

DESIGNING FOR ETHNOCULTURAL EMPATHY:
CRITICAL LITERACY AND INTERGROUP CONTACT IN ELA

By

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A dissertation submitted to the

Graduate School of Education

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of

Doctor of Education

Graduate Program in Design of Learning Environments

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New Brunswick, New Jersey

May 2020

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ABSTRACT

The absence of diverse perspectives, coupled with a Eurocentric lens of analyzing history and literature, substantially limits opportunities for dialogue about race, culture, and experience (Bondi, 2012; Chapman, 2013; Schieble, 2012). As a result, White students often fail to see race as a construct with tremendous social and political implications (Chapman, 2013; Flynn, 2012; McIntosh, 1998). A lack of understanding about the intersection of power and identity can curtail White students' empathy for racial and ethnic minorities (Chapman, 2013; McClain, 2008; Pope-Davis & Ottavi, 1994). Though there is ample evidence to support that increased contact with outgroup members increases ethnocultural empathy (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000; Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, & Christ, 2011), creating authentic opportunities for this kind of contact in predominantly White spaces is often met with reluctance and resistance (Chapman, 2013; Flynn, 2012; Linder, 2015; McClain, 2008). Both this research and this intervention design are built on a body of literature that underscores the importance of dialogue, intergroup contact, and critical literacy for the development of ethnocultural empathy. The purpose of this design-based research study was twofold: (a) to understand whether an eight-week intervention (centered on dialogue, intergroup contact, and critical literacy) increased ethnocultural empathy among 10th-grade students ($n=41$), and (b) to discern the mediating processes that contributed to and limited the development of ethnocultural empathy. A paired samples *t*-test suggests that students' increase in ethnocultural empathy was statistically significant. A thematic analysis of reflection logs revealed four mediating processes that contributed to the development of ethnocultural empathy: (a) understanding diverse experiences and appreciating culture, (b) awareness of bias and privilege, (c) foregrounding counter narratives and taking perspective, and (d) valuing inclusivity and social justice activism. Two additional themes emerged as limitations

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to the development of ethnocultural empathy: (e) passivity that reinforces the status quo and (f) national and self-preservation. These findings highlight the value of authentic intergroup contact, particularly that which is driven by collaborative co-constructions of reality. Not only does this study provide guidelines for designing instruction, but it also offers a model that clarifies the relationship among theories, embodiments, mediating processes, and outcomes.

Keywords: critical literacy, dialogue, English language arts, ethnocultural empathy, intergroup contact, racial discourse

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply indebted to the support of many individuals, without whom this work would not have been possible.

To my students and colleagues—I am so grateful for your willingness to candidly share your truths, all while seeking out the truths of others. Thank you for engaging so openly in this research and for inspiring me to be the best educator I can be.

To Sarah—Thank you for letting our classroom be a space for experimentation and innovation. I am truly grateful for your friendship and am humbled to work alongside you each day.

To my cohort, dissertation group, and my dissertation committee—Each of you has shaped me to be the researcher and writer I am today. I am regularly inspired by your commitment to supporting others, regardless of how much is already on your plate. Thank you for your faith in me and your constant commitment to helping me grow.

To my family—I am grateful for every leap you’ve encouraged me to take, the distance you’ve given me to make decisions for myself, and the lessons you’ve taught me along the way. Your love and support fueled me through frustration and failure; you gave me the strength to be resilient. I’ve dared to do this work because of the values you have instilled in me. For that, I’m eternally grateful.

Mike—There are no words to sufficiently express my gratitude for the role that you have played during this journey. You have consistently believed in my ability to engineer greatness; and even when I’ve fallen short, you’ve been my biggest champion. I have learned to embrace uncertainty and discomfort through this work; but it is your love and support that has given me the strength to endure it, and occasionally, enjoy it.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Predominantly White institutions (PWIs) in New Jersey are seeing a surge in race-related hate crimes. Within the last year, New Jersey has seen a 67% increase in the number of bias crimes committed by minors, many of which have taken place in schools (Attrino, 2018; Hochran, 2018; Hoover, 2018; Kadosh, 2018; Lowe, 2019; Mooney, 2018). Most of the bias crimes involve graffiti, racial slurs, and derogatory symbols, sending messages of intolerance to racial and ethnic minorities. In the aftermath of the hate crimes, many school districts have expressly stated that there is no place for hate in their schools (Crespolini, 2018; 2019; Mooney, 2018). Though the rhetoric is powerful in momentarily rallying the community against hate, very rarely do schools or school leaders acknowledge and address the underlying problem—a lack of diverse perspectives has calloused our students to the experiences of ethnocultural¹ minorities (Chapman, 2013; Keisch & Scott, 2015; Scott 2017).

PWIs are guilty of employing a Eurocentric approach to education (Chapman, 2013; Gusa, 2010; Pollock, 2004; O'Brien, 2004; Reeves, 2010; Vetter, 2014), which substantially limits opportunities for ethnocultural discourse and subsequent opportunities for perspective taking (Keisch & Scott, 2015; Scott 2017). As a result, White students often fail to see race as a construct with tremendous social and political implications (Chapman, 2013; Flynn, 2012; McIntosh, 1998). Because one's understanding of race is inextricably connected to their sense of self (Helms, 1990; Tatum, 1992), there is often guilt and resistance associated with racial discourse that examines and acknowledges White privilege (Bondi, 2012; Flynn, 2012; McClain,

¹Wang et al. (2003) operationalize *ethnocultural* to include the social constructions of race and religion. This study will adhere to this inclusive definition of ethnocultural.

2008; McIntosh, 1998; Pope-Davis & Ottavi, 1994; Sleeter, 1998). Indeed, it can be disadvantageous to have conversations about race and privilege out of context, because it often puts White students on the defense and produces White guilt (Flynn, 2012; Linder, 2015; Sleeter, 1998). However, a lack of understanding about the intersection of power and identity ultimately curtails White students' empathy for racial and ethnic minorities (Benett & Lee-Treweek, 2014; McClain, 2008; Schieble, 2012), which has deleterious consequences for intergroup relations (Chang, 2017; Hope, Skoog, & Jagers, 2015; Ispa-Landa, & Conwell, 2015; Pope-Davis & Ottavi, 1994).

Examining limitations in ethnocultural empathy warrants an understanding of the factors that both contribute to and detract from empathy. Empathy scholars indicate that perspective taking, dialogue, and self-awareness are critical components in an individual's conception of *self* in relation to *other* (Ashby, Collins, Helms, & Manlove, 2018; Bal & Veltkamp, 2013; Bettendorf, 2016; Kidd & Castano, 2013; Monroe, 2018; Muller & Miles, 2017; Nordstrom, 2015; Pino & Mazza, 2016). Increased opportunities for perspective taking (in both professional and academic contexts) have been linked to increases in baseline levels of ethnocultural empathy (Bachen, Hernández-Ramos, & Raphael, 2012; Fleming, Thomas, Burnham, Charles, & Shaw, 2015). Thus, it can be inferred that interventions that seek to bridge the gap between *self* and *other* are effective when they are anchored in perspective taking.

The purpose of this study was to explore how 10th-grade students enrolled in my American literature class in a predominantly White school district in New Jersey navigated a unit of study that involved overcoming the barriers to ethnocultural discourse. I sought to understand the cognitive and affective processes that supported and interfered with students' development of ethnocultural empathy (Wang et al., 2003). By identifying these cognitive and affective

processes, I was able to examine the application of broad interpersonal and pedagogical theories to academic contexts with adolescents (Allport, 1954; Bakhtin, 1984; Coffey, 2008; Freire, 1972; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993; Lewison et al., 2002; Pettigrew et al. 2011; Stevens & Bean, 2007). More specifically, I was able to understand how the critical components of ethnocultural empathy (Wang et al., 2003) manifested for adolescents in a learning environment design that was guided by the principles of intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew et al. 2011), dialogue (Bakhtin, 1984; Freire, 1972), and critical literacy (Coffey, 2008; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993; Lewison et al., 2002; Stevens & Bean, 2007).

I leveraged my strengths as a reflective practitioner and my knowledge of the district to answer the following research questions:

1. Does a learning environment design that foregrounds intergroup contact, dialogue, and critical literacy foster ethnocultural empathy?
2. What are the mediating processes that support and/or limit the development of ethnocultural empathy?

An evaluation of the efficacy of this intervention and an understanding of the critical processes that support and limit the development of ethnocultural empathy have the potential to strengthen English language arts (ELA) curricula for school districts with analogous demographics. The findings from this research will inform not only my current instructional practice but also future curriculum design. The long-term goal of this work is to evaluate the embodiments of this design based on their potential to elicit mediating processes of ethnocultural empathy and refine them so that they operate as effective scaffolds for students. Future educators and researchers will be able to adapt the elements of this design to better suit their student populations.

Operational Terms

Ethnocultural Empathy

Ethnocultural empathy (Wang et al., 2003), emerging from an earlier concept of cultural empathy (Ridley & Lingle, 1996), (a) underscores the importance of considering another's experience in a cultural context; (b) emphasizes dismantling subjective prejudices against those of different racial, cultural, and/or ethnic backgrounds; and (c) stresses the value of practical experience with perspective taking. Wang et al. (2003) operationalize ethnocultural empathy as intellectual empathy and empathic emotions, and the communication of those two (Ridley & Lingle, 1996).

Critical Literacy

Critical literacy is defined as “read[ing] texts in an active, reflective manner in order to better understand power, inequality, and injustice to human relationship” (Coffey, 2008, p. 1). It allows readers the opportunity to engage in four important activities: “(a) disrupting the commonplace, (b) interrogating multiple viewpoints, (c) focusing on sociopolitical issues, and (d) taking action and promoting social justice” (Lewison, Flint, & Van Sluys, 2002, p. 382).

White Privilege

Peggy McIntosh (1998) defines White privilege as “an invisible package of unearned assets, which [she] can count on cashing in each day, but about which [she] was ‘meant’ to remain oblivious” (p. 77). Whether it is evident to the holder or not, White privilege advantages White individuals in daily social and political interactions. “Privilege is problematic (a) when it skews our personal interactions and judgments, and (b) when it contributes to or blinds us to systemic barriers for those who do not possess a certain privilege, thereby creating or

perpetuating inequity” (National Association of School Psychologists, n.d., p. 1).

Colorblindness

Colorblindness is the racial ideology that posits the best way to end bias and discrimination is by treating individuals as equally as possible, without regard to race, culture, or ethnicity (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Tarca, 2005). It upholds the idea that we, as a society and culture, have evolved to ignore race and only see people for who they are (Williams & Conyers, 2016).

Intergroup Contact Theory

Intergroup contact theory proposes that individuals belonging to different groups can work to reduce prejudice and intergroup conflict, provided that certain conditions are in place: equal status, intergroup cooperation, common goals, and support by social and institutional authorities (Allport, 1954). Though Allport (1954) does not detail the degree or extent to which these factors must be present, he maintains that together they offer a platform for change. Pettigrew (1998) takes this one step further noting how integral cross-group friendships are in reducing prejudice. Most friends have equal status, work collaboratively to achieve shared goals, and are not typically affected by institutional or social forces, so they inherently meet the criteria for intergroup contact theory.

Problem Statement

The following section presents a historical analysis of ethnocultural relationships as a result of a century of educational reform and demonstrates how the reform initiatives of the past have had lasting effects on how students experience race, culture, and ethnicity in schools today, particularly in PWIs.

The Role of Educational Reform

A careful analysis of the history of American education reveals that the ethnocultural divide we see in middle-class suburban schools is the repercussion of decades of systemic oppression and educational inequality (Patterson, 2002; Reese, 2005; Roithmayr, 2014). During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the surge in immigration gave way to “concerns about the ability of these new and different immigrants to assimilate into American society” (Shertzer, 2011, p. 51). At the core of the compulsory schooling movement during the Progressive Era was the need to morally and civically reform children, particularly those of the poor or foreign-born (Cabán, 2001, Cubberley, 1918 as cited in Cabán, 2001; Lleras-Muney & Shertzer, 2015; Reese, 2005). The stigmatization of children of color fueled the need for schools to remedy the *problems* created by the influx of immigrants at the turn of the century. Under the guise of citizenship, early Progressive reformers set out to wipe away the identities of minorities in America (Lleras-Muney & Shertzer, 2015; Reese, 2005). Education, in turn, was employed as a means of legitimization of individuals whose identities were anchored in various languages, religions, and ethnic groups. By establishing new social rules to replace existing norms based on regional, ethnic, or religious loyalties, advocates of reform were able to inculcate in society a disdain for difference.

During this time, Cubberly (1912) and Strayer (1911) used scientific measurement to propagate claims about the hereditary basis of intelligence (Cubberley, 1918, as cited in Cabán, 2001; Cubberly, 1912, as cited in Culpepper, Johnson, Ryan, Crawford, & Dawidowitz, 2012; Silverberg & Lafer, 2008). The scientific management principles and social efficiency movement were used to “magnify differences rather than eliminate them” (Reese, 1997, p. 156). Thorndike (1921) maintained that it was economically frivolous and inefficient to give all children the same

education, especially given their unequal inclinations for learning. What these reformers failed to consider, or perhaps chose to overlook, was that the discrepancies that existed in students' performances on the scales and measurements designed were primarily due to cultural differences; the tests were not designed for everyone to be successful (Economos, 1980; Walpole et al., 2005). In fact, the intelligence tests of the early 20th century contributed to the tracking of poor and minority children into fewer academic courses of study (Culpepper et al., 2012). Prior to the sorting and sifting of students on account of pseudo-scientific tests, "local prejudices by majority Whites ensured that Asian and Asian Americans, like Blacks in the South or Mexicans in the South West, often attended segregated schools" (Reese, 1997, p. 127). The deliberate segregation of racially, ethnically, or culturally different students into inferior camps of education ensured the *othering* of minorities (Cabán, 2001; Culpepper et al., 2012; Silverberg & Lafer, 2008).

The endorsement of eugenics during the Progressive Era of education reform continued to shape Whites' perceptions of Blacks as academically and socially inferior (Alchon, 2017; Leonard, 2005). The longstanding effects of the Progressive Era can still be seen today as Black individuals continue to exist on the periphery of a White society (Coates, 2015). This has resulted in an ethnocultural divide in society and schools. Educational tracking continues to propel this segregation by sorting racial minorities into vocational tracks (Culpepper et al., 2012; Silverberg & Lafer, 2008). Black students are underrepresented in rigorous academic courses and face disproportionate rates of discipline in predominantly White schools, which confirms the social reproduction of American schooling (Bloom, 2013; Cobbs & Glenn, 2014; Ojha, Christenson, Brown, & King, 2014; Pesta, 2018; Togut, 2011; Yearby & Boggs, 2017). It is no

surprise that race, culture, and ethnicity continue to divide students today, particularly because our institutions orchestrate this divide.

Educators and policymakers often succumb to the delusion that the Civil Rights Era overturned the divide that plagued American education for over a century. The efficacy of the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision has been contested by researchers, not as means of discounting what it was able to do, but rather in an attempt to spotlight the work that was left undone, and the work that steadily unraveled in the decades that followed (Bell, 2004; Orfield & Eaton, 1996; Patterson, 2001). Though *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) made school segregation illegal, it did not provide the standards nor the means for school integration (Bell, 2004; Patterson, 2001). Consequently, the Black children who attended White schools after desegregation endured psychological and physical trauma (Brown, 2016; Winston, 2009). Though progress was made, it was not without many casualties along the way.

The Little Rock Nine, nine children who enrolled in an all-White high school after *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), faced grave opposition by the community at large; this opposition was only strengthened by the vocal disapproval of integration handed down by Governor Faubus of Arkansas (Hardney, 2008). The year after these nine children walked up the steps to Central High, Faubus closed all schools in Little Rock for a year (Hardney, 2008). Ernest Green, the only member of the Little Rock Nine to graduate from Central High in Arkansas, reflected on his experience that year as one that was laden with racism, threats, and violence. The experiences of the Little Rock Nine are evidence that desegregation was only a Band-Aid that presented the illusion of rapid healing.

Though desegregation eventually changed the face of all-White schools, it was not long before Whites took matters into their own hands, creating bubbles of Whiteness that ostracized

Blacks socioeconomically (Coates, 2014; Patterson, 2001). Whites moved from racially and ethnically diverse cities to the suburbs (Coates, 2014; Patterson, 2001). In response to desegregation and busing, many White parents chose to withdraw their children from public schools and enroll them in private schools (Patterson, 2001; Zhang, 2011). Even so, those that stayed in public schools were just as capable of securing all-White spaces for their children (Patterson, 2001; Zhang, 2011). Institutions and society worked in concert to deliberately slow down effective desegregation. *Miliken v. Bradley* (1974), a critical Supreme Court decision that affected the state of city public schools in Detroit, confirmed that segregation that was not *explicitly* a part of school district policy was not in violation of the constitution (Johnson, 2013; Jones, 1992). By knocking down a proposal to desegregate busing of public schools across district lines in Detroit, the court indicated that intent of school action was all that they could hold schools accountable for; thus, integration could not be enforced (Patterson, 2001). The dangerous precedent set by this legislation led to concealed, yet equally injurious, policies of segregation.

The Civil Rights Era was a time that both stimulated and stifled progress for interracial and intercultural relations. It liberated Black families from the chains of Civil War America but did so strategically and deliberately, ensuring that they would always be *separate* and could never be *equal*. What we fail to realize when we acquiesce to the sentiment embraced by the status quo is that all children—regardless of race, culture, or ethnicity—will face the repercussions of the systematic oppression that we reproduce in America. Though some will continue to benefit financially and socially, the ethnocultural stratification of society will continue to reproduce in ways that will strip our country of community and our children of morality.

The Lasting Effects of Systemic Oppression on Interpersonal Relationships

It has been over 65 years since *Brown v. Board of Education* legislated the desegregation of schools; and yet, systemic oppression continues to pervade the academic and interpersonal experiences of students of color. These students continue to be stigmatized, marginalized, and silenced through their academic curricula and in their intergroup experiences (Chang, 2017; Hope, Skoog, & Jagers, 2015; Ispa-Landa, & Conwell, 2015; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). Schools continue to stratify students of color into special education courses and vocational tracks (Culpepper et al., 2012; Silverberg & Lafer, 2008). Reproduction theory identifies how schooling contributes to and reproduces hierarchical class relations, often putting the wealthy at the top and conditioning the poor to claim their role as second-class citizens (Conchas, 2006). This, of course, is problematic on both socioeconomic and interpersonal fronts; White students often disproportionately occupy the top, and students of color find themselves at the bottom, struggling to climb up the social ladder in schools and society. Students see themselves not as members of a community, but rather as individuals that must bypass their neighbors to get ahead. The emphasis on getting ahead at any cost dismantles communal goals and initiatives (Labaree, 1997). For many White students, this means that students of color are taken even further out of their spheres, compromising the extent to which ethnocultural discourse takes place in PWIs (Chapman, 2013; McClain, 2008; Rothschild, 2003).

Given the growing diversity in the United States, the need to engage in racial dialogue is essential to support cross-race relationships in the future, particularly in the classroom (Williams & Conyers, 2016). However, instructional practices that position students to analyze the effects of race and racism are often met with resistance, guilt, and tension (Chapman, 2013; McClain, 2008; Tatum, 1992; Williams & Conyers, 2016), and therefore are commonly avoided, notably

in schools where they are greatly needed (Dickar, 2008). Academic institutions continue to protect White privilege, upholding “the myth of meritocracy, the myth that democratic choice is equally available to all” (McIntosh, 1989, p. 5). Tatum (1992) corroborates this position by noting that many students, irrespective of their race, consider the United States to be a just society. Therefore, when students are exposed to issues involving oppression, such as racism, classism, and sexism, they respond with guilt, anger, and frustration (Chapman, 2013; McClain, 2008; Tatum, 1992). Typically, students display these emotions through acts of resistance, disengagement, color-blindness, and/or silence (Chapman, 2013; Flynn, 2012; McClain, 2008).

Students born into the ‘post-racial’ United States society (Mueller, 2013) believe that Jim Crow laws and the ‘real racists’ (e.g., KKK, Aryan Brotherhood, neo-Nazis, etc.) no longer exist; thus, issues involving race and racism are in the past (McClain, 2008). They have adopted a colorblind philosophy, which upholds the idea that we, as a society and culture, have evolved to ignore race and only see people for who they are (Williams & Conyers, 2016). This belief is especially prominent within White students who overlook White as a race because White norms are the cultural standard (Williams & Conyers, 2016; Chaisson, 2004). This creates a large issue, because “such a perspective cannot question the structural arrangements that are premised on skin color, because it does not see White as a race” (Chaisson, 2004, p. 347). In agreement, critical race theory argues that assertions of neutrality and colorblindness disguise White privilege and clout (Sleeter, 2017). Therefore, White students commonly respond with irritation and resentment when they are identified as having racial privilege (Chaisson, 2004; Tatum, 1992). Unless critically contested, these colorblind ideologies will continue to reinforce student resistance and perpetuate dominant discourse, while hindering student learning (Williams & Conyers, 2016). Consequently, society will reproduce the misconceptions that are deeply

embedded in the socialization of White America (Williams & Conyers, 2016; Wise, 2011). This underscores the need to engage in ethnocultural discourse.

Students who grow up and learn in segregated environments without access to diverse racial, cultural, or ethnic experiences are likely to remain within their segregated spheres (Tatum, 2007), and are likely to never reflect on the concepts of race, culture, identity, and privilege throughout their education (Chaisson, 2004), and quite possibly their lifetime. Not only does the absence of diverse perspectives limit opportunities for dialogue about race, culture, and experience (Bondi, 2012; Chapman, 2013; Schieble, 2012), it predisposes White students to overlook the social and political implications of race (Chapman, 2013; Flynn, 2012; McIntosh, 1998). Even when racial discourse is contextualized in English language arts as an examination of language and power, White students shy away from critical discourse (Chapman, 2013; McClain, 2008). Rather, they regurgitate platitudes about hard work and the American Dream, blindly corroborating the myth of *liberty and justice for all* (Brooks, 2001; Bullock & Lott, 2011; Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2009; Seider, 2008). This desire to uphold the myth of meritocracy and protect Whiteness has consequential implications for intergroup relationships ranging from biased attitudes to violent hate crimes (Bondi, 2012).

Ethnocultural Ignorance: A Hotbed for Hate

The Anti-Defamation League's Pyramid of Hate (2018) portrays the trajectory of bias and hate, implying that even the most dormant microaggressions have the potential to turn violent if they go unchallenged. Recent research on hate speech and White supremacy suggests that hate speech can and often does inspire criminal activity (Cohen-Almagor, 2018). The U.S. Department of Justice prosecutes hate crimes defined as "acts of physical harm and specific criminal threats motivated by animus based on race, color, national origin, religion, gender,

sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability” (“Hate Crimes, U.S. DOJ,” n.d.). Data from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) indicates that 80 percent of all bias crimes between 2011 and 2015 were motivated by race or ethnicity, and nearly 90 percent of all bias crimes involved violence (Masucci & Langton, 2017). In addition, we have seen an increase in bias crimes related to race, ethnicity, and religion between 2016 and 2017. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), “58.1 percent were motivated by a race/ethnicity/ancestry bias, and 22.0 percent were prompted by religious bias” (“Hate Crimes, U.S. DOJ,” n.d.). It is worth noting that some organizations have expressed skepticism about the accuracy of the FBI statistics, claiming that the data missed several incidents in their reports (Brown, 2018). The FBI reports also indicate that “Anti-Black or African American” bias accounted for nearly half of all crimes motivated by race or ethnicity, which rose 18 percent from the previous year; and “Anti-Hispanic or Latino” hate crimes increased by over 20 percent (Brown, 2018).

The presence of bias and hate hits close to home with New Jersey reporting 569 bias incidents in 2018, the highest number since 2011 (Atmonavage, 2019). Shockingly, “more than a quarter of the reported bias incidents in 2018 occurred at colleges and universities, and nearly half of the offenders were minors. Over the past two years, a total of 284 reported bias incidents occurred on college and university campuses statewide” (Atmonavage, 2019, p. 1). From 2016 to 2017, bias incidents in New Jersey saw an increase of “more than 32 percent, the largest single-year percentage jump in more than a decade” (Atmonavage, 2019, p. 1). Union County, the location of the site of inquiry for this research, saw bias incidents more than double between 2016 and 2017 (“News 12 New Jersey,” 2019). The Attorney General’s report indicates that in 2018, race, ethnicity, and religion were three of the most significant motivators of bias incidents (Atmonavage, 2019). Research on racially and ethnically

motivated bias suggests that empathy, or lack thereof, is critical to shaping one's perception of outgroup members (Azevedo et al., 2013; Gutsell & Inzlicht, 2010; Nordstrom, 2015; Segal, 2011). Given the prevalence of bias incidents in New Jersey perpetrated by adolescents, it is critical that we refine our understanding of instructional and curricular practices that facilitate the development of ethnocultural empathy.

Purpose

As evidenced by an analysis of the problem, a lack of understanding about the intersection of power and identity limits White students' empathy for ethnocultural minorities (Chapman, 2013; McClain, 2008; Pope-Davis & Ottavi, 1994). Ethnocultural empathy (Wang et al., 2003), emerging from an earlier concept of cultural empathy (Ridley & Lingle, 1996), (a) underscores the importance of considering another's experience in a cultural context; (b) emphasizes dismantling subjective prejudices against those of different racial, cultural, and/or ethnic backgrounds; and (c) stresses the value of practical experience with perspective taking. It is important to note that Wang et al. (2003) operationalize ethnocultural empathy to include the social constructions of race and religion. This study will adhere to this inclusive definition of ethnocultural empathy.

If empathy is about knowing and understanding another's inner experience, then one must possess knowledge of diverse backgrounds and varied experiences (Green, 1998; Rasoal, Eklund, & Hansen, 2011). Because the subjective perception of experiences exists at the intersection of individual and society, their examination, at any level, holds tremendous implications for empathy (Kidd & Castano, 2013). There is ample evidence to support that increased contact with racial and/or cultural outgroup members (members of groups with whom we share no commonalities) has favorable effects on ethnocultural empathy (Allport, 1954;

Pettigrew, 1998; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000; Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, & Christ, 2011; Wang et al. 2003). However, creating authentic opportunities for this kind of contact in predominantly White spaces is often met with reluctance and resistance (Chapman, 2013; Flynn, 2012; Linder, 2015; McClain, 2008).

Both this research and this intervention design are built on a body of literature that confirms that White students navigate ethnocultural discourse with trepidation and guilt, often maintaining the dominant perspective (Flynn, 2012; Linder, 2015; McClain, 2008; Sleeter, 1998). This is in contrast to adolescents of color who are more eager to talk about race and explore their racial identities (Landsman, 2009; Tatum, 1992). Research confirms that having an accessible entry point into ethnocultural discourse mitigates some of the trepidation that students have when navigating such conversations (Alimo, 2012; Griffin, Brown, & Warren, 2012; Heather, 2008; Markowicz, 2009; Wertley, 2014). Thus, an exploration of how students make sense of diverse ethnocultural experiences (in the context of an academic curriculum) will provide researchers, educators, and policymakers with an understanding of the critical learning environment features that promote the development of ethnocultural empathy.

The historical background of the study contextualizes the barriers to ethnocultural discourse and the challenges that affect intergroup relations in schools today. The conceptual framework underscores the importance of scaffolded initiatives for critical literacy, intergroup contact, dialogue, inquiry-driven pedagogies, and self-reflection. Thus, the purpose of this study was to evaluate an intervention designed to foster ethnocultural empathy and examine how students made sense of diverse ethnocultural experiences in the context of an American literature curriculum. As such, I sought to understand the cognitive and affective processes that supported students' development of ethnocultural empathy and those that limited it (Wang et al., 2003). By

identifying these cognitive and affective processes, I was able to examine the application of broad interpersonal and pedagogical theories to academic contexts with adolescents (Allport, 1954; Bakhtin, 1984; Coffey, 2008; Freire, 1972; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993; Lewison et al., 2002; Pettigrew et al. 2011; Stevens & Bean, 2007). More specifically, I was able to understand how the critical components of ethnocultural empathy (Wang et al., 2003) manifested for adolescents in a learning environment design that was guided by the principles of intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew et al. 2011), dialogue (Bakhtin, 1984; Freire, 1972), and critical literacy (Coffey, 2008; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993; Lewison et al., 2002; Stevens & Bean, 2007).

As educators, it is imperative to understand what aspects of the learning environment produce favorable opportunities for ethnocultural discourse and sense-making. It is equally important to understand the elements of the learning environment that reinforce racial and/or cultural hegemony.

Research Questions

1. Does a learning environment design that foregrounds intergroup contact, dialogue, and critical literacy foster ethnocultural empathy?
2. What are the mediating processes that support and/or limit the development of ethnocultural empathy?

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

This review of the literature sequentially examines the problems that contribute to limitations in ethnocultural empathy and details curricular and pedagogical solutions implemented by renowned scholars in the field, primarily in the realm of creating opportunities for ethnocultural discourse and analysis. This study was built on the findings of existing research, accounting for its limitations in an effort to secure a sound platform for interpersonal growth, development, and empathy.

Limitations in Racial Discourse and the Problem with Colorblind Racial Contexts

Racial discourse in the United States is full of evasion and euphemism (Gladwell, 2017). By noting how so many stories about race get cleaned up, Gladwell unearthed one of the most problematic issues in teaching American history or American literature without accounting for the politics of race. It is equally problematic to examine the politics of race solely in the context of history. Too often educators feel inclined to situate racism in America's past in an effort to mitigate present discomfort affiliated with racial discourse; however, this does nothing "to diminish future white privilege" (Low, 2017, p. 19). As noted by Ta-Nehisi Coates, situating racism in the past and examining it retrospectively gives us "a hall-pass through history, a sleeping pill that ensures the Dream" (2015, p. 33). Evidently, the sanitation of racial discourse and the silencing of it cultivates a climate of colormuteness in American schools and predisposes students to the dangers of a singular narrative (Adichie, 2009; Coates, 2015; Low, 2017). In her research, Pollock (2004) examined race talk in a California high school and found that educators, policymakers, and laypeople all work to reproduce racial inequalities by choosing to only examine race through a historical lens or by failing to examine it altogether. An examination of

the intersection of race, culture, and education reveals that schools are using colorblind ideologies to minimize race as a social and political construct that possesses consequential implications ranging from ignorance to hate crimes (Chapman, 2013; Linder, 2015; Rothschild, 2003).

Colorblind racial contexts are often institutional attempts at calibrating racial discourse; however, they perpetuate systemic racism (Chapman, 2013; Kestner, 2009; Pollock, 2004; Vetter, 2014). When social and academic contexts mute racial dialogue, particularly in suburban schools, they systemically reinforce Whiteness by foregrounding the dominant discourse as the correct way of seeing and being (Adichie, 2009, Coates, 2015; Chapman, 2013; Low, 2017). Chapman (2013) examined colorblind racial contexts, noting that federal mandates and common school policies (e.g., tracking, traditional curricula, classroom practices) depict patterns of racial hostility in majority White suburban schools. Focus group interviews of students of color in predominantly White high schools revealed that White students are over-represented in higher track classes, while students of color regard their lower track education as valuable. Economic and social possibilities for these students remain stratified by race (Chapman, 2013). Students feel uncomfortable and defensive when issues of race and racism are part of the formal curriculum (Bondi, 2012; Chapman, 2013; McClain, 2008; Rothschild, 2003). Black students, in particular, think that they are not supposed to discuss race or use it as a way to differentiate themselves. Even though schools attempt to obscure race and discount its political implications, it continues to be an influential construct (Bondi, 2012; Chapman, 2013; Flynn, 2012; Pollock, 2004; Pope-Davis & Ottavi, 1994).

Students of color continue to feel stigmatized in predominantly White spheres (Chang, 2017; Hope, Skoog, & Jagers, 2015; Ispa-Landa, & Conwell, 2015). A closer examination of

Black students revealed that they experience racial stereotyping, discrimination, lack of institutional support, and limited racial diversity in the curriculum (Blanchett, 2006; Harwood, Hunt, Mendenhall, & Lewis, 2012; Hope et al., 2015; Lewis, Chesler, & Forman, 2000; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). Conversely, White students do not perceive race to be a problem at all (Benett & Lee-Treweek, 2014; Bonilla-Silva, & Forman, 2000; Chesler, Peet, & Sevig, 2003; McClain, 2008). In his study, McClain (2008) sought to help his students step out of their White-dominated spheres (Sleeter, 1998), but found a great deal of racial ignorance in that they possessed the luxury of not having to think about race in the first place. According to his students, the word racism summoned visions of violent lynchings, Klan rallies, and nothing more (McClain, 2008). The problem with the dichotomous view of oppressor and oppressed held by McClain's (2008) students is that it relies primarily on the tangible and the visible. In many ways, they oversimplified the complexities of racism, making it difficult for them to detect the institutional structures of racism that disenfranchise one group (McLain, 2008; Cohen, 1998).

Though McClain's (2008) experiences in Nebraska seem distant and obsolete, these pockets of ignorance exist everywhere. Benett and Lee-Treweek (2014) conducted a three-year multi-method study in a predominantly White area of the United Kingdom. Both the observational and interview analyses revealed that students did not perceive race or racism to be a problem. Furthermore, the curriculum made superficial mentions of race, which ultimately left students confused about historical events and the social and political impacts of occurrences such as the slave trade, apartheid, and the Holocaust. Similarly, Flynn (2012) qualitatively examined how individuals in a diverse middle-school classroom reacted to discussions of race, class, and White privilege. Both teachers in this study recognized the challenges that students faced,

particularly White students, in talking about race. Though most White students felt motivated to become agents for change, some felt a sense of guilt and resistance (Flynn, 2012). While race talk in schools can lead to difficult conversations rife with tension, or worse evasion, there are several studies that uncover the importance and fruitfulness of navigating this terrain strategically in the context of an academic discipline (Morgan, 2014; Nordstrom, 2015; Perrotta, 2018; Rothschild, 2003; Schieble, 2012; Sellers, 2007; Sorenson, 2010; Thomas, 2015).

Considerations for Instruction

The following section examines what educators and researchers have already done to create a forum for ethnocultural discourse that effectively reduces bias and increases empathy. These practices include: talking about race, offering opportunities for storytelling, intergroup dialogue, the development of racial literacy, the diversification of perspectives in the curriculum, an infusion of texts that evoke empathy, inquiry-based active learning pedagogies, perspective taking exercises, and providing space and time for self-reflection.

Breaking the Silence: Talking about Race

Discussions of race in classrooms can be both cathartic and eye-opening for all students. Critical dialogue about race and privilege undermines systemic inclinations to protect Whiteness (Bondi, 2012; Flynn, 2012; Rothschild, 2003; Schieble, 2012; Sellers, 2007; Sorenson, 2010). Bondi (2012) investigated how White students in a predominantly White institution engaged with race and racism to locate their experiences in the U.S. educational system. This research was predicated on the notion that Whiteness is not associated with skin color, but also describes social processes that are fluid and shifting, imbued with rights and privileges (Garner, 2007; Tehranian, 2000). By considering Whiteness as a moving concept, Bondi (2012) applied critical race theory to examine ways that students and institutions propel hegemony through curricula,

pedagogy, policies, and practices. The research revealed three salient themes among White participants: (a) a willingness to learn about race, but defensiveness when experiences were challenged by racially minoritized students; (b) feelings of marginalization in racial dialogue; and (c) an awareness of a racial divide within their cohort. Bondi (2012) reinforced the idea that White students were protective of privileges granted to them through Whiteness, even in instances when it compromised the learning of minority peers.

Some researchers stress the importance of navigating racial dialogue cautiously and creating a sphere where Whiteness is temporarily privileged (Levine-Rasky, 2000; Puchner & Roseboro, 2011; Solomon et al., 2005; Vaught & Castangno, 2008); others advocate tailoring pedagogy to the context in which racial discourse takes place (Flynn, 2012; McClain, 2008; Rothschild, 2003). Puchner and Roseboro (2011) used Helm's (1990) White racial identity model to analyze racial understandings in teacher education students in classes with faculty of color. They highlighted data from three White interviewees to argue that it is difficult for faculty of color to create a dialogic space in the classroom, wherein students' voices are encouraged but counterhegemonic authority is maintained. The pedagogical issues that surface when instructors of color teach predominantly White students underscore the importance of dialogic compromise. To move students towards antiracist attitudes, faculty must first facilitate the development of a positive White racial identity (Moule, 2005). Clearly, focusing on Whiteness and White privilege can be a problem (Rothschild, 2003; McClain, 2008; Sleeter, 1998), so Puchner and Roseboro (2011) propose talking about Whiteness as an important force that is institutionalized and structural. One problem with this is that it may allow individuals to shed responsibility for racism, furthering the dissonance between complicit and deliberate racism.

Storytelling

Racial discourse is most challenging when it is not contextualized appropriately or when it seems to hold individuals personally accountable for large scale systemic problems. Students need to feel safe when exploring issues that deal with race and racism (McClain, 2008; Puchner and Roseboro, 2011; Rothschild, 2003; Sleeter, 1998). Some researchers advocate for storytelling as an approach for reducing prejudiced attitudes and increasing cultural and racial empathy (Caruthers, 2006; Caruthers, Thompson, & Eubanks, 2004; Golobski Twomey & Bifuh-Ambe, 2012; Kim, 2016). Feshbach and Feshbach (2009) underscore how storytelling produces empathy; more specifically, it gives participants an entry point into strengthening their cognitive abilities to discern the affective states of others.

Caruthers (2006) conducted a qualitative study that evaluated storytelling as a professional development strategy to help teachers and administrators engage in dialogue about cultural and racial differences in education. The primary finding from this study confirms the value of storytelling as a force that breaks the silence around race and culture. To be effective, storytelling must be combined with dialogue and inquiry (Caruthers, 2006). Other researchers adhere to this same model by building in discussions and questions after opportunities for storytelling (Golobski Twomey & Bifuh-Ambe, 2012; Kim, 2016; Rodriguez, 2010). In an earlier study, Caruthers, Thompson, and Eubanks (2004) spoke of transformation in schools as a process of *reculturing*. They noted that to move beyond conceiving race as an undiscussable, we must reject the paradigm of sameness and expand mental models. When considering how Caruthers's initial study (2004) differs from her follow-up (2006), it is clear that storytelling is being operationalized as a tool for *reculturing*.

Similarly, Rodriguez (2010) conducted a qualitative study that examined how storytelling creates collective transformational spaces and helps individuals analyze knowledge about identities in the context of race and culture. Even though Rodriguez's (2010) study examined storytelling among students of color, other researchers have conducted similar studies in predominantly White spaces and found that it effectively validates the lived experiences of all participants, increases knowledge about culture, and fosters deeper interpersonal relationships (Caruthers, 2006; Caruthers, Thompson, & Eubanks, 2004; Golobski Twomey & Bifuh-Ambe, 2012). The primary difference between the findings of storytelling among students of color and White students is that it helps students of color deal with racism in a way that is empowering and active (Kim, 2016; Rodriguez, 2010).

Storytelling also has the power to unify groups that are more explicitly and politically divided (Kim, 2016). The social integration effects, mediated by mutual understanding and empathy, are a direct consequence of a storytelling intervention in Kim's (2016) research with participants from North and South Korea. As part of a National Unification initiative, her study considered the effects of storytelling on intergroup relationships and individual participants' identities. Through observations and semi-structured interviews, she found that all participants felt unified after sharing personal stories about their life experiences. Storytelling facilitates the ability to move past sociopolitical differences by providing a co-constructed space for vulnerability, transparency, and connection (Caruthers, 2006; Caruthers, Thompson, & Eubanks, 2004; Golobski Twomey & Bifuh-Ambe, 2012; Kim, 2016). As evidenced by the research on colorblind and colormute racism, issues that deal with race are often swept under the rug as institutions maintain a façade of inclusivity and equality (Chapman, 2013; Kestner, 2009;

Pollock, 2004; Vetter, 2014). Storytelling combats colorblind and colormute approaches by securing insights into diverse experiences that challenge presuppositions and bias.

Intergroup Dialogue and the Intergroup Contact Theory

Intergroup dialogue is an implicit yet critical feature of storytelling. Clearly, dialogue has favorable implications in reducing bias and increasing empathy (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, & Christ, 2011; Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005). The intergroup contact theory, originally defined by Allport (1954), proposed that individuals belonging to different groups can work to reduce prejudice when they share common goals, engage in cooperative activities, are positioned equally in terms of equal status, and are supported by social and institutional authorities (Allport, 1954). Intergroup dialogue, as it manifests in storytelling, meets some of those prerequisites.

Several researchers have sought to test out this contact theory in both academic and non-academic spheres, varying in their adherence to the established criteria (Adachi, Hodson, & Hoffarth, 2015; Adachi et al., 2016; Brenneman, 2017; Chua, Lung, Lwin, & Theng, 2013; Harwood, Quadar, & Chen, 2016; Lee & Scott, 2013; Nordstrom, 2015; Schafer, 1997; Sorenson, 2010; Taras et al., 2013).

Intergroup Contact in Non-Academic Spheres

Examining intergroup contact in non-academic, recreational spheres sheds light on the factors that facilitate the dissipation of prejudice and the development of prosocial relationships. Whether participants engaged in recreational activities such as sports, video games, or an event of common interest, it became evident that intergroup contact typically fosters favorable attitudes for both groups (Brenneman, 2017; Chua, Jung, Lwin, & Theng, 2013). Lee and Scott (2013) conducted qualitative interviews with fifteen Korean American males, investigating their perceptions of optimal conditions for intergroup contact (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998). The

findings distilled from these interviews illustrate that interracial contact during recreational sports contributes to harmonious interracial relations, and not all of Allport's (1954) optimal conditions need to be present for positive interracial contact. Still, it is worth noting that not all participants experienced the positive effects of this interracial contact (Lee & Scott, 2013). The results of Lee and Scott's (2013) study reinforce the importance of intergroup friendship as a predictor of prejudice and bias reduction (Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, & Christ, 2011; Turner, Hewstone, & Voci, 2007).

A study that examined the positive intergroup contact and communication in the experiences of fans at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, also highlighted the prosocial effects of intergroup contact in recreational spaces, partly because friendships began to form despite notable differences (Brenneman, 2017). In his dissertation study, Brenneman (2017) focused on the importance of voluntarily participating in an experience with others, having a pleasant time, making new friends, and similarities underlying differences as critical factors of positive intergroup experience. While not all intergroup contact experiences occur as authentically as those in the Brazil Olympics experiment, even the most orchestrated experiences can allow for positive intergroup contact when contextualized in recreation.

One example of this is a two-month longitudinal experimental study that explored the role of game enjoyment on intergenerational perceptions when youth and elderly participants played video games together (Chua, Jung, Lwin, & Theng, 2013). This study found there to be a significant reduction in anxiety and a significant increase in favorable attitudes towards the other age group. Additionally, a post hoc analysis of those in the video game condition found that participants who enjoyed playing video games developed a greater attraction towards their game partner from the other age group and felt less anxiety about being in intergroup settings. Much

like the findings of Lee and Scott (2013), spending an extended amount of time in intergroup partnerships amplified the positive results of the contact. It is also worth noting that Lee and Scott (2013) investigated the experience of players on interracial teams sharing a common goal, not competing against one another. One question that remains unanswered though is how competition against one another in the game manifested and why it did not obscure the effects in Chua et al.'s (2013) study. It could be speculated that the intergenerational pairs (elderly and youth) possess stereotypes (i.e., youth are naturally better at video games; the elderly are not as skilled, etc.) about one another that reduce competitive drive and allow for more recreationally-driven experiences.

Intergroup Contact in Academic Spheres

Researchers and practitioners have worked to move intergroup contact from a theoretical construct to a practical framework that facilitates teaching and learning. Both researchers and practitioners must recognize that geographical and societal limitations often make it difficult for intergroup contact and dialogue to occur spontaneously. Some of the most effective models of intergroup dialogue create spaces wherein students critically examine societal constructs, political powers, and individual experiences (Diaz, 2009; Lopez & Nastasi, 2012; Reason, Roosa Millar, & Scales, 2005; Zúñiga, Lopez, & Ford, 2012). In these conversations, students engage in dialogue, problem posing, reciprocity, and transformative actions that require them to identify, explore, and question structural oppression and individual predisposition (Fassett & Warren, 2007; Freire, 1970, as cited in Rule, 2009; Shor & Freire, 1987).

Effective intergroup dialogue transcends individual differences and engages multiple perspectives to make meaning (Freire, 1972; Bakhtin, 1984, as cited in Rule, 2009; Sorenson, 2010; Zúñiga, Lopez, & Ford, 2012). The presence of multiple perspectives and distinctive

experiences grants individuals several lenses to dissect prevailing ideas and generate new, more developed understandings. With focus and purpose, students navigate conversations, pose questions, dissect responses, unearth problematic constructs, propose changes, and ultimately grow. Whether students are engaged in sustained dialogue (Zúñiga, Lopez, & Ford, 2012), study circles (Pincock, 2008; Walsh, 2007), or dialogue circles (Fassett & Warren, 2007; Souto-Manning, 2010), they demonstrate respect for one another, explore critical issues, and develop action plans. It is worth juxtaposing intergroup contact in recreational spaces to intergroup dialogue in academic spheres to highlight how academic orientation to dialogue can promote critical analysis and self-reflection. Some tenets of intergroup dialogue that have emerged in many academic frameworks include critical co-inquiry, heightened awareness of inequities, conflict transformation, and efforts for social justice (Adams, 2007; Maxwell, Fisher, Thompson, & Behling, 2011; Mayhew & Fernandez, 2007; Sorenson, 2010; Zuniga, Nagda, Chesler, Cytron, & Walker, 2007).

Zuniga, Lopez, and Ford (2012) examined how dialogue opens doors and allows individuals to transcend the limitations imposed by society. In the context of ethnocultural discourse, intergroup dialogue gives individuals a chance to communicate, critically reflect on self and society, and transform collaboratively. In one particular study, Reason, Roosa Millar, and Scales (2005) analyzed the experiences of White college students who contemplated their function in racial justice movements. Their investigations indicated that exposure to a diverse student body and meaningful interactions across social identity groups allowed White students to reflect deeply upon their understandings of self in the context of racial identity perceptions. Another finding in Reason et al.'s (2005) study was that students whose discussions of race and race relations extended beyond the course reported reflecting more frequently than those who did

not engage in dialogue beyond the classroom. Additionally, the frequency of reflections and reflecting with peers of color were correlated with increased change and refinement in racial attitudes. This can be attributed to the fact that the frequency and diversity of interactions affected the quality and depth of intergroup dialogue.

Building on this work, Lopez and Nastasi (2012) evaluated the efficacy of a one-day institute for local high school students ($n=88$) from two schools (one urban and one suburban) taking English courses focused on race, rhetoric, and voice. The implications of this study validated the need for building intergroup dialogue programs and offerings within public high schools (Griffin, Mikel, Brown, & Warren, 2012). Though the approaches to intergroup dialogue vary, researchers underscore the importance of reconciling distance through dialogue (Zuniga, Lopez, & Ford, 2012). This dialogue is most advantageous when it extends beyond just a singular sphere of the classroom into the larger community. Laman, Jewett, Jennings, Wilson, Souto-Manning (2012) examined five empirical studies to analyze interdialogic practices across educational settings with students of varying age groups and racial and ethnic backgrounds to stress that genuine dialogue is often imperfect and unfinished, time is a necessary condition for critical dialogue, space is dynamic and co-constructed, and authentic texts allow for meaningful discourse to take place. At the collegiate level, Nordstrom (2015) conducted an experiment wherein White students' racist perspectives shifted after participating in The Voices Project, which exposed them to the perspectives about whom they held racial or cultural biases. Nordstrom's research (2015) corroborates the premise that intergroup contact can reduce prejudice if the group members have equal status, share common goals, and work cooperatively (Allport, 1954). The Voices Project (Nordstrom, 2015) met these goals, and ultimately reduced White students' stereotypes and prejudice toward stigmatized racial groups.

Though intergroup contact consistently has favorable outcomes, we must seek to understand how to more authentically incline individuals to participate in it. To that end, Willow (2008) conducted a qualitative inquiry to better understand what made individuals want to participate in interracial dialogue, and then coded the descriptive narratives of their experiences in race study circles. Willow's (2008) exploratory analysis of race study circles indicated that this forum elicited more favorable interracial attitudes and deepened empathy. Most participants expressed that their experiences with others in interracial groups were significant and meaningful (Willow, 2008), which is consistent with research literature that cites direct face-to-face contact as integral to ethnocultural empathy development (Hoffman, 1993; Roysircar, 2004; Roysircar et al., 2005). Participants expressed being able to approximate the social experiences of others, which also led to empathy development (Willow, 2008). The empathy fostered through interracial dialogue gave participants a clearer moral focus, an understanding of how racial constructs leverage power, an appreciation of self-reflection, and a drive for social justice (Willow, 2008). These findings confirm the importance of self-reflection (Mayhew & Fernandez, 2007), and highlight the benefits of intergroup dialogue for civic engagement (Diaz, 2009).

Considering the Limitations of Intergroup Dialogue

Though structured interracial dialogue has the potential to increase participants' understandings of inequalities (Nagda et al., 2009), deepen intergroup empathy (Sorenson, 2010), expand cross-race networks (Wernet et al., 2003), and lay the ground for interracial alliances (Alimo, 2012), one must acknowledge the limiting factors that impede these experiences (Cargile, 2015). Cargile (2015) reviewed decades of research and found some of these challenges to be: conversation fatigue, resentment, silence, passive-aggressiveness, micro-invalidations, absenteeism, and even overt aggression (Fishman & McCarthy, 2005; Hewstone &

Brown, 1986; Marx & Pennington, 2003; Pettigrew, 1998). By reviewing the literature on resistance to interracial dialogue, be it explicit or implicit, Cargile (2015) secured a foundation for her quantitative analysis of participant openness to the other. Based on a sample of 36 undergraduate participants, Cargile (2015) found that testimonies of social suffering that have the “potential to disrupt master narratives and invite this deepest kind of learning are likely to be met with some degree of resistance” (p. 208). Thus, designers of intergroup contact must be conscientious and deliberate in their attempts to orchestrate such experiences.

Racial and Cultural Literacy and the Curriculum

Based on the aforementioned limitations of intergroup dialogue, researchers and educators have sought to create a context for racial and cultural literacy in academic spaces (Baker-Bell, 2013; Berchini, 2016; Borsheim-Black, 2015; Garcia, Seglem, & Share, 2013; Seider et al., 2017; Winans, 2010). Racial literacy is defined as “the ability to examine critically and recursively the ways in which race informs discourses, culture, institutions, belief systems, interpretative frameworks, and numerous facets of daily life” (Winans, 2010, p. 476). Winans (2010) conducted a qualitative analysis of first-year college students’ writing samples in a predominantly White liberal arts university to explore how White students engage or disengage with racial inquiry. She found that White students rely upon ethical judgment to wrestle with conflicted emotions and navigate uncertainties about race (Winans, 2010). Though these conflicts are rooted in limited knowledge about race and racism, offering students more information does not itself foster racial literacy (Schneider, 2005; Winans, 2010).

To that end, racial literacy is “an interactive process in which race functions as a tool of diagnosis, feedback, and assessment” (Guinier, 2004, p. 115) in that it allows us to examine and develop an ever-evolving understanding of race (Winans, 2010). Vetter and Hunerford-Kressor

(2014) used an ethnographic approach to examine how racial literacy undergirds dialogue about the issues of race and segregation. They found that dialogue in small groups gives students opportunities to hear and appreciate diverse and unfamiliar perspectives, facilitate problem-solving within their communities, and create opportunities to talk about race. Similarly, Seider et al. (2017) examined diverse schooling methods and investigated how different approaches to critical consciousness (Freire, 1973, as cited in Rule, 2009) impacted students' critical thinking about racial inequality. Ultimately, they argued for an activism-oriented curriculum that introduces students to examples of injustices as well as activism historically.

It is important that racial literacy is not perceived simply as an insertion of race into the curriculum, but rather an experiencing of race through the curriculum (Berchini, 2016; Morgan; 2104; Winans, 2010; Seider et al., 2017; Vetter & Hungerford-Kressor, 2014). Berchini (2016) conducted a critical analysis of *The White Umbrella*, a short story with multicultural themes written by a prominent author of color. She found that prepackaged, textbook driven approaches to diverse texts are not nearly enough to foster racial literacy. Her analysis suggests that a textbook's framing of a story is a critical indicator of how content will be delivered and ultimately consumed (Berchni, 2016). Mainhart, Coke, Frederiksen, and Langstraat (2016) explored how reading literature from different cultures develops empathy and increases intercultural understanding in the classroom. They conducted a textual analysis of Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* and Sherman Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* and found that literary texts are useful tools for racial and cultural literacy when they are historically relevant and told from the perspective of a single character who comes in contact with characters who are different from the readers. Similarly, Mcdougall, Begum, Carter, and Wood (2018) evaluated the benefits of teaching Native American and Middle Eastern American

literature in secondary schools and found that these diverse texts have benefits ranging from building empathy, gaining knowledge of outgroup cultures, and deconstructing racial stereotypes. They, too, emphasized the importance of thoughtful and appropriate implementation of diverse literature (Berchini, 2016; McDougall et al., 2018).

The empirical research reviewed confirms the importance of selecting texts based the following criteria: (a) historical relevance, (b) opportunities for racial and cultural inquiry, and (c) examples of racial injustices (Mainhart, Coke, Fredericksen, & Langstraat, 2016; McDougall et al., 2018; Seider et al., 2017; Winans, 2010). Thus, developing students' racial and cultural literacies (through meaningful incorporation of diverse texts) is an effective scaffold for intergroup contact and dialogue. It allows students to engage deeply with ethnocultural issues and interrogate the presence and impact of social, cultural, and political forces (Berchini, 2016; Mainhart et al., 2016; McDougall et al., 2018; Morgan, 2014).

Inquiry-Based Active Learning Pedagogies

Inquiry-based active learning fosters increased critical consciousness and heightens empathy in students (Caldwell, 2012; Fricke, Murdick, Newton, & Nomi, 2018; Hutchison, 2016; Lopez & Nastasi, 2012; McDougall et al., 2018; Perrotta, 2018; Seider et al., 2017). Some researchers advocate for activities such as questioning stereotypes, composing perspective pieces, and reflecting on reading and/or writing (McDougall et al., 2018). In her case study analysis of conditions that promote historical empathy, Perotta (2018) found that active learning pedagogies, such as in-class debates, promote historical empathy in middle and secondary social studies students. Historical empathy refers to “deep inquiry in which intellectual and affective responses to content are shaped through source analysis of the actions, motives, perspectives, and beliefs of people in the past” (Perotta, 2018, p. 129). It is worth noting that historical empathy

shares many of the fundamental principles of ethnocultural empathy in that there is a conscious attempt to understand the experiences of seemingly distant people.

When students engage in learning about individuals that seem to be different from them, they resolve preconceived notions and develop greater interpersonal understanding (Fricke et al., 2018; Hutchison, 2016; Lopez & Nastasi, 2012; Mainhart et al., 2016; Perotta, 2018). Fricke et al. (2018) examined how inquiry-driven active learning pedagogies impacted empathy in 179 seventh-grade students. Their study identified the favorable effects of first-person perspective writing and episodic simulation on empathy. Even though this study examined empathy in the context of bullying in middle school, it reinforces the power of active learning that is rooted in trying to explore and understand others' experiences. Similarly, Mainhart et al. (2016) pointed out that exploring the narratives of diverse characters in literature demands that students are ethnoculturally knowledgeable, which makes them inquirers of experience. Ultimately, this pushes students to "utilize the contextual information that they have to explore issues and ideas to better imagine and understand an individual's situation" (Mainhart et al., 2016, p. 42). In her qualitative analysis of middle school students' experiences in an inquiry-driven study of race, class, and gender, Caldwell (2012) distilled the value of beginning with students' experiences with race and generating questions that arise from personal stories. She noted that these personal stories lead students to further research, which gives them a greater historical context as they navigate their own and others' experiences. In short, inquiry-based active learning pedagogies cultivate a desire to know more, allowing students to generate questions, explore problems, and propose solutions in context. Importantly, the experiences gained from inquiry-based active learning pedagogies give students the ethnocultural knowledge, which ultimately operates as cognitive currency for perspective taking.

Perspective Taking

Perspective taking, when conceived socially and psychologically, is an invaluable tool to help individuals understand one another (Cutting; 2009; Erle & Topolinski, 2017; Wolgast & Barnes-Holmes, 2018). It affords individuals proximity to other, unfamiliar, and often overlooked perspectives (Cutting; 2009; Erle & Topolinski, 2017; Wolgast & Barnes-Holmes, 2018). As such, the nature of perspective taking creates a simulative experience that sets up a perceived closeness (Tarrant, Calitri, & Weston, 2012). Erle and Topolinski (2017) conducted five experiments ($n=1067$) wherein participants completed visuospatial perspective taking tasks through their perspectives as well as through others'. Taking another's perspective led participants to adopt the thoughts of the target person more strongly (Experiments 1–3), increased perceptions of similarity (Experiment 4), and increased favorable attitudes towards outgroup members (Experiment 5). Similarly, Nordstrom (2015) conducted a comparative design experiment predicated on perspective taking and intergroup contact. In her study, White college students interviewed those they held biases against and composed narratives from their perspectives. Nordstrom's (2015) findings underscore the premise that intergroup contact can reduce prejudice if the group members have equal status, share common goals, and work cooperatively. Thus, the contact must involve positive affective (e.g., empathy) and cognitive (e.g., perspective taking) components (Allport, 1954; Dovidio et al., 2003; Pettigrew, 1997; Pettigrew et al., 2011).

Perspective taking allows students to immerse themselves in unfamiliar realities. As such, literature is an opportune platform to try on other lived experiences, examine issues of power, and dissect how perspective shapes experiences (Beach, 1998; Bensalah, Caillies, & Anduze, 2016; Gee, 1997; Hodges et al., 2018; Marby & Bhavnagri, 2012; Thein, Beach, & Parks, 2007;

Willhelm, 1992). Beach (1998) stresses the importance of liberating oneself from thinking of literary worlds as real or fictive, noting the merit of imagining alternative perspectives. Teasing out alternate perspectives in literature helps students engage in discourse about the intersection of identity, access, and privilege.

Needless to say, this discourse creates cognitive dissonance and tension, which is important to perspective taking and subsequently individual growth (Sun, Zuo, Wu, & Wen, 2016). It is through this dissonance that individuals develop a flexible story of self (Warin & Muldoon, 2009; Warin, 2015). This increases their understanding of how their beliefs and values are formed and why other people hold different perspectives (Thein, Beach, & Parks, 2007). One way to achieve this is to expose students to diverse literature wherein students learn from characters that have been historically disenfranchised. This encourages students to adopt the perspective of the disenfranchised character, challenging mainstream beliefs and hegemonic values (Thein et al., 2007). There is ample evidence that suggests that students are more willing to try on different perspectives, engage in unfamiliar worlds, and reflect on their perspectives and beliefs when exposed to diverse literature (Thein et al., 2007; Mainhart et al., 2016; McDougall et al., 2018; McLaughlin & DeVoogd 2004).

To add authenticity to perspective taking, teachers can have students participate in drama and performance activities (Thein et al., 2007). In any case, however, students must have the liberty to decide how and to what degree they shift their views; they should not be asked to dismiss the beliefs and values they bring with them or to radically change their own identities (Warin & Muldoon, 2009; Warin, 2015; Thein et al., 2007). Thein and Sloan (2012) call for a pedagogical approach that invites students to shift from self-reflection of an initial response to self-reflection of all subsequent responses as they truly enter the perspectives of others. In a

sense, the initial response functions as a measure against which readers continually evaluate their growth as they reimagine other interpretations of the text. Literature-based perspective taking, when rooted in reader-response practices, has tremendous potential for the development of ethnocultural empathy.

Simulations and Games

Simulation and game-based studies have noted the importance of vicarious experiences in reducing bias and fostering empathy towards outgroups (Bachen, Hernandez-Ramos, & Raphael, 2012; Behm-Morawitz, Pennell, & Speno, 2016; Eastin, Appliah, & Cicchirillo, 2009; Groom, Bailenson, & Nass, 2009; Peck, Seinfeld, Aglioti, & Slater, 2013; Pelligrini, 2009; Yee et al., 2009). To examine the positive correlation between simulative experiences and empathy, Bachen, Hernandez-Ramos and Raphael (2012) conducted a study that contrasts the effects of simulation games and traditional assignments on student empathy. In the experimental condition, students were engaged in playing the simulation game, while the control group worked on a similarly self-directed assignment, composing a PowerPoint. The students involved in simulative gameplay entered the game at the age of 15, experiencing life through the eyes of their assigned character. The results of this study indicate that the experimental group expressed more global empathy and greater interest in learning about other countries than the control group. It is important to consider how the different experiences and levels of cognitive and affective engagement between the simulation group and the control group contributed to these findings. Those involved in simulation gameplay would likely demonstrate heightened interest as a result of the engaging and exploratory nature of the task.

In another study, researchers examined the efficacy of virtual racial embodiments in a simulative gaming application for reducing bias against a non-dominant group (Behm-Morawitz

et al., 2016). They found that White college students who created and embodied a Black avatar displayed more favorable beliefs towards Black men and demonstrated greater support for policies that helped minorities in comparison to those who embodied White avatars. Behm-Morawitz et al., (2016) also turn to Allport's intergroup contact theory (1954) to contextualize their outcomes theoretically. These simulation and gaming studies elucidate the importance of transportation as a key predictor of bias reduction and increased empathy (Bachen, Hernandez-Ramos, & Raphael, 2012; Behm-Morawitz, Pennell, & Speno, 2016; Eastin, Appliah, & Cicchirillo, 2009; Groom, Bailenson, & Nass, 2009; Peck, Seinfeld, Aglioti, & Slater, 2013; Pelligrini, 2009; Yee et al., 2009). Designing for ethnocultural empathy calls for opportunities for affective connections through dialogue and cognitive transportation through perspective taking. Understanding the salient elements of designing educational experiences that promote ethnocultural empathy is critical, but incomplete in terms of combatting limitations that stem from one's desire to protect White racial identity.

Self-Reflection and White Racial Identity Development

To crystalize the discussion of the aforementioned curricular and pedagogical tools for ethnocultural empathy, we must look to self-reflection as the missing piece that secures a space for identity development. Richards and Camuso (2015) examined the effect of post-simulation debriefing on students from a privileged background. The findings of post-simulation assessments revealed that students developed a greater degree of empathy for the working class and that students' critical thinking was sharpened and enhanced by the individual debriefing session, but it was deepened during the collective debriefing session. Similarly, Veloria (2015) and Dymont and O'Connell (2011) confirmed the value of written reflection (Winans, 2010) by pointing to journals as effective forums for reflection about issues such as race, class, gender,

and privilege. Mainhart et al., (2016) also built reflective writing portfolios into their course design as an attempt to cultivate greater intercultural understanding and empathy. Caruthers (2006) indicated that through reflection students constructed insights, which contributed to their understandings of *self* and *other*.

In a comparative analysis of shame and guilt, Joireman (2004) found that self-reflection mediates the relationship between guilt and perspective taking, which has favorable implications for White racial identity development (Linder, 2015). White racial identity development describes a process in which individuals move through a series of developmental stages, progressing from no awareness of their racial identity to integration and self-awareness (Linder, 2015). Though previous research has detailed this to be a linear process (Helms & Cook, 1995/2005), Linder (2015) argues that White racial identity development is a cyclical model wherein Whites are introduced to racism through sexism, experience resistance and defensiveness, accept the reality of racism, move into guilt and shame, fear appearing racist, distance themselves from Whiteness, and ultimately engage in action (Linder, 2015). Researchers who have conducted studies on Whiteness and critical pedagogies corroborate the importance of reflection as students move through this cycle (McClain, 2008; McIntosh, 1998; Sleeter, 1998; Flynn, 2012; Bondi, 2012).

Ambrosio (2014) stressed the importance of knowing oneself as a precursor to breaking down the barriers that prevent White individuals from engaging in discourse that investigates Whiteness and White racial identity. The value of forthright articulation in White racial identity construction reinforces the need for discursive and formative spheres that allow for stories of self to be developed (Warin & Muldoon, 2009; Warin, 2015). Breaking down racial narratives, expanding on them, and developing them through self-reflection may help individuals

conceptualize the dimensions of self that had gone unseen before. As such, students need multiple opportunities to develop their identity capital (Côté, 1996) in a way that hinges on an expanded narrative of self, rather than a rigid sense of self (Warin & Muldoon, 2009; Warin, 2015). Thus, students need time and space for reflection to construct and revisit flexible narratives of self before they can even begin to think about the ways that their identities affect others (Warin & Muldoon, 2009; Warin, 2015).

Theoretical Framework

Many theoretical frameworks underpin this study; each one reveals another layer that builds the foundation for a learning environment design that dismantles subjective prejudices and fosters ethnocultural empathy through real and simulative experiences. This research study recognizes both the value and limitations of broad social theories and aims to clarify how they can be applied in academic contexts, more specifically in high school language arts classes in suburban schools. Thus, the learning environment design for this study is predicated on the intersection of intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew et al., 2011), principles of dialogue (Bakhtin, 1984; Freire, 1972) and critical literacy (Coffey, 2008; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993; Lewison et al., 2002; Stevens & Bean, 2007) as foundational theories for the development of ethnocultural empathy.

More specifically, intergroup contact theory provides the guiding principles for this learning environment design: equal status, intergroup cooperation, common goals, support by social institutions, and opportunities for cross-group friendships (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998). Additionally, dialogue (through dialectic synthesis and dialectic struggle) actualizes intergroup cooperation, supports the communication of common goals, and affords participants opportunities for cross-group friendships (Allport, 1954; Bakhtin, 1984; Freire, 1972; Pettigrew,

1998). However valuable, the guiding principles of intergroup contact theory and dialogue do not provide sufficient curricular and pedagogical direction. Because these theories were not developed with academic contexts in mind, they fall short in communicating their applicability to academic units of study. Critical literacy, however, accounts for these limitations by elucidating how the design conditions of intergroup contact theory and dialogue can be brought to life in an academic context: “(a) disrupting the commonplace, (b) interrogating multiple viewpoints, (c) focusing on sociopolitical issues, and (d) taking action and promoting social justice” (Coffey, 2008; Lewison et al., 2002, p. 382). Taken together, these theories support the development of appropriate conditions, curricula, and pedagogy for the development of ethnocultural empathy among adolescents enrolled in a 10th-grade ELA class.

Intergroup Contact Theory

Intergroup contact theory proposes that individuals belonging to different groups can work to reduce prejudice and intergroup conflict, provided that certain conditions are in place: equal status, intergroup cooperation, common goals, and support by social and institutional authorities (Allport, 1954). Though Allport (1954) does not detail the degree or extent to which these factors must be present, he maintains that together they offer a platform for change. Pettigrew (1998) takes this one step further noting how integral cross-group friendships are in reducing prejudice. Most friends have equal status, work collaboratively to achieve shared goals, and are not typically affected by institutional or social forces, so they inherently meet the criteria for Allport’s intergroup contact theory. Pettigrew (1998) fails to acknowledge that though there are no strict limitations on intergroup contact, there are certainly implicit social and institutional barriers that will never truly allow for a level playing field—even in the closest of friendships. In

any case, it is evident that without contact, reducing prejudice and increasing tolerance becomes difficult (Everett & Onu, 2013).

Since Allport's (1954) initial contact theory, researchers have worked to test and confirm the impact that contact has had on reducing prejudice. Several studies elucidate the favorable effects of positive contact experiences towards ethnic, racial, and cultural minorities (Everett & Onu, 2013, Works, 1961; Caspi, 1984; Vonofako, Hewstone, & Voci, 2007; Yucker & Hurley, 1987). Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, and Christ (2011) reviewed recent advances in intergroup contact theory and conducted a meta-analysis with 515 studies and more than 250,000 participants and found that intergroup contact typically reduces prejudice ($r = -.21$). To put this into perspective, 94% of the studies reviewed found that greater contact is typically affiliated with less prejudice. The effects of intergroup contact are far greater for those in the majority ($r = -.227$) than those in the minority ($r = -.175$), but both groups benefit (Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005). Intergroup contact cultivates a shared experience between individuals, often fostering trust and understanding. Most notable is the transferability of trust and understanding to other outgroups not involved in the contact. This is to say that intergroup contact with certain outgroups provides individuals with a broader perspective that transcends the immediate intergroup experience (Pettigrew et al., 2011). Furthermore, there is evidence that even indirect contact, through social or mass media, has the potential to reduce prejudice (Pettigrew et al., 2011).

While much evidence demonstrates the value of intergroup contact, cross-group friendship must be examined as a manifestation of the contact's potential (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). As mentioned earlier, friendships operate under many of the conditions proposed by Allport (1954) but do so rather organically. The mutual trust that friendships are predicated on facilitates self-disclosure and vulnerability. The intimacy that is developed generates strong,

positive attitudes that generalize towards the outgroup (Pettigrew et al., 2011; Turner et al., 2007). To build on this, a synthesis of two studies conducted in Northern Ireland found that intergroup contact was positively related to intergroup forgiveness, perspective taking, and trust (Hewstone, Cairns, Voci, Hamberger, & Niens, 2006). These two studies (carried out in 1989 and 1991) used data from a random sample survey of adults in Northern Ireland to explore attitudes toward mixing with other people (intergroup contact). The findings of both studies support intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000); participants who had prior experience mixing with others had more favorable attitudes towards intergroup contact, and intimate intergroup experience was a significant predictor for forgiveness (Hewstone et al., 2006). While this research was conducted with individuals who shared an ethnic background and national identity, their religious affiliations and the political context of Ireland should not be discounted. Thus, it is important to recognize that in-group and out-group identification can be based on identifiers ranging from race, ethnicity, religion, political preference, age, gender, etc.

Though many researchers have corroborated Allport's (1954) intergroup contact theory, there have been some concerns about its generalizability. Forbes (1997, 2004) concedes that intergroup contact works at the individual level, but maintains that it does not hold any weight when it comes to group conflict. However, Forbes (1997, 2004) fails to identify why the effects of individual prejudice reduction are not generalizable to the group (Pettigrew et al., 2011). Another criticism posed is much less a criticism, but rather a query about how intergroup contact can be established after a history of political conflict. This critique maintains that some conflicts run too deep. Pettigrew et al., (2011) point out that the answer to this problem comes not from intergroup contact theory itself, but rather from the application of this theory by future researchers.

Reicher (2007) recognizes the value of intergroup contact but raises concerns about what this means for social change and progress. By noting that intergroup conflict has been the greatest barrier to change and progress, Reicher (2007) questions the likelihood of intergroup contact as a mechanism for social progress. Pettigrew et al., (2011) respond to Reicher (2007) with evidence from their meta-analysis, indicating that the effect of intergroup contact is much greater for those in the majority, which suggests that attitudes and behaviors towards disadvantaged groups will improve, not the converse. Lastly, intergroup contact can certainly shed light on inequities that exist, fostering group relative deprivation—the sense that one’s in-group is being unjustly deprived when contact provides minorities the chance to learn what the majority possesses (Pettigrew et al., 2011). Nevertheless, these experiences also inspire in-group members to increase intergroup contact with outgroup allies and decrease it with out-group opponents, cultivating alliances for social change.

Conceptualizing Intergroup Contact for the Learning Environment Design

Intergroup contact theory has been readily applied to academic and professional contexts and has proven to be invaluable to the reduction of intergroup bias and prejudice. However, as critics point out, intergroup contact can be met with resistance and frustration, particularly if it is not voluntary. In the design of this intervention, intergroup contact manifests in two key embodiments: the diverse literature circle texts and the intergroup dialogue sessions. This deliberate sequencing of literary to interpersonal intergroup contact helps students “get their feet wet” when engaging in ethnocultural dialogue. The empirical research reviewed confirms the importance of the following criteria when selecting diverse texts: (a) historical relevance, (b) opportunities for racial and cultural inquiry, (c) examples of racial injustices (Mainhart, Coke, Fredericksen, & Langstraat, 2016; Mcdougall et al., 2018; Seider et al., 2017; Winans, 2010).

Teaching Tolerance's *Reading Diversity Checklist* (2019) provides educators with a comprehensive list of considerations when selecting diverse texts for inclusion into the academic curriculum (Appendix A). Thus, to enhance the face validity of the text selections, each of the five books selected as literature circle options for this unit had to meet the criteria identified by Teaching Tolerance's *Reading Diversity Checklist* (2019). Subsequently, the inclusion of face-to-face intergroup contact into students' academic lives (through the dialogue circles) relies on dialogue to navigate differences and demonstrates social and institutional support (Allport, 1954).

Theories of Dialogue

Though it is not explicitly analyzed, it can be inferred that dialogue is present in the intergroup contact experiences examined thus far. Whether it be conversing at the Olympics (Brenneman, 2017) or observing intergroup collaboration in music or technology (Harwood et al., 2016), dialogue must have been a critical factor that afforded communication and subsequently connection. Understanding intergroup contact warrants taking a magnifying glass to the mediating processes that undergird it, particularly dialogue.

Theories of dialogue stem from the work of Buber (1958) who contrasted two kinds of dialogue: *I-thou* and *I-it*. Buber (1958) maintained that when conceiving the *other* as a person (*I-thou*) dialogue is productive, but when the *other* is perceived as an object (*I-it*) dialogue is reductive. Understanding this dichotomy of dialogue is critical to recognizing the gradient of discourse and how it affects interpersonal relationships. Freire (1972) and Bakhtin (1984), both philosophical disciples of Buber (1958), understand dialogue as more than just a form of communication, but rather a form of being in the world. Examining Freire (1972) and Bakhtin

(1984) as contrasting theoretical perspectives, however, sheds light on the open-endedness and lack of finality of dialogue.

Freire's conceptualization of dialogue as a horizontal relationship is predicated on mutual respect, humility, trust, faith, hope, love, and critical thinking (1972; 1998). Freire (1972) aligns dialogue with Buber's (1958) *I-thou* and anti-dialogue with *I-it*. Bakhtin (1984) recognizes and notes that dialogue often involves constant effort in navigating a site of struggle. Ultimately though, it affords individuals a chance to take a deep dive into themselves and others, enriching their understandings of both (Freire, 1972; Bakhtin, 1984). In this sense, dialogue invites affective and cognitive participation from both parties, heightening consciousness both internally and externally. Bakhtin notes that "life by its very nature is dialogic" and that "in this dialogue a person participates wholly and throughout his whole life with his eyes, lips, hands, soul, spirit, with his whole body and deeds" (1984, p. 293). Though not all dialogue is a spiritual affair, it certainly has the potential to be. Individuals that engage in this level of dialogue position themselves in a space where transformation potentially takes place (Maiese, 2017). This is not to imply that deep dialogue affords change, but rather that change does not occur without it.

To understand where both Freire (1972) and Bakhtin (1984) overlap is to discern where they disagree. For Freire, this transformation is crucial to the shaping and reshaping of the future. In this sense, he maintains that critical transformation takes place when individuals present oppositional ideas and mitigate the dissonance together, amounting to the creation of a new shared understanding (Freire, 1972). Bakhtin rejects this conflation of ideas, arguing that it obscures and reduces ideas of individuals in an idealistic intent to synthesize. For Bakhtin (1984), Freire's (1972) philosophy of dialectics, through its attempt at synthesis, forces closure and finality. His criticism of dialectics does not, however, equate to his rejection of mutual

growth and understanding. Bakhtin (1984) posits that engaging in a site of struggle through dialogue is enough to afford change and growth. An attempt to distill and merge ideas inherently undermines the quality of the ideas present in the discourse. Bakhtin opposes the necessity of synthesis, resolution, and fulfillment, insisting on unchanging differences within dialogue. He notes that ideas live in dialogue and, in doing so, they develop, change, and contest with one another, but they do not become one another. By denouncing a single unified consciousness, Bakhtin claims that knowledge is relative; and thus, a plurality of consciousness affords a more whole picture of the truth. By contrast, Freire (1972) argues that critical reflection, collective transformation, and individual conscientization are the measures of productive engagement. He claims that without the development of a unified consciousness, an agreement that lifts both individuals and extends their consciousness, dialogue is not fruitful (Freire, 1972; Rule, 2009).

Despite their differences, Both Freire (1972) and Bakhtin (1984) share a philosophical foundation that recognizes humans as social beings who yearn for truth and get closer to it in dialogue with those who are not like them. They maintain that much of human development and understanding is achieved through being with others and being in the world. Furthermore, they recognize that dialogue cannot be effective unless both individuals perceive one another as equals, which is reminiscent of Allport's intergroup contact theory (1954). Most importantly, however, is the notion that dialogue is anchored in a constant state of becoming, and thus, is incomplete and unfinalized.

Conceptualizing Dialogue for the Learning Environment Design

The design of the learning environment in this study rests on the transformative abilities of dialogue. It does not ascribe to one specific philosophy of dialogue in the debate between dialectic synthesis (Freire, 1972) and dialogue as a site of constant struggle (Bakhtin, 1984).

Rather, it seeks to explore the effects of dialogue on identity development and empathy. In this study, dialogue was present in two forms: in-class literature circle discussions and after-school intergroup dialogue sessions on ethnocultural identity and power. The intergroup dialogue sessions adhered to the dialogue circle method, which has three basic conditions: (a) all participants must suspend their assumptions; (b) all participants must regard one another as colleagues; and (c) there must be a facilitator who shares their experience, invites others to share stories, and asks questions to elicit stories (Bohm, 2013). One thing that sets dialogue circles apart from other approaches to dialogue is that they are predicated on sharing experiences rather than suppositions or hypotheticals. They give individuals a chance to talk about themselves and listen to the experiences of others in an effort to find commonalities and differences.

Though dialogue and intergroup contact have profound implications for fostering understanding and empathy, the limitations imposed by academic contexts need to be accounted for. This intervention sought to combat limitations to racial discourse (such as guilt, trepidation, and resistance) by scaffolding dialogue through structures and routines (e.g., modeling experience-based storytelling, employing the use of a facilitator, providing prompts, etc.) (Bohm, 2013; Brookfield & Preskill, 1999; Nottingham & Renton, 2017). Ideally, the transformative capabilities of dialogue flourish when cognitive scaffolds support the disintegration of affective limitations.

Critical Literacy

Critical literacy, a pedagogical framework anchored in critical theory, overturns the status quo by dismantling historical, social, and political power structures (Freebody & Luke, 1990 as cited in Stevens & Bean, 2007; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993). As noted by Stevens and Bean (2007), critical literacy prepares the reader to question power, privilege, and oppression. Not

only does it “offer a balance point to counter hegemonic forces and simple solutions to complex issues,” but it also “places students and teachers in a questioning frame of mind that moves beyond didactic, factual learning” (Stevens & Bean, 2007, p. 8). Critical literacy embodies the lack of finality of dialogue by engaging students in cycles of inquiry, marked by debriefing and reflection (Stevens & Bean, 2007). Projects and assignments that are rooted in critical literacy investigate texts with a reflective and open stance, deconstructing and ultimately reconstructing their representations of reality (Stevens & Bean, 2007).

Perspective taking is one of the core tenets of critical literacy, particularly because it contextualizes discourse in an exploration of marginalized experiences. To dissect power, inequality, and injustice, critical literacy engages students in: “(a) disrupting the commonplace, (b) interrogating multiple viewpoints, (c) focusing on sociopolitical issues, and (d) taking action and promoting social justice” (Coffey, 2008; Lewison et al., 2002, p. 382). Thus, the reader is given the tools to excavate truths in presented narratives— asking fundamental questions about the speaker, the audience, the origin and history of the narrative, the sociopolitical climate, and the role of language. Though all readers benefit from this kind of close-reading, White students may find that their understanding of the world around them becomes radically different; they may discover that so much of their privilege is strangely connected to the color of their skin. On the other hand, students of color may learn to use critical literacy to navigate the world around them, disrupting institutional and structural forces that oppress them. In any case, students will begin to understand how all aspects of *storying*—who can tell stories, how many, when, and under what circumstances—are integrally connected to power (Thomas & Stronaiuolo, 2016; Adichie, 2009).

Today's readers partake in practices that position them at the center of their readings and interpretations (Thomas & Stronaiuolo, 2016), but critical literacy provides them with tools for repositioning. To reposition themselves, readers must understand how they have been positioned by the text in the first place (Lewison et al., 2002; Shor, 1987). By deconstructing the language in texts, readers make themselves vulnerable to exploring how it shapes identity, constructs culture, and supports or disrupts the status quo (Fairclough, 1989; Gee, 1990; Lewison et al., 2002). Each text must be examined in its appropriate historical and social context, but with the following questions in mind: What has changed and what has stayed the same? Whose voices are heard and whose are missing? Considering marginalized voices begins the work of understanding those who are often overlooked, underrepresented, and stigmatized. As we begin to “build a bridge from the familiar to the unfamiliar” (Martin, 2001, p. 114), we become more acutely aware of instances in which we benefit at the expense of others, because *their* injustices become *our* injustices. Thus, by minimizing the distance between *self* and *other*, critical literacy prepares us to cognitively explore and affectively understand perspectives, which is a precursor to ethnocultural empathy (Wang et al., 2003).

Conceptualizing Critical Literacy for the Learning Environment Design

The theoretical claims of intergroup contact theory and dialogue are incomplete without a pedagogical framework. In the context of English language arts, critical literacy provides an appropriate framework for examining structural and individual biases. Importantly, critical literacy challenges the traditional way of seeing reality by supporting students in their interrogation of multiple viewpoints in the context of sociopolitical issues (Coffey, 2008; Lewison et al., 2002). Critical literacy is embodied in this intervention through the diverse selection of texts for literature circles, the opportunities for intergroup dialogue, the inquiry-

driven activities including but not limited to collaborative research, perspective taking, and self-reflection. Several facets of the learning environment lean on critical literacy to make broad social and interpersonal theories more accessible for an adolescent population in an academic context.

Theoretical Synthesis

There is ample evidence that suggests intergroup contact, dialogue, and critical literacy are important features when designing for ethnocultural empathy (Bachen, Hernandez-Ramos, & Raphael, 2012; Behm-Morawitz, Pennell, & Speno, 2016; Diaz, 2009; Eastin, Appliah, & Cicchirillo, 2009; Griffin, Mikel, Brown, & Warren, 2012; Groom, Bailenson, & Nass, 2009; Laman, Jewett, Jennings, Wilson, Souto-Manning, 2012; Lopez & Nastasi, 2012; Nordstrom, 2015; Reason, Roosa Millar & Scales, 2005; Zúñiga, Lopez, & Ford, 2012). However, it is unclear how these theories inform practice in academic contexts. While Allport's (1954) intergroup contact theory and the theories of dialogue carry tremendous weight in their implications, not all schools have opportunities for intergroup contact or the budget for simulative software. Apart from geographic limitations for intergroup contact, there is a great deal of anxiety that accompanies tasking students with finding a racial and/or ethnic minority with whom to correspond. The theories of dialogue underscore the importance of abiding by principles of dialogue to arrive at a true understanding of *self* and *other*, and these guiding principles should be facilitated and supported for adolescents. It is evident that without curricular and pedagogical support, intergroup contact theory and the theories of dialogue fall short in facilitating the development of ethnocultural empathy. Importantly, critical literacy fills this gap by providing curricular and pedagogical features that equip students with the tools necessary for the development of ethnocultural empathy (Coffey, 2008; Lewison et al., 2002).

Though there is much to be gleaned from these theoretical frameworks, the design elements that foster ethnocultural empathy remain unclear—especially in the context of English language arts. In turn, there is little information on mediating processes that are predictors of and/or barriers to ethnocultural empathy. Capitalizing on the findings of the researchers who underscore the importance of diverse perspectives in the curriculum and inquiry-driven active learning pedagogies (Coffey, 2008; Lewison et al., 2002), I sought to investigate ways in which intergroup contact could be reimaged. More specifically, I evaluated a scaffolded approach to intergroup contact, wherein participants' initial point of intergroup contact was diverse literature. Gradually, points of contact built toward intergroup dialogue sessions with ethnocultural outgroup members. Additionally, this design added an inquiry-based research component to literary perspective taking. This research component helped participants contextualize their literary and intergroup findings and draw informed conclusions about diverse experiences. As noted by the research reviewed, the cognitive and affective components of empathy are deeply intertwined. Still, though, none of the literature examined advocates for building a knowledge base to help support students in their perspective taking endeavors. To that end, my work fills the gap in the literature by incorporating four critical components to a learning environment design intended to foster ethnocultural empathy: (a) diverse literary texts, (b) intergroup contact, (c) inquiry-driven perspective taking, and (d) reflection. Each of these critical design features is not only derivative of the core principles of the aforementioned theories but also designed with the academic and interpersonal needs of an adolescent population in mind.

Learning Environment Design

This learning environment design is theoretically and empirically grounded in the work of critical pedagogy researchers. More specifically, this design is modeled after Nordstrom's *The*

Voices Project (2015), wherein participants engaged with those who have had different experiences than them and composed narratives from their perspectives. Though Nordstrom's (2015) findings suggest that her intervention reduced White students' prejudices toward stigmatized racial groups in first-year college students, they do not evaluate the implications of perspective taking on ethnocultural empathy. While Nordstrom (2015) used quantitative measures to evaluate a reduction in bias, she failed to examine the learning processes and design variables that contributed to this change. Thus, to adapt the design for high school students and investigate the implications for empathy, I decided to scaffold and support ethnocultural discourse in the context of critical literacy—an approach to reading and writing with the intent of analyzing, unearthing, and subverting hegemonic power structures (Coffey, 2008; Lewison et al., 2002).

As evidenced by research, inquiry-driven intergroup contact and dialogue are integral to affecting change in an individual's perception of *self* and *other*, because they allow for authentic opportunities for perspective taking (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1997; Nordstrom, 2015). The conjecture map of the proposed design (Appendix B) offers an argumentative grammar (Kelly, 2004; Sandoval, 2014) that details how interpersonal and critical theoretical frameworks (Allport, 1954; Coffey, 2008; Lewison et al., 2002; Pettigrew et al., 2009; Stevens & Bean, 2007) lay the foundation for the embodiments (e.g., diverse texts, scaffolded contact and dialogue with outgroups, research-based perspective pieces, and opportunities for inquiry and reflection). Additionally, the conjecture map identifies the mediating processes that were hypothesized to be critical indicators of ethnocultural empathy. Table 1 identifies the critical design embodiments that were conjectured to support students' development of ethnocultural empathy, the guiding research, and the guiding theories for each embodiment.

Table 1*Description of Critical Design Embodiments*

Embodiment	Description	Guiding Research	Guiding Theories
Diverse literary texts	Texts that have protagonists of color who encounter challenges on account of ethnocultural identity.	Mainhart et al. (2016) pointed out that exploring the narratives of diverse characters in texts demands that students be inquirers of experience and that they are knowledgeable, which pushes them to “utilize the contextual information that they have to explore issues and ideas to better imagine and understand an individual’s situation” (p. 42). Developing students’ racial literacy, when coupled with diverse texts, can be seen as an effective scaffold for intergroup contact and dialogue; it allows students to engage deeply with issues of race and interrogate the social, cultural, and political forces at play (Berchini, 2016; Mainhart et al., 2016; McDougall et al., 2018; Morgan, 2014).	Intergroup contact theory Critical literacy
Dialogue Sessions	Voluntary intergroup dialogue sessions with ethnocultural outgroup members. These sessions engage participants in open discussions regarding race, culture, and society.	Some of the most effective models of intergroup dialogue create spaces wherein students critically examine societal constructs, political powers, and individual experiences (Bohm, 2013; Diaz, 2009; Lopez & Nastasi, 2012; Reason, Roosa Millar & Scales, 2005; Zúñiga, Lopez, & Ford, 2012). When students engage actively in learning about individuals that seem to be different from them, they break down barriers, which increases interpersonal understanding (Fricke et al., 2018; Hutchison, 2016; Lopez and Nastasi, 2012; Mainhart et al., 2016; Perotta, 2018). Research underscores the value of structures and routines for collaborative discourse (i.e., experiential	Intergroup contact theory Dialogue Critical literacy

		storytelling, employing roles, four corners, questions stems, etc.) (Bohm, 2013; Brookfield & Preskill, 1999; Nottingham & Renton, 2017).	
Collaborative Inquiry with Research Portfolio	Collaborative investigation of topics related to the experiences of participants' outgroup members (e.g., police brutality, immigration, family deportation, hate crimes, etc.). This inquiry culminates in a student-generated research portfolio, containing sources that offer a more complete explanation of factors that shaped the experiences of their outgroup members.	Inquiry-driven active learning instructional approaches and activities foster increased critical consciousness and empathy in students (Caldwell, 2012; Hutchison, 2016; Fricke, Murdick, Newton, & Nomi, 2018; Mcdougall et al., 2018; Lopez and Nastasi, 2012; Perrotta, 2018; Seider et al., 2017). Design-based research underscores the importance of scaffolds that facilitate the organization of process information, particularly as it pertains to the development of knowledge and understanding (Edelson & Resier, 2006; Quintana et al., 2006). Both studies note the implications of these scaffolds on student learning in that they decrease cognitive load and bring down affective filters.	Intergroup contact theory Dialogue Critical literacy
Research-based Perspective Piece	A narrative from the perspective of a selected outgroup member, using findings from the research-portfolio, first-person narration, and salient details to convey an understanding of outgroup experiences.	Whether it be through character narratives, simulation games, or narrative role-playing, perspective taking has favorable implications on students' abilities to shed their own identities and conceive of reality through the eyes of another (Bachen, Hernandez-Ramos, & Raphael, 2012; Behm-Morawitz, Pennell, & Speno, 2016; Eastin, Appliah, & Cicchirillo, 2009; Erle & Topolinski, 2017; Groom, Bailenson, & Nass, 2009; Mainhart et al., 2016; Mcdougall et al., 2018; McLaughlin & DeVoogd 2004; Peck, Seinfeld, Aglioti, & Slater, 2013; Pelligrini, 2009; Thein, Beach, & Parks, 2007; Yee et al., 2009)	Critical literacy

Student reflection logs	Weekly self-reflection entries composed in response to salient passages in the literature circle books, notable experiences in the intergroup dialogue sessions, and powerful findings from the research process.	There is ample research that underscores the value of reflection, particularly as students work through transformative and simulative learning processes (Caruthers, 2006; Dymont & O'Connell, 2011; Mainhart et al., 2016; Richards & Camuso, 2015; Veloria, 2015; Winans, 2010). In a comparative analysis of shame and guilt, Joireman (2004) found that self-reflection mediates the relationship between guilt and perspective taking.	Intergroup contact theory Dialogue Critical literacy
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CHAPTER III

Methodology

This mixed-methods, design-based research study builds on the work of critical pedagogy researchers who have unearthed limitations in racial and cultural discourse among White students (Bondi, 2012; Flynn, 2012; Linder, 2015; McClain, 2008; McIntosh, 1998; Nordstrom, 2015; Pope-Davis & Ottavi, 1994; Sleeter, 1998). While the challenges around racial discourse and empathy are greater among White students, the philosophical framework that undergirds this research recognizes the value of exposing all students to opportunities for ethnocultural empathy (Wang et. al, 2003). Thus, this study seeks to evaluate and understand the development of ethnocultural empathy in the context of an ELA unit of study in a 10th-grade American literature course.

This section includes a positionality statement, an overview of the research design, a description of the learning environment design, details on context and sampling, as well as the methods of data collection and analysis. This study set out to examine not only the efficacy of a theoretically supported intervention but also the nuanced ways in which participants made sense of ethnocultural experiences in the learning environment. In turn, I sought to answer the following questions:

1. Does a learning environment design that foregrounds intergroup contact, dialogue, and critical literacy foster ethnocultural empathy?
2. What are the mediating processes that support and/or limit the development of ethnocultural empathy?

Positionality Statement

Conducting critical and transformative research in one's own classroom comes with limitations and affordances. Thus, the perspectives of both the teacher and the researcher are critical to understanding how data are collected and represented (Linder, 2015). I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the role that my presence and my identity have played in both the design and execution of this study. As a person of color who immigrated to the United States, I felt comfortable designing and facilitating racial and cultural discourse in my classroom. My students and I engaged in conversations about cultural appropriation, immigration, generational poverty, the school-to-prison pipeline, and police brutality. These conversations were both enriched and limited by my presence as a person of color in a position of power. The duality of my identity as a teacher and a researcher needs to be recognized to understand that no curriculum of study can be effectively analyzed without appropriate consideration being given to who designed it, for whom it was designed, and who delivered it to students. Thus, this positionality statement aims to communicate how my identity as a teacher gave way to my identity as a researcher, and how the duality of these two, occasionally warring and often complementary, identities surfaced during the study. Importantly, I explicate the methods I employed to keep each of these identities in check during the study.

As a high school ELA teacher, I have always prioritized understanding human nature in regard to identity. For the last six years, these values have informed the texts I brought into the classroom, the discussions we have had, and the design of our activities and assessments. Perhaps this can be attributed to my own experiences as an immigrant whose identity has been weathered by marginalization and made whole again in circles where diversity was both valued and celebrated. My experiences instilled in me a desire to explore and understand how

individuals navigate differences, particularly in terms of racial, cultural, and ethnic identity.

While the duality of my identity as a teacher and a researcher is critical to the execution of this intervention, the focus of this particular study is on the curriculum and the students.

One of the primary reasons that I chose to conduct this research with my students is that my knowledge of myself, my students, and the school district serves as a strength for design-based research. Because design-based research is iterative, collaborative, and highly reflective, it warrants flexibility on the part of the designer and the instructor (Brown, 1992; Cobb, diSessa, Lehrer, & Schauble, 2003; Collins, Joseph, & Bielaczyc, 2004). The role of the teacher is particularly important in research that aims to examine race, culture, and ethnicity in educational spaces. The various roles and identities that a teacher takes on are “intricately and inextricably embedded in the process and outcomes of educational research” (Chapman, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Stanley, 2007 as cited in Milner, 2007, p. 389). Thus, my identity was critical to the way that I perceived reality, particularly as I designed and evaluated students’ experiences.

Research suggests that educators of color face challenges, ranging from denial to resistance, when engaging in racial discourse with predominantly White students (van Beinum, 2005). White students also feel implicated and guilty when an educator of color discusses racism (King, 1991). In the van Beinum (2005) study, teachers of color noted that students of color were reticent to engage in dialogue about race and overly reliant on the image of their identities that the media had created. Because of the challenges I knew I might face engaging in racial dialogue with students who may not have felt comfortable sharing their viewpoints with an educator of color, I sought to create a culture that mitigated existing power dynamics. I modeled openness and flexibility, often taking on the role of both facilitator and participant. I capitalized on my insider status by using my knowledge of my district and my students to establish a culture of

candid discourse. I also leveraged my racial and ethnic outsider status to facilitate intergroup contact, model perspective taking, and challenge dominant ways of seeing and thinking.

To acknowledge the aforementioned limitations and affordances of my identity, I used Milner's (2007) framework of researcher racial and cultural positionality to research myself in relation to others and engage in reflection. During the study, I kept a teacher journal in which I chronicled my observations, thoughts, reflections, and insights. I regularly questioned my representations and interpretations of reality in the context of race and culture. More specifically, I considered the following questions, first posited by Milner IV (2007), at various points during the research:

1. What is my racial and cultural heritage? How do I know?
2. In what ways do my racial and cultural backgrounds influence how I experience the world, what I emphasize in my research, and how I evaluate and interpret others and their experiences? How do I know?
3. How do I negotiate and balance my racial and cultural selves in society and in my research? How do I know?
4. What do I believe about race and culture in society and education, and how do I attend to my own convictions and beliefs about race and culture in my research? Why? How do I know?
5. What is the historical landscape of my racial and cultural identity and heritage? How do I know?
6. What are and have been the contextual nuances and realities that help shape my racial and cultural ways of knowing, both past and present? How do I know?

7. What racialized and cultural experiences have shaped my research decisions, practices, approaches, epistemologies, and agendas? (p. 395).

The second element of this framework suggests that researchers “think about themselves in relation to others, work through the commonalities and tensions that emerge from this reflection, and negotiate their ways of knowing with that of the community or people under study” (Milner IV, 2007, p. 396). As an instructor and a researcher of color who teaches predominantly White students, I often considered myself in relation to others; this allowed me to validate the various identities and experiences that both I and my students brought to the research process (Aldridge, 2003; Chapman, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Milner IV, 2007; Tillman, 2002). This negotiation of all interests and experiences helped establish power as relative and fluid, urging participants to maintain a true sense of self throughout the experience. To consider myself in relation to my participants and their worlds, I reflected on the following questions:

1. What are the cultural and racial heritage and the historical landscape of the participants in the study? How do I know?
2. In what ways do my research participants’ racial and cultural backgrounds influence how they experience the world? How do I know?
3. What do my participants believe about race and culture in society and education, and how do they and I attend to the tensions inherent in my and their convictions and beliefs about race and culture in the research process? Why? How do I know?
4. How do I negotiate and balance my own interests and research agendas with those of my research participants, which may be inconsistent with or diverge from mine? How do I know?

5. What are and have been some social, political, historical, and contextual nuances and realities that have shaped my research participants' racial and cultural ways or systems of knowing, both past and present? How consistent and inconsistent are these realities with mine? How do I know? (Milner IV, 2007, p. 395)

A third feature of the framework is engaged reflection and representation, which involved my participants and I engaging in reflection together to consider our racial and cultural experiences (Milner IV, 2007). This aspect of the framework relied heavily on “researchers’ and research participants’ voices, perspectives, narratives, and counter-narratives” so as not to allow one voice or narrative to supersede another (Milner IV, 2007, p. 396). The tensions between our interpretations of experiences ensured that all voices were accounted for. I took note of these tensions in my teacher journal, reflecting on where my perspective diverged, how my positionality informed this, and how I reacted in the moment. Lastly, Milner IV (2007) notes the importance of “shifting the process of inquiry from the more personalized level to consider policy, institutional, system, and collective issues” (p. 397). Some questions that helped me make this shift from *self* to *system* included:

1. What is the contextual nature of race, racism, and culture in this study? In other words, what do race, racism, and culture mean in the community under study and in the broader community? How do I know?
2. What is known socially, institutionally, and historically about the community and people under study? In other words, what does the research literature reveal about the community and people under study? And in particular, what do people from the indigenous racial and cultural group write about the community and people under study? Why? How do I know?

3. What systemic and organizational barriers and structures shape the community and people's experiences, locally and more broadly? How do I know? (Milner, 2007, p. 397).

By considering individual experiences in context, I was able to use multiple and varied lenses to better understand the implications of the data. Importantly, shifting from the self to the system involved understanding the institutional choices that contributed to and detracted from the experience.

As noted, careful measures were taken to account for and acknowledge moments in which my teacher identity could have supported and/or interfered with my researcher identity. The teacher journal not only allowed for much-needed catharsis after lessons and discussions that were particularly draining but also detailed my perceptions of certain realities in the learning environment. Additionally, it chronicled my recollections and reflections of lessons and activities that students, too, reflected on. In more ways than one, the teacher journal supported the validity and reliability of my data analysis by serving as a means of triangulation. Importantly, the duality of my identity as a teacher and researcher supports the theoretical sensitivity of my analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Theoretical sensitivity is a concept that “includes the researchers’ level of insight into the research area, how attuned they are to the nuances and complexity of the participant's words and actions, their ability to reconstruct meaning from the data generated with the participant, and a capacity to separate the pertinent from that which isn't” (Mills, Bonner, & Francis, 2006, p. 27). While the interplay between my identities can be a limitation, self-reflection and documentation support the notion that my findings are richer and more precise as a result of engaging in this work with my students.

Research Design

This mixed-methods study used quantitative methods to discern whether this learning environment design (guided by critical literacy, theories of dialogue, and intergroup contact theory) supported high school students' development of ethnocultural empathy in the context of a 10th-grade ELA class. Subsequently, it employed qualitative methods to understand the processes that contributed to and detracted from students' development of ethnocultural empathy.

More specifically, I set out to understand how a particular learning environment design affords or inhibits the development of ethnocultural empathy in an authentic environment; as such, a design-based research approach provided an appropriate balance of flexibility and rigor. As noted by Sandoval and Bell (2004) "design-based research can develop different kinds of knowledge, including better theoretical understanding of the learning phenomena addressed by an intervention and knowledge of useful generalizable design practice" (p. 201). Moreover, design-based research recognizes the affordances and accounts for the limitations of authentic settings, complex variables, and iterative procedures (Brown, 1992; Cobb, diSessa, Lehrer, & Schauble, 2003; Collins, Joseph, & Bielaczyc, 2004). The thrust of design-based research is to better understand emerging pedagogical theories, which warrants a shift away from fixed procedures designed to test explicit hypotheses (Barab & Squire, 2004). Because this study was inspired by interpersonal and critical theories of discourse, student writing was the primary form of pre, post, and process data collected. A quantitative analysis of student writing was used to evaluate progress on a rubric measure of ethnocultural empathy; whereas, a qualitative thematic analysis (employing inductive and deductive coding approaches) was best suited to examine student writing for mediating processes that were indicators of ethnocultural empathy.

Learning Environment Procedures

This section provides an overview of the instructional tasks and activities that students engaged in during the eight-week intervention, including but not limited to literature circle discussions, intergroup contact via dialogue circles, inquiry of diverse experiences and the sociopolitical forces that shape them, and self-reflection. The conjecture map (Appendix B) illustrates the conceptual design of the learning environment. It displays the relationships among guiding theories, design embodiments, conjectured mediating processes, and the desired outcome. Table 2 presents a more detailed timeline of the designed activities and experiences, their theoretical underpinnings, the data sources produced, their means of analysis, and their connections to the research questions.

Table 2

Design, Analysis, and Research Question Alignment

Timeline	Activities & Experiences	Theoretical Underpinnings	Data Sources	Analysis Process
Week 1	a) Operationalizing ethnocultural terminology b) Literature circle text selection c) Literature circle discussion day 1 d) Identity Collage: Unpacking White privilege e) Self-reflection ^b	Literary intergroup contact Critical literacy Dialogue	Weekly Reflection Log	Constructivist grounded theory with provisional coding (Charmaz, 1996)
Week 2	a) Current Event: “Race, Culture, and America” b) Socratic Seminar: “What does it mean to be an American?”	Literary and Interpersonal Intergroup Contact Critical literacy	Research-based Perspective Piece	Descriptive statistics and inferential analysis of perspective pieces pre/post scores on the Intercultural Knowledge &

	c) Intergroup Dialogue Session 1- <i>Privilege and Power</i>	Dialogue		Competence Rubric (AAC&U, 2015).
	d) Literature circle discussion day 2			Constructivist grounded theory with provisional coding (Charmaz, 1996)
	e) Research-based perspective piece ^a (Narrative from the perspective of an outgroup member, using research to validate narrative choices)		Weekly Reflection Log	
	f) Self-reflection ^b			
Week 3	a) Documentary Analysis: Race and Education	Literary intergroup contact	Weekly Reflection Log	Constructivist grounded theory with provisional coding (Charmaz, 1996)
	b) History of an experience analysis	Critical literacy		
	c) Literature circle discussion day 3			
	d) Self-reflection ^b	Dialogue		
Week 4	a) Defining a research question (based on the experiences of an outgroup member) for a collaborative research portfolio.	Literary intergroup contact Critical literacy	Weekly Reflection Log	Constructivist grounded theory with provisional coding (Charmaz, 1996)
	b) Editorial- position piece on a sociopolitical conflict that affects outgroup members.	Dialogue		
	c) Literature circle small group discussion day 4			
	d) Self-reflection ^b			
Week 5	a) Pyramid of Hate project (using examples from literature circle books, dialogue	Literary and Interpersonal Intergroup Contact	Weekly Reflection Log	Constructivist grounded theory with provisional coding (Charmaz, 1996)

	sessions, and research)	Critical literacy		
	b) Using databases to compose collaborative research portfolio	Dialogue		
	c) Literature circle small group discussion day 5			
	d) Intergroup Dialogue Session 2- <i>Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness- C'est La Vie</i> (Bramesfeld, 2015)			
	e) Self-reflection ^b			
Week 6	a) Using databases to compose collaborative research portfolio	Literary intergroup contact	Weekly Reflection Log	Constructivist grounded theory with provisional coding (Charmaz, 1996)
	b) Composing a podcast/panel discussion using the collaborative research portfolio	Critical literacy Dialogue		
	c) Literature circle discussion day 6			
	d) Self-reflection ^b			
Week 7	a) Presentations of podcast/panel discussion	Literary intergroup contact	Weekly Reflection Log	Constructivist grounded theory with provisional coding (Charmaz, 1996)
	b) Intergroup Dialogue Session 3- <i>Valuing Diversity</i>	Critical literacy		
	c) Literature circle discussion day 7	Dialogue		
	d) Self-reflection ^b			
Week 8	a) Revised research-based perspective piece ^a	Critical literacy	Research-based Perspective Piece	Descriptive statistics and inferential analysis of perspective pieces pre/post scores on
	b) Conversation café presentation of	Dialogue		

segments of
perspective pieces
c) Self-reflection^b

Weekly
Reflection
Log

the Intercultural
Knowledge &
Competence Rubric
(AAC&U, 2015)

Constructivist
grounded theory
with provisional
coding (Charmaz,
1996)

^a = Associated with Research Question 1: Does a learning environment design that foregrounds intergroup contact, dialogue, and critical literacy foster ethnocultural empathy?

^b = Associated with Research Question 2: What are the mediating processes that support/limit the development of ethnocultural empathy?

Context

The site of inquiry is a four-year comprehensive high school located in northern New Jersey and has approximately 1500 students. Two suburban municipalities make up the regional school district. The median household incomes of the two municipalities in 2018 were \$128,890 and \$133,452, respectively (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). In the last three years, approximately 70% of students and 89% of the teachers identified as White. Additionally, 94% of students indicated that English is their primary home language (NJ School Performance Report, 2017-18). The site was chosen because the racial and cultural demographics of the district displayed an opportunity for interpersonal development.

Participants and Sampling

The participants were selected from a convenience sample of 10th-grade students enrolled in my American literature course. All students who consented to participate were included in the study. Organizing a participant sample that was as large as possible ensured a credible range of perspectives that could have emerged due to differences in race or gender

(Creswell & Clark, 2001; Merriam, 2009; Patton, 1990). Because I had no role or participation in deciding student enrollment or placement in the course, the larger pool of participants was random and demographically representative of the school as a whole (Creswell, 2015; Keppel & Wickens, 2003). There were 64 students enrolled in this course across three sections. For context, Table 3 presents the demographics of the learning environment ($n=64$).

Table 3

Demographics of the Learning Environment

Demographic	n	%
White males	33	51.5%
White females	13	20.3%
Males of color	9	14.1%
Females of color	9	14.1%
Total	64	100

Though all students participated in the learning environment as part of the curriculum, only 41 participants consented to partake in the study. Table 4 presents the demographics of the participant sample for this study ($n=41$).

Table 4

Demographics of the Sample

Demographic	n	%
White males	20	48.7
White females	10	24.4
Males of color	4	9.8
Females of color	7	17.1
Total	41	100

For the purpose of analysis, and in accordance with similar studies (Keehn, 2015), this study dichotomized race and gender, creating four demographic subgroups: White males, White females, males of color, and females of color. This was done to streamline quantitative data

analysis, not as a means of diminishing existing differences among racial and ethnic groups.

Thus, Table 5 lists all participants with their school identified race as well as how they were grouped for analysis.

Table 5

Participant Table

Participant Number	Pseudonym	School Identified Race	Participant Group
1	"Sadie"	Black	Female of color
2	"Ellis"	Hispanic	Female of color
3	"Janet"	Black	Female of color
4	"Carrie"	Black	Female of color
5	"Aliyah"	Black	Female of color
6	"Simone"	Black	Female of color
7	"Sarah"	Hispanic	Female of color
8	"Jason"	Black	Male of color
9	"Devon"	Black	Male of color
10	"Michael"	Black	Male of color
11	"Josh"	Asian	Male of color
12	"Gisselle"	White	White female
13	"Deborah"	White	White female
14	"Mary"	White	White female
15	"Gloria"	White	White female
16	"Alexandra"	White	White female
17	"Yvonne"	White	White female
18	"Natalie"	White	White female
19	"Jessica"	White	White female
20	"Aspen"	White	White female
21	"Jade"	White	White female
22	"Peter"	White	White male
23	"Tom"	White	White male
24	"Ryan"	White	White male
25	"Sam"	White	White male
26	"Jackson"	White	White male
27	"Mason"	White	White male
28	"Andy"	White	White male
29	"Baker"	White	White male
30	"James"	White	White male

31	"Cameron"	White	White male
32	"Daniel"	White	White male
33	"Kirk"	White	White male
34	"Jared"	White	White male
35	"Kyle"	White	White male
36	"Russell"	White	White male
37	"Matthew"	White	White male
38	"Drew"	White	White male
39	"Aaron"	White	White male
40	"Mitchell"	White	White male
41	"Carson"	White	White male

Acquiring Consent

Approval was obtained for the research by the Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research at Rutgers University (Appendix C). All data collection procedures took place at the high school, where participants were enrolled. Permission to perform this study at this location and recruit participants was obtained. At the beginning of the school year, envelopes that consisted of recruitment materials and consent/assent forms were disseminated to all students. I reviewed the materials in the envelope with my students and answered any questions they had. Students were told to review the materials with their parents/guardians and return the envelopes sealed, regardless of consent/assent, limiting coercion to participate. In addition, the envelopes were collected by a colleague and were stored in a locked filing cabinet for the duration of the study. Students were informed that the returned envelopes would not be opened until the study had concluded and the marking period grades had finalized.

Data Collection

The data collection methods for this study sought to assess the learning environment design's impact on students' levels of ethnocultural empathy and understand the mediating processes that contribute to and/or limit the development of ethnocultural empathy. To evaluate

the efficacy of the learning environment design, I examined pre and post writing artifacts (research-based perspective pieces) on a rubric measure of ethnocultural empathy (Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Rubric) (AAC&U, 2015). To discern processes that students engaged in as they made sense of stimuli in their learning environment, I examined process writing artifacts (weekly reflection logs) that supported and captured participants' sense-making throughout the eight-week unit of study. I analyzed formative student writing because it allowed me to examine how specific learning environment elements affected their thoughts, emotions, and perceptions. In contrast to forums of discussion, student journals operated as safe and reflective spaces where individuals could be forthright without fear of judgment.

The instructional intervention was designed to provide participants with multiple and varied opportunities to make sense of their thoughts, feelings, and experiences through reflection and perspective taking. In turn, this provided me with multiple opportunities to examine students' cognitive and affective states from various points during the intervention. Collecting student writing throughout the unit helped ensure the saturation of data, which was driven by multiple sources and investigations that converged on a specific point (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). Additionally, this helped account for and mitigate the effects of extraneous variables that affect high school students on a day-to-day basis (Cobb et al., 2003). This section outlines the method of data collection, describes the primary data sources, justifies the importance of each data source to the research study, and details any formal measures that were used for analysis with a data source.

Method of Data Collection

All participant data (student logs and research-based perspective pieces) were collected and stored in a password-protected folder on my personal computer. The primary means of

securing the confidentiality of data sources was through the usage of school-sanctioned student identification numbers, which allowed only the participant and the researcher access to demographic information about the participants including age, race, and gender. All data were exported from their electronic platform (Google Classroom) only after the academic quarter had ended. Data were then de-identified and the last four digits of the participants' identification numbers were used.

Data Sources

Two primary data sources were collected and analyzed for this study: research-based perspective pieces and reflection logs. Each of these data sources informed the findings of the research questions. More specifically, participants' research-based perspective pieces from the beginning and end of the unit allowed me to assess the development of ethnocultural empathy (research question 1). Additionally, students' weekly reflection logs shed light on the specific affective and cognitive processes that students engaged in as they navigated the embodiments of the learning environment (research question 2).

Research-Based Perspective Pieces

Research-based perspective pieces, written at the beginning and end of the unit, served as important sources of data for the evaluation of ethnocultural empathy. These written artifacts were driven by student-generated research questions in a thematic exploration of injustices and identities. Students used their research to develop narratives from the point of view of either a character in their literature circle books or an individual from their intergroup dialogue sessions. Plot points in the research-based perspective pieces were backed by research from primary and secondary sources (as evidenced by the use of footnotes and references). Importantly, this data source was critical to assessing and evaluating participants' pre and post capacities in terms of

ethnocultural empathy. I evaluated each participants' research-based perspective piece from the beginning and end of the study, paying close attention to the factors that inform students' abilities to write from the perspective of an outgroup member (i.e., quality of research questions, use of primary and secondary data sources, consideration of multiple perspectives within the narrative, narrative writing style, and voice). This data source was used to assess the growth and development of ethnocultural empathy using an adapted version of the Intercultural Knowledge and Competence (IKC) Rubric (AAC&U, 2015).

The IKC Rubric: A Measure of Ethnocultural Empathy. The formal measure that was used to evaluate growth in ethnocultural empathy was an adapted IKC Rubric (AAC&U, 2015), which is detailed further in this section. Bennett (2008) defines IKC as “a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts” (p. 95). In other words, IKC centers on the fundamental components of demonstrating an understanding and awareness of self and others in society, a sensitivity to the experiences of others, a desire for learning about others, and an openness and willingness to learn about things important to others. The original IKC Rubric (Appendix D) is an established 4-point holistic measure developed by teams of faculty experts representing colleges and universities across the United States (AAC&U, 2015). It was developed through a process that examined distinct rubrics that measured similar learning outcomes (ethnocultural empathy and knowledge) and sought to synthesize the fundamental criteria for each learning outcome.

In more ways than one, the IKC Rubric parallels and clarifies earlier concepts of ethnocultural empathy (Wang et al., 2003). More specifically, the rubric evaluates cognitive and affective responses to intercultural stimuli, worldviews, beliefs, and practices (AAC&U, 2015).

In addition, the IKC Rubric proves to be a more valid measure of ethnocultural empathy than existing self-report survey measures (Wang et al., 2003), which are more susceptible to false reporting as a result of social desirability bias. Despite its precision and accuracy as a measure of ethnocultural empathy, the original IKC Rubric had to be truncated to align with the focus of this study. The original rubric consists of six criteria: (a) cultural self-awareness, (b) knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks, (c) empathy, (d) verbal and non-verbal communication, (e) curiosity, and (f) openness. The adapted rubric that was used for this study (Appendix E) consisted of two criteria: knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks and empathy. Based on the theoretical framework and the data source that would be measured by this rubric (research-based perspective pieces), some of the existing criteria could not be observed. Thus, the adapted rubric consisted of only the criteria that aligned with the theoretical foundation and were observable in the research-based perspective pieces.

Reflection Logs

Reflection logs captured participants' responses to various features of the learning environment and elucidated the cognitive and affective processes that may have contributed to and/or detracted from the development of ethnocultural empathy. Students logged reflections at least once a week during the eight-week intervention. Early on, these logs were driven by focus questions: *1) What have you learned about the experiences of individuals in your outgroup? 2) How do others' experiences compare to yours? 3) How did you feel when learning about the challenges faced by individuals in your outgroup? 4) If you were in their shoes, would you face similar challenges? Why or why not?* During the second half of the intervention, the logs were entirely student-driven, stemming from their research topics. The process of reflection was critical to heightening self-awareness, which in turn, allowed for shifts in attitudes and

perceptions (Warin & Muldoon, 2009; Warin, 2015). It also provided students with the opportunity to keep track of their own experiences and understandings.

The self-reflection logs gave participants a forum to reflect on disparate experiences, confront misrecognition, and negotiate dissonance (Warin & Muldoon, 2009). Ultimately, they allowed participants to synthesize shifts in awareness, understanding, and beliefs as a result of the learning environment design. Having access to the artifact that students used to make sense of these experiences contributed to my understanding of the participant process, particularly as it related to the design embodiments. As such, this data source was used to identify the mediating processes that contributed to and limited the development of ethnocultural empathy.

Data Analysis

To answer my primary research question, which sought to evaluate the efficacy of the design, I conducted a paired samples *t*-test of participants' pre and post ethnocultural empathy scores. Pre and post scores were calculated by scoring the research-based perspective pieces on the adapted IKC Rubric. To gain greater insight into each subgroup's performance on the adapted IKC Rubric, I employed descriptive statistics analysis to the distinct starting and ending points for each subgroup (White males, White females, males of color, and females of color). I decided that I would use subgroups (based on race and gender) for both my descriptive statistics analysis and my provisional coding because these demographic factors have been known to contribute to differences in baseline levels of biased attitudes and empathy (Keehn, 2015; Kidd & Castano, 2013; Nordstrom, 2015).

My second research question, which aimed to understand the mediating processes that contributed to and/or detracted from the development of ethnocultural empathy, warranted a qualitative analysis of self-reflection logs from the duration of the intervention. I chose to use a

constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 1996) that involved provisional coding of the reflection logs to explicate the mediating processes that contributed to and interfered with the transformations during the learning process. Provisional coding began by compiling a predetermined “start list of set codes prior to the field work” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 58). These provisional codes were then reworked, modified, and expanded to account for emergent findings in the data (Hedlund-de Witt, 2013). Data analysis methods were derivative of previous researchers who conducted similar intervention studies in academic and professional settings but modified to account for specific features of this research design, such as an analysis of four subgroups (Bachen et al., 2012; Fleming et al., 2015; Nordstrom, 2015).

Quantitative Analysis

The primary purpose of my quantitative analysis was to assess growth in ethnocultural empathy by evaluating student writing (pre and post research-based perspective pieces) on the adapted IKC Rubric. Thus, a paired samples *t*-test was conducted to ascertain statistical significance ($p < 0.05$) and evaluate the high-level conjecture. The decision was made not to run the paired samples *t*-test in subgroups, because inferential statistics are most reliable and valid when the sample size is as large as possible.

To account for variance in levels of ethnocultural empathy among participants, I employed descriptive statistics analysis within subgroups. This allowed me greater insight into the performance of each subgroup in relation to the overall sample. I began my analysis by examining frequencies on the overall measure and subscales. Frequency tables were created to organize how often participants of each subgroup earned a specific score on the rubric. This was done for both the initial and final research-based perspective pieces.

The next level of analysis concentrated on measures of central tendency, which consists

of the mean, median, and mode of the data. Each of the central tendencies was analyzed in subgroups to prevent the dilution of notable differences. I computed the mean, median, and mode of overall scores of ethnocultural empathy and disaggregated the data so that the central tendencies of subgroups and subscales were also evident. The final level of analysis explored was dispersion. When examining the variability within the data, I looked at standard deviation and range to consider the degrees of variance in each subgroup on each subscale.

Qualitative Analysis

Prior to analysis, the reflection logs were also organized by subgroup to account for differences in sense-making processes and/or experiences due to race and gender. The reflection logs were analyzed using constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 1996) to identify and understand the formative processes that contributed to or detracted from the development of ethnocultural empathy. Constructivist grounded theory methods are “suitable for studying individual processes, interpersonal relations and the reciprocal effects between individuals and larger social processes” (Charmaz, 1996, p. 28-29). Not only does this method of analysis provide the rigor and flexibility needed to examine cognitive and affective processes, but it also offers a systematic approach for “discovering significant aspects of human experience that remain inaccessible with traditional verification methods” (Charmaz, 1996, p. 30). The reflection logs provided rich, descriptive data that effectively and chronologically charted the experiences of each participant, which allowed me to “trace events, delineate processes, and make comparisons” (Charmaz, 1996, p. 34).

More specifically, I considered affective, cognitive, process, and identity dimensions to deduce theoretical claims how students make sense of the experiences designed to foster ethnocultural empathy (See Coding Protocol in Appendix F). On the affective level, I considered

participants' emotional reactions to the stimuli in the learning environment. On the cognitive level, I examined how participants expressed cognitive shifts, integrated new knowledge, or rejected existing paradigms in response to designed stimuli. In regard to the process dimension, I explored participants' reflections on the practices and activities that led them to new understandings. And in terms of identity, I analyzed how participants reflected on their own identities and the identities of others.

To prepare for formal analysis all reflection logs were uploaded to *Dedoose*, a computer-assisted qualitative analysis software. I used this software to organize raw reflection data, preliminary codes, final codes, and analytic memos (Clarke, 2005, as cited in Saldana, 2009). I employed Tesch's Eight Steps (Appendix G) to sort, code, and compare the data. Analysis began with open coding to discern noticeably salient categories of information while maintaining proximity to the data. Then I employed focused coding to create and try out categories and develop my analytic framework. I sought to keep codes active to reflect what participants were doing and what was happening (Charmaz, 1996). As I moved to the memo-writing stage, I used Glaser and Strauss's (1967) constant comparative method to determine consistency in coding and began to generate conjectures about mediating processes. These codes were compared and contrasted to offer increasingly complex and inclusive categories (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The process of examining information from the data and comparing it with emerging categories (constant comparative method) involved theoretical sampling (revisiting the corpus of data) to develop and interrelate categories (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The latter steps of the text analysis involved generating themes, which included collapsing some coded material and integrating categories (Braun & Clarke, 2006; O'Leary, 2004). To strengthen the reliability of the data analysis, decisions about the definitions of and relationships among codes, categories, and

themes were reached through consensus coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 1998). Data analysis methods for student reflections were derivative of previous researchers who conducted similar learning environment-based studies in academic and professional settings (Cunningham, 2009; Fjällström & Kokkola, 2014; Kheen, 2015).

Provisional Coding

In keeping with qualitative data analysis methods of design-based research (Brown, 1992; Cobb et al., 2003; Collins, 1992), I tested my conjecture about the meditating processes that contribute to ethnocultural empathy by employing provisional coding. Provisional coding begins by compiling a predetermined “start list of set codes prior to the field work” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 58). These provisional codes are then reworked, modified, and/or expanded to account for emergent findings in the data (Hedlund-de Witt, 2013). Because theory development is critical to design-based research, researchers must acknowledge pre-existing theories. Therefore, pre-established codes, derived from the theoretical framework, drove the initial coding process to confirm, disconfirm, and refine existing conjectures about mediating processes (Hedlund-de Witt, 2013; Mason, 2002).

The provisional list of codes was generated from the literature reviewed on ethnocultural empathy, critical literacy, dialogue, and intergroup contact theory (See Provisional Codebook in Appendix H) (Miles & Huberman, 1994, as cited in Saldana, 2009). As such, the conjectured mediating processes were: (a) using hypothetical statements to take on another’s perspective; (b) assertions of current/historical bias and/or discrimination against ethnocultural minorities; (c) dismantling prejudices against ethnocultural minorities; (d) expressions of anger and/or frustration on behalf of victims of bias, discrimination, and/or hate; and (e) expressions of appreciation in the culture and backgrounds of ethnocultural minorities. Provisional coding

allowed me to evaluate the presence and salience of each of the conjectured mediating processes during the intervention.

Because there is no existing theory on designing for ethnocultural empathy in high school language arts and the existing theories on intergroup contact do not sufficiently explore how adolescents make sense of critical literacy and intergroup experiences, I used inductive and deductive coding approaches to generate conjectures about the design variables and student processes that are critical to the development of ethnocultural empathy in the context of a language arts curriculum. Thus, I examined students' reflections and applied provisional codes to test my theoretical conjecture about the mediating processes that are indicative of the development of ethnocultural empathy. While provisional coding is a departure from the inductive grounded theory methodology, it provides a necessary foundation for explicating mediating processes in light of existing literature on ethnocultural empathy.

Validity and Reliability

When conducting any research, it is imperative to consider meaningful ways to secure validity and reliability at each stage of the process. The role of the researcher in this design study can be considered a strength to the validity of the findings (Barab & Squire, 2004). Researchers who work in schools face a dilemma when considering the extent to which they should remain observers; however, decades of design-based research highlight the value that researchers can bring when they are not afraid to get their hands dirty (Brown, 1992; Cobb et al., 1999). Notably, researchers who both design and execute studies in authentic contexts have a deeper understanding of variables as they occur. Barab and Squire (2004) suggest that researchers should "intervene where possible using interventions as opportunities to examine core theoretical issues and explore learning" (p. 11).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest using measures of trustworthiness to ascertain the validity of qualitative research. To do so, one must consider whether the findings of the research hold true for its context and participants. In the current study, multiple techniques were used to ensure that the means of analysis were valid and credible. Prolonged engagement, which is described as “extended time spent in the research setting to allow research participants to build trust in the researcher and feel more relaxed to be themselves,” allowed me to ensure that participants felt comfortable with my presence and helped me “learn the culture of the setting and penetrate into some nuances in meaning of the events occurring” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Sanogo, 2014, p. 66). Because I was present in the classroom daily, I acquired a sense of confidence and understanding; this facilitated my interpretations of participants’ writing samples. Persistent observation refers to the researcher’s ability to be vigilant while immersed in the setting, which provides a depth of understanding as it relates to the problem or issue being studied (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Sanogo, 2014). Although this study did not rely on observational data, persistent observations helped ensure that the interpretations had face validity. This was particularly important when coding participants’ reflection logs for mediating processes. Prolonged engagement and persistent observation also contributed to my teacher reflection journal. These reflection entries allowed me to take note of things I was noticing as students engaged with the learning environment embodiments and reflect on how my perspective, biases, and viewpoints could be constructing those realities.

Data were triangulated by using multiple sources of information (research-based perspective pieces, reflection logs, and the teacher reflection journal) from various points in the study, multiple methods (inferential statistics, descriptive statistics, and content analysis), multiple investigators, and multiple theories (Creswell, 2015; Cobb et al., 2003; Design-Based

Research Collective, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Sanogo, 2014). To ensure the validity and reliability of the data analysis, I regularly engaged in peer debriefing (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Sanogo, 2014). I worked closely with my team teacher, who was present in the classroom during the course of the study, to evaluate my own biases, test hypotheses and ideas, and consider my next steps in the research project (Sanogo, 2014). Peer debriefing allowed me to establish a relationship with my team teacher that proved to be invaluable when we participated in consensus scoring and coding for 30% of the data (Creswell, 2015). When we were not able to reach a consensus, a third scorer/coder was brought in for consultation (Creswell, 2015; Hays & Singh, 2011). When analyzing the data, we engaged in negative case analysis—the process of looking for and utilizing disconfirming data to revise conjectures (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Sanogo, 2014).

Furthermore, the process of theoretical sampling, collecting additional data to clarify ideas and discern relationships, facilitated the development of categories and the discovery of variation within them (Charmaz, 1996). Conducting theoretical sampling later in the research ensured that relevant issues had been defined and salient elements of the data had been accounted for, which strengthened the validity of the analysis (Charmaz, 1996). Importantly, the design-based research approach maintained ecological validity in that the data sources captured the day-to-day reality of ongoing instruction (Fjällström & Kokkola, 2014). Finally, regular meetings with my dissertation group served as an inquiry audit of the research methodology, findings, and interpretation of findings. All data in the study were organized and an audit trail was maintained to account for the feedback of my advisor, committee members, and dissertation group colleagues (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Sanogo, 2014).

CHAPTER IV

Findings

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which the intervention influenced adolescents' levels of ethnocultural empathy. The intervention was designed to provide participants with multiple and varied opportunities for intergroup contact, dialogue, and self-reflection in the context of critical literacy. The research design and methodology set out to examine not only the efficacy of a theoretically supported intervention but also the nuanced ways in which participants made sense of diverse ethnocultural experiences. To better understand the affordances and limitations of the designed intervention, I sought to answer the following questions:

1. Does a learning environment design that foregrounds intergroup contact, dialogue, and critical literacy foster ethnocultural empathy?
2. What are the mediating processes that support and/or limit the development of ethnocultural empathy?

It was hypothesized that the designed intervention would increase levels of ethnocultural empathy. Additionally, it was conjectured that the following mediating processes would be evident in the process data: a) using hypothetical statements to take on another's perspective; b) assertions of current/historical bias and/or discrimination against ethnocultural minorities; c) dismantling prejudices against ethnocultural minorities; d) expressions of anger and/or frustration on behalf of victims of bias, discrimination, and/or hate; and e) expressions of appreciation in the culture and backgrounds of ethnocultural minorities. The data were analyzed by their application to each of the two research questions that framed the study. The results of the study are presented in the following sections.

Research Question 1

To answer the primary research question (regarding the efficacy of the intervention), pre and post writing samples were analyzed using the IKC rubric. I ran a paired samples *t*-test comparing scores from students' initial (week 2) and final (week 8) perspective taking writing assignments (research-based perspective pieces). Then, participants' scores were disaggregated, sorted into subgroups, and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The descriptive statistics for overall ethnocultural empathy were also analyzed by subscales (knowledge and empathy).

Paired Samples *t*-Test

The paired samples *t*-test compared participants' scores on their initial and final research-based perspective pieces, using an 8-point measure of ethnocultural empathy (adapted IKC rubric). When running a paired samples *t*-test, the *p* value is the greatest indicator of statistical significance. If the *p* value is less than an alpha value of .05, the null hypothesis is rejected. The null hypothesis states that there is no significant difference between the measured phenomenon. As such, the smaller the *p* value, the more likely it is that the results can be attributed to the intervention (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2015). In this case, the *p* value was less than .0001; this rejects the null hypothesis and ascertains the statistical significance of participants' increase in ethnocultural empathy. The results of the *t*-test are reported in Table 6.

Table 6

Descriptive and Inferential Statistics on 8-point Adapted IKC Rubric

	Mean \pm SD	Min	Max	Median	Range	Mode	T	<i>p</i>
Pre (Week 2)	3.78 \pm 0.82	2	6	4	4	4	-9.63	<.0001
Post (Week 8)	5.76 \pm 1.28	2	8	6	6	6		

**p* < .05
n=41

Descriptive Statistics by Subgroups and Subscales

This section disaggregates the data from the inferential analysis and employs descriptive statistics by subgroups and then by subscales to allow for greater insight into the efficacy of the intervention (Keehn, 2015).

Overall Ethnocultural Empathy Scores by Subgroups

A descriptive analysis of pre and post ethnocultural empathy scores on the adapted 8-point IKC Rubric is presented by subgroups in Table 7. On this 8-point rubric, a score of a 6 indicates proficiency on the overall measure. The table shows that the mean score for each subgroup increased between pre- and post-assessments. These descriptive statistics corroborate the findings of the paired samples *t*-test because all subgroups demonstrated quantifiable growth in overall ethnocultural empathy between the pre- and post-assessment. Notably, White males demonstrate the largest increase between pre and post means (+2.15), followed by females of color (+2.0), males of color (+1.75), and White females (+1.70). Interestingly, on the pre-assessment, White males scored lower (3.80 ± 0.70) than White females (3.90 ± 1.20); however, on the post-assessment, White males scored higher (5.95 ± 1.28) than White females (5.60 ± 1.71). In addition, the standard deviation between pre and post scores increased for each subgroup except for males of color ($n=4$). In keeping with the findings of the standard deviation, the range increased from pre to post for all subgroups, except males of color. Furthermore, the median score for each subgroup increased at least two points between the pre- and post-assessment. Moreover, the score that most frequently appeared on the post-assessment was within two points of the highest possible score on the overall measure. As a whole, these descriptive statistics suggest that, regardless of subgroup, overall ethnocultural empathy scores increased between the pre- and post-assessment.

Table 7*Descriptive Statistics 8-point Adapted IKC Rubric Scores by Subgroup*

	Mean \pm SD	Min	Max	Median	Range	Mode
White males pre ($n=20$)	3.80 ± 0.70	2	5	4	3	4
White males post ($n=20$)	5.95 ± 1.28	3	8	6	5	6
White females pre ($n=10$)	3.90 ± 1.20	2	6	4	4	4
White females post ($n=10$)	5.60 ± 1.71	2	7	6	5	7
Males of color pre ($n=4$)	4.00 ± 0.82	3	5	4	2	4
Males of color post ($n=4$)	5.75 ± 0.50	5	6	6	1	6
Females of color pre ($n=7$)	3.43 ± 0.53	3	4	3	1	3
Females of color post ($n=7$)	5.43 ± 0.98	4	6	6	2	6

Knowledge Subscale

A descriptive analysis of pre and post scores on the 4-point knowledge subscale of the IKC Rubric is presented in Table 8. On this subscale, a score of a 3 indicates proficiency. The table shows that the mean for each subgroup increased between pre- and post-assessments. On the pre-assessment, White males scored lower (1.65 ± 0.59) than White females (1.80 ± 0.79); however, on the post-assessment, White males scored higher (3.15 ± 0.75) than White females (3.00 ± 1.05). White males demonstrated the largest increase between pre and post means (+1.50), followed by females of color (+1.28), males of color (+1.25), and White females (+1.20). It is worth noting that the standard deviation between the pre- and post-assessment increased for White males and White females, but decreased for males of color and females of color. In addition, the median score for each subgroup showed at least a one-point increase between the pre- and post-assessments. A frequency analysis of the post-assessment indicates that the mode for all subgroups was a 3, which is one-point shy of the highest possible score on

the subscale. As evidenced by the descriptive statistics, all subgroups demonstrated growth on the knowledge subscale between the pre- and post-assessments.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics on 4-point Knowledge Subscale

	Mean \pm SD	Min	Max	Median	Range	Mode
White males pre ($n=20$)	1.65 ± 0.59	1	3	2	2	2
White males post ($n=20$)	3.15 ± 0.75	1	4	3	3	3
White females pre ($n=10$)	1.80 ± 0.79	1	3	2	2	2
White females post ($n=10$)	3.00 ± 1.05	1	3	3	2	3
Males of color pre ($n=4$)	1.75 ± 0.50	1	2	2	1	2
Males of color post ($n=4$)	3.00 ± 0.00	2	3	3	1	3
Females of color pre ($n=7$)	1.43 ± 0.53	1	2	1	1	1
Females of color post ($n=7$)	2.71 ± 0.49	2	3	3	1	3

Empathy Subscale

A descriptive analysis of pre and post scores on the 4-point empathy subscale of the IKC Rubric is presented in Table 9. The table shows that the mean for each subgroup increased between pre- and post-assessments. It is important to note that White males started with the same mean score (2.10 ± 0.37) as White females (2.10 ± 0.57); however, on the post-assessment, White males scored higher (2.80 ± 0.62) than White females (2.60 ± 0.70). In addition, females of color demonstrated the largest increase between pre and post means ($+0.71$), followed by White males ($+0.70$), males of color ($+0.50$) and then White females ($+0.50$). Notably, the standard deviation between pre- and post-assessments increased for all subgroups except for males of color. The median and mode score for each subgroup increased by one point between the pre- and post-assessments. Identical to the findings on the knowledge subscale, a frequency

analysis of the post-assessment indicates that mode for all subgroups was a 3, which is deemed proficient on the 4-point measure. Ultimately, the descriptive statistics indicate that all subgroups demonstrated growth and proficiency on the empathy subscale.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics on 4-point Empathy Subscale

	Mean \pm SD	Min	Max	Median	Range	Mode
White male pre ($n=20$)	2.10 \pm 0.37	1	3	2	2	2
White male post ($n=20$)	2.80 \pm 0.62	2	4	3	2	3
White female pre ($n=10$)	2.10 \pm 0.57	1	3	2	2	2
White female post ($n=10$)	2.60 \pm 0.70	1	4	3	3	3
Males of color pre ($n=4$)	2.25 \pm 0.50	1	2	2	1	2
Males of color post ($n=4$)	2.75 \pm 0.50	2	4	3	2	3
Females of color pre ($n=7$)	2.00 \pm 0.00	1	2	2	1	2
Females of color post ($n=7$)	2.71 \pm 0.49	2	4	3	2	3

Research Question 1 Conclusion

The primary research question set out to investigate the efficacy of this particular intervention. It intended to understand whether a learning environment design that foregrounds intergroup contact, dialogue, and critical literacy fosters ethnocultural empathy. An examination of the inferential analysis of the quantitative data suggests that there was a statistically significant difference ($p < .0001$) between participants' scores on the pre-assessment (week 2) and the post-assessment (week 8).

Further analysis of participant data organized by demographic subgroups indicates that, regardless of race and gender, participants' mean scores increased between the pre- and post-assessment; the same holds true for participants' scores on the knowledge and empathy

subscales. Based on the descriptive statistics, White males ended with the highest overall ethnocultural empathy score (5.95 ± 1.28) and showed the greatest increase on the knowledge subscale. Taken together, the results of the quantitative analysis strongly suggest that the increase in levels of ethnocultural empathy can be credited to the design of the learning environment.

Research Question 2

To identify the mediating processes that supported and those that limited the development of ethnocultural empathy, I conducted a thematic analysis of participants' weekly reflection logs using constructivist grounded theory and provisional coding (Charmaz, 1996). This section outlines the results of the qualitative analysis. The first four themes indicate the mediating processes that contributed to the development of ethnocultural empathy and the final two themes note those that limited its development. Each theme begins with an identification of the codes that were collapsed into it; codes are presented sequentially from most salient to least salient. Only data that are most representative of how the theme emerged are included in the findings. Thus, not all codes are addressed in the analysis of each theme. However, each of these codes is operationalized and exemplified in the final codebook (Appendix I). Where appropriate, the demographic indicators of participants are identified. Should demographics be omitted from the reporting of the results of any particular theme, it can be inferred that the data did not display any notable differences on account of race and/or gender. Lastly, it is important to note that all of the excerpted data are directly quoted from students' writing samples; therefore, they have not been edited for grammar and spelling.

Theme 1. Understanding Diverse Experiences and Appreciating Culture

Understanding diverse experiences and appreciating culture was found to be a mediating process of ethnocultural empathy. Six codes were collapsed into this theme; each one can be seen as a process that contributed to participants' understanding and appreciation of outgroup experiences and culture. The codes included in this theme are organized in the order of their salience in the data: (a) eyes opened through storytelling, (b) expressions of comfort in and appreciation of intergroup experiences, (c) appreciation of culture, (d) valuing diversity, (e) admiring outgroup members, and (f) relating to the experience (see Appendix I for a full codebook).

The most salient code in this theme was eyes opened through storytelling (EOTS). The data in this code laid the groundwork for participants' understandings of diverse experiences and, subsequently, their appreciation of culture. The gradation of the responses in this code demonstrates the various levels of engagement with the personal experiences shared during the intergroup contact. Some participants articulated with specificity how their eyes were opened; whereas, others simply noted that they felt enlightened. In one instance, Sam stated:

I learned it's important to talk about it and to accept others and empathize with them because we're not the only ones going through it. I felt this entire experience enlightened me in new ways and I will continue to live with the knowledge gained.

In another instance, Yvonne indicated:

People who were in my group who are a different race than me talked about some of the struggles they have, such as people joking about them being Mexican. This opened my eyes to issues that they can face every day even though we go to the same school.

Sam's response did not share the specifics of how he had been enlightened by the experience; whereas, Yvonne's response articulated a new understanding as well as the critical moment that contributed to this development. Most of the data in EOTS displays how White participants' ways of seeing developed as a result of their intergroup contact and dialogue. There were, however, some examples in which participants of color displayed shifts in their ways of seeing, as well. In one instance, Aliyah considered the experience of a White peer:

Before this I didn't ever think about how white people must feel when we talk about police brutality. There was a girl in my circle whose dad is a cop and she was talking about how he gets stereotyped all the time. This opened my eyes to the feelings of cops kids because not all cops are bad.

Though the content and depth of reflections ranged, the data in EOTS were indicative of how individuals worked through the stories that were shared.

Appreciation of culture (AOC) was present, explicitly and implicitly, in much of the data in this theme. Even when participants were stating their comfort in and appreciation of intergroup experiences, their reflections implied that they were appreciative of the ability to get to know more about the cultures of others as well as reflect on their own. For example, Natalie noted:

We never get to talk to people outside of our immediate circles and it was really cool to get to know more about where people come from and how their lives are different from ours and what makes them who they are like the foods they eat and the music they like.

It is important to note that appreciation of culture manifested differently between students of color and White students. Students of color articulated with greater specificity their appreciation of their *own* cultural elements. This can be seen in Lisa's reflection:

My ethnicity also plays a role in which I can empathize with other hispanics in topics only our culture can relate to. Being hispanic opens a different world in which music and foods that are diverse to the american culture. Seasoning varies in my house, while young I am taught to love spices since it was always emerged in my dinners. I was taught how to dance bachata and learn to love the music and artist like prince royce and romeo.

White students, on the other hand, displayed a more general appreciation of outgroup culture.

For example, Jack noted:

The Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s and 1930s is one of the first and most important cultural movements in Black history. It is one of the first major recognitions of African American music, literature, and art. The works of African American authors, poets, and musicians of the day rooted African American experience in American culture and continues to shape it, even today. This part of history shaped experiences for many people and is still shaping experiences for others.

Particularly in AOC, participants of color referenced language, music, and food. They considered what they personally had to offer society and, ultimately, displayed an appreciation of their *own* cultures. On the other hand, White participants broadly looked to history, art, music, and literature to articulate their appreciation of outgroup cultures. In these responses, White students did not reference the specific works and/or contributions of people of color. Nonetheless, AOC was a significant part of this theme, particularly because it demonstrated an openness to difference.

Not only did participants display an appreciation of culture, but they also expressed that they valued diversity. Valuing diversity (VD) became important to this theme because it communicated how codes such as EOTS and AOC coalesced to suggest movement along a

continuum of identity development. For example, Joe noted the value that staff diversity could have on students:

If the school systems were more aware of how much the education system could affect students outside of schools they should try to appeal to a more diverse group of staff so the students can carry themselves in a better way when they are not in school.

Implicit in Joe's comment is an appreciation of culture and what it could potentially offer students "when they are not in school." In any case, this acknowledgement and appreciation of what outgroup members have to offer can be seen as an indicator of ethnocultural openness and understanding.

Taken together, the codes in this theme suggest that an understanding of outgroup members and an appreciation of diversity were predictors of ethnocultural empathy. It is important to note that the data in this theme were often products of intergroup dialogue sessions and reflections on reading and research. In most cases, participants credited these realizations and thoughts to their intergroup experiences, their literature circle books, and/or their research—all of which were facets of the intervention.

Theme 2. Awareness of Bias and Privilege

Awareness of bias and privilege was the second mediating process that contributed to the development of ethnocultural empathy. Seven codes were collapsed into this theme. Together, they demonstrate how participants made sense of knowledge that unearthed disparities in individuals' experiences on account of race, culture, and/or ethnicity. The following list of codes is organized in the order of their salience in the data: (a) current/historical bias, (b) long-term effects of history and consequences of bias, (c) acknowledging differences in experience, (d)

recognizing privilege, (e) recollections of bias, (f) reflecting on biased feelings and actions toward ethnocultural minorities, and (g) analyzing power (see Appendix I for a full codebook).

The first two codes, current/historical bias (CHB) and long-term effects and consequences of bias (LTE-CB), were the most profound contributors to this theme. The comments in these two codes charted systemic oppression and considered the deleterious impact it had and continues to have on communities of color. This identification of systemic oppression and its longstanding impact on people of color was a critical contributor to participants' awareness of bias. In one instance, Deborah leveraged her research to claim: "Police officers are much more likely to engage with Black civilians. It is rarer for residents of Black communities to call law enforcement, which some researchers have chalked up to fear of police brutality." Jade echoed this research, but extended the findings by commenting on the impact of neighborhood programs and law enforcement bias:

Government programs like Neighborhood Watch have reinforced this belief in the minds of Americans. However, studies on African-American neighborhoods show that residents are hesitant to call law enforcement compared to majority-white neighborhoods. This has a direct correlation to police brutality, which affects Black neighborhoods. Inner-city areas also have a higher rate of juvenile crime, along with areas with poor schools.

Typically, these areas have a higher police presence than suburbs or areas with higher-quality schooling.

In her reflection, Jade demonstrated an awareness of existing bias and its repercussions, including police brutality, higher rates of juvenile crime, and poor schooling. Similarly, Tom noted the ubiquity of bias, particularly for African Americans:

African-Americans have to deal with those issues on a daily basis from a very young age. These issues eventually manifest their way into the workplace, but they usually begin in school, and it's affecting Starr in many ways. For example, she feels the need to maintain a very sophisticated demeanor in her predominantly white school just so she isn't ridiculed by the way she's used to speaking when she's home.

Tom recognized that African Americans experience bias "daily" and "from a very young age." He traced the impact of bias from school to the workplace and exemplified his point by relating it to Starr, a character in his literature circle book. In all three cases, participants examined systems of oppression that exist in law enforcement, education, and the workforce.

Acknowledging differences in experience (ADE) and recognizing privilege (RP) were two codes that worked hand-in-hand to further develop participants' understandings of *self* and *other* in the context of racial and cultural bias. For White participants, much of the awareness of bias gave way to an understanding of differences in experiences and, ultimately, a recognition of White privilege. In these reflections, White students often juxtaposed their day-to-day experiences with those of people of color to make points about systemic bias, prejudice, and discrimination. For example, Peter indicated:

For me, growing up as a white American male I do not need to worry about any of the things Starr needs to worry about. If I were to get pulled over by the cops, I would have no fear that my parents and I could be in danger of getting shot.

Starr, a fictional character in *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas, became a foil for the experiences of many White students. This is further evidenced by Aspen's reflection:

Learning about what Starr and her community has gone through has enhanced a topic that I never truly have to think about in my daily life. I never have to think twice about a

police officer pulling me over for a broken tail light, or leaving a store with a hoodie on, even though Black people would have to worry about keeping their hands visible at all times, or justifying their purchase for something that they're being accused of stealing. Participants' reflections also drew on the experiences of cultural minorities to make arguments about racial privilege (RP). In one instance, Sam said: "Caucasians would not likely be the target of any hate crimes because people have nothing against them, they have different experiences in America than some other ethnic and religious groups like Muslims." Sam's comment demonstrates his ability to reflect on the role of race, culture, and ethnicity as predictors of bias. Implicit in Sam's remark about the unlikelihood of Caucasians being the target of hate crimes is his awareness of White privilege.

In addition to noting and analyzing the effects of oppressive systems that perpetuate bias and the role of privilege, participants also recollected individual experiences with bias (RB). These statements did not rely on secondhand information about bias incidents; rather, they focused on the participant's *own* experience during or after a bias incident. These reflections differed based on the race of the participants. Students of color often shared experiences as victims of bias and as bystanders to bias incidents; whereas, White students only shared experiences of being bystanders.

In her reflection log, Ellis, a female student of color, stated: "I remember when President Trump said that Mexicans are rapists and criminals, this disgusted, angered, and saddened me because people began to stereotype me and when they heard that I'm Mexican, they already had assumptions about me." A male student of color reflected on his first year on the track team: "I would run past people, as I would like to think I'm fast but people would say 'you're only fast because you're Black,' or 'you should be that fast,' as a stereotype" (Jason). Almost all

participants of color shared at least one recollection of being the recipient of a biased remark or stereotype. In some instances, students of color admitted to having been bystanders in bias incidents. For example, Jason recalled a time in middle school when “a girl in [his] class was made fun of because her hair was nappy and [he] didn’t do anything because [he] didn’t want to draw attention to [himself].” White participants also shared that they had witnessed biased incidents. Gloria reflected on a moment in elementary school:

I remember a new kid coming into my class. I forget what country he was from, but some kids were joking about the way he talked. All I can remember is thinking why. Why are these kids joking about his accent? That's the way he was born, and who he is. Just because he talks differently than you doesn't mean he's any less of a human being than you. I should've said something, but I was too scared and confused, being a young child. But I wish I did say something, and if it was present day I definitely would. No one should be discriminated against because of the way they look or speak or for just being who they are.

As Gloria made sense of this experience, she noted that she wished she had said something in the moment; and if it were today, she “definitely would.” An important finding in this theme is that most White participants recalled moments from elementary school; whereas, students of color had more recent memories of bias incidents. Unsurprisingly, none of the participants admitted to being aggressors in bias incidents.

The data analyzed in this theme revealed that research-based accounts of current and historical bias provided context for individual accounts. Additionally, participants acknowledged the damaging effects of bias on individual and systemic levels. Noting differences in experiences on account of ethnocultural identity gave participants a platform to analyze White privilege.

White participants often aligned themselves with racial privilege by accounting for ways that their day-to-day experiences differed from those of people of color.

Theme 3. Foregrounding Counter Narratives and Taking Perspective

Foregrounding counter narratives and taking perspective was the third mediating process that emerged. For this analysis, counter narratives are operationalized as stories that “arise from the vantage point of those who have been historically marginalized” (Mora, 2014, p. 1).

Perspective taking helps individuals understand one another by affording them proximity to other vantage points (Cutting, 2009; Erle & Topolinski, 2017; Tarrant, Calitri, & Weston, 2012; Wolgast & Barnes-Holmes, 2018). Eight codes were collapsed into this theme; each one can be seen as a predictor that contributed to participants’ abilities to foreground counter narratives and take perspective. The following list of codes is organized in the order of their salience in the data: (a) reflecting on the immigrant experience; (b) considering push factors for illegal immigrants and motivations for crime; (c) correcting stereotypes and/or bias-based statements; (d) expressions of anger and/or frustration on behalf of victims of bias, discrimination, and/or hate; (e) recognizing the value of perspective taking; (f) perspective taking; (g) recalling vivid details from outgroup experiences; and (h) finding commonalities (see Appendix I for a full codebook).

The most salient process that emerged out of participants’ reflection logs was reflecting on the immigrant experience (RIE). There were several examples of participants trying to understand the immigrant experience through questions and hypotheses. In one example, Baker considered the motivations of and the challenges faced by refugees that cross the Mexican Desert:

This makes me wonder if migrants crossing the desert ever regret their decision? Do they ever think that the pain is actually worth it? For example, if some close friends or family are crossing together in search of a better life, and one member dies, it will probably hurt their morale and take away their will to continue. Or perhaps they fear life in Mexico so much that they are willing to go through the pain.

Baker's reflection shows how he attempted to understand the immigrant experience, particularly through his consideration of the thoughts and feelings of immigrants. He used the experience of one family from his literature circle book to investigate the role of loss and pain on the journey to America. By speculating that fear and regret may play a role in the journey across the border, Baker demonstrates an attempt to understand the immigrant experience. In another instance, Carrie relied on the same literature circle book to reflect on the displacement felt by refugees:

It is just sad thinking these poor people are trying to find better opportunities and then they end up getting treated the same exact way in America when they are only trying to find a resort from their own crappy country only to end up in another crappy one. In "the border" the four kids are literally risking their lives to stay alive and hopefully get a better lifestyle but they may be in for a rude awakening because the white supremacy within America will be very clear to them once they arrive.

Carrie's reflection illustrates that she, too, wrestled with the experiences faced by immigrants. Her reflection differed from Baker's in that she focused on the experiences of immigrants once they arrive in America; whereas, Baker focused primarily on their journey across the border. All of the data in RIE revealed that participants leveraged their literature circle books, research, and intergroup dialogue to consider challenges that immigrants face before, during, and after their journey to America.

The second most prominent code in this theme was considering push factors for illegal immigrants and motivations for crime (CPF-MC). The data in CPF-MC foregrounded counter narratives; participants were able to push aside dominant discourse, particularly about illegal immigration and drug-related offenses among Black males, to focus on the factors that contributed to these incidents. Josh effectively bridged the gap between fiction and reality when he noted that:

[The characters in *The Border*] turn to solutions which unfortunately, many struggling Mexicans in real life also have to do. They have to illegally cross the border and enter the United States. This is a sad reality...Mexicans have to break the law and come into the United States illegally. The world of Pato, Arbo, Gladys, and Marcos is similar to the world of actual Mexicans in today's society where they have to take risks like these.

Similarly, Mary reflected on her dialogue with an individual from Guatemala, stating that even though he is not from the same country as the characters in her book, “he shares many similar reasons to cross [the border].” She then cited her research to note that “since 2000 there has been a significant increase in the number of gang related violence in Guatemala.” Both Josh and Mary were able to look beyond the illegality of immigration and focus on the reasons that prompted outgroup members to leave their home countries. It is important to note that these counter narratives did not only spotlight the immigrant experience, but also the experiences of several other historically marginalized groups. In another instance, Alexandria referenced Angie Thomas’s *The Hate U Give* to consider the financial strain that may have pushed a Black teenager into a life of crime:

It was just recently revealed that Khalil had a reason behind his drug dealing. He needed to provide for his family and get food on the table and clothing for them. It wasn’t just

because he wanted to, but he needed to. Yes, he spent some on himself, but it was also to help his family.

Though she acknowledged the illegality of drug dealing, she did not let the dominant discourse of what is legal and illegal cloud her ability to consider the factors that compelled Khalil to partake in illicit activity.

Correcting bias-based statements and stereotypes (CBBS) emerged as another critical process that contributed to the foregrounding of counter narratives. In most cases, students leveraged their literature circle books, intergroup dialogue, and research to correct bias-based statements and stereotypes. In one instance, Giselle connected her research to her literature circle book:

My research had to deal with Trump's influence on people's opinions on Mexicans and immigrants, racially motivated killing, and more. I believe these things are why Steve Shafer wrote the book. The book not only shows that not all Mexicans are gangsters and drug cartel members but it puts why they leave Mexico into perspective.

Similarly, Drew corrected the generalization that all Muslims are terrorists:

Violence goes against Islamic code so there clearly is no ideology for both terrorists and Muslims. Terrorist have their own groups that promote violence, these groups are usually smaller and more shady bands of people who seek to spread fear and sacrifice their lives to murder others.

Participants, regardless of subgroup, rectified existing misconceptions that stereotyped entire groups of people. Jason, a Black male student, clarified that "not all cops are racist and think that Black teens are a liability. There are cops that save lives and provide protection for innocent people...and we need to recognize the ones that put in that effort." To dismantle bias, many

students foregrounded evidence that countered existing stereotypes. None of these statements sought to assign blame; rather, they focused on correcting bias-based assumptions that are deleterious to intergroup relationships.

Another code that contributed to this theme was expressions of anger and frustration on behalf of victims of bias (EAF). As students progressed through the study, they began to use first-person pronouns, hypotheticals, and thought-provoking questions in an attempt to understand outgroup members' experiences. In several cases, these reflections intensified to expressions of frustration and anger on behalf of those targeted by bias. Gloria expressed her frustration with the bias incident in her literature circle book:

Reading this made me feel sickened for the safety and happiness of Muslim citizens. It was made clear that Muslims being abused for their race does not only exist in books, but in real life as well. Furthermore, the fact that Muslims have to live through fear is highly upsetting. It utterly disturbs me that there are citizens who harass Muslims for embracing their culture.

Similarly, Tom shared in the anger felt by the Black community in his literature circle book:

When Officer 115 was not convicted of killing Khalil, riots broke out. Hell, I was angry too. I get why the Black community was frustrated because they have faced injustice for so many years and this was just another situation where it was obvious that Khalil and Starr were in the right but the jury never convicted the officer based on assumptions of Khalil.

By using emotionally-charged language, both Gloria and Tom channeled the feelings of victims of bias, discrimination, and hate. Though the data ranged in the degree of frustration and anger expressed, all comments in EAF validated the lived experiences of those who have been

historically marginalized on account of race, culture, or ethnicity. Importantly, these comments did not display a desire to seek justice in the form of revenge; rather, they were attempts at shouldering the weight of the emotions felt by outgroup members as a result of experienced injustices.

As a whole, this theme consisted of three stages of a sense-making experience that often occurred chronologically. Initially, participants foregrounded counter narratives by considering push factors for illegal immigration and socioeconomic forces that contribute to criminal activity among Black youth. Then, many participants corrected bias-based statements and stereotypes of historically marginalized groups. Finally, participants pointed to vivid details that depicted the brutality of outgroup experiences and expressed anger on behalf of those targeted by bias.

Theme 4. Valuing Inclusivity and Social Justice Activism

Valuing inclusivity and social justice activism was the fourth and final mediating process that contributed to the development of ethnocultural empathy. Six codes were collapsed into this theme. The following list of codes is organized in the order of their salience in the data: (a) acknowledging empathy, (b) shifting viewpoints on sociopolitical issues, (c) defining American by broadening parameters, (d) identifying prosocial behavior that fosters ethnocultural empathy, (e) valuing activism, and (f) action-oriented statements (see Appendix I for a full codebook).

The first three codes—acknowledging empathy (AE), shifting viewpoints on sociopolitical issues (SVP), and defining American by broadening parameters (DA-BP)—can be best understood as processes on the continuum of a flexible narrative of self (Warin & Muldoon, 2009). A flexible narrative of self demonstrates an individual's "capacity to adapt and expand the story [they] tell, so that it becomes a way of managing complexity and multiplicity" (Warin & Muldoon, 2009, p. 293). In context, AE demonstrates one's understanding of how a flexible

narrative of self could be mutually beneficial. SVP reveals one's openness to change, particularly as it relates to viewpoints and values. Finally, DA-BP displays a heightened awareness of self—one that is not threatened by complexity or multiplicity but rather marked by inclusivity.

In this theme, participants acknowledged the importance of empathy for intergroup relationships. Jade reflected on the value of empathy, indicating that “empathy impacts the way we treat and view others...It helps individuals take a minute to see what goes on in another's life before we give a judgement.” Many students commented on how empathy inhibits snap judgments and invites us to step into another person's shoes, ultimately impacting the way that we treat them. In his reflection log, Tom recognized the barriers of his own point of view:

I've grown up and experienced life through one generic point of view, which has consequently shaped who I am as a person today. I will never truly know what it's like to go through life as another person of a different background, but history has taught me that I at least have to make an attempt to understand other people and their experiences as Americans and as individuals.

Tom's comment leverages history to make the argument that he has an obligation to try to understand the diverse experiences of others in America, particularly because his experience will always be different from theirs.

The second code, SVP, often emerged in reflection logs from the middle and end of the unit of study and was unique to White participants. Often, these participants acknowledged a before-and-after way of seeing a controversial sociopolitical issue, which displayed a development in their opinions. One example can be seen in Sam's reflection log:

Before reading this book, I never really had an opinion on football players kneeling during the National Anthem, but now that I have finished *The Hate U Give*, I think it was the right decision because the players can help end hate crimes by using their status.

In Sam's comment, he is explicit about how his viewpoint on a sociopolitical issue shifted from apathy to activism. It is important to note that not all participants were as explicit about how their viewpoints evolved. In another example, Mitchell indicated that he was "able to reconsider [his] perspective on illegal immigration and see how [his] research of the topic relates closely with the experiences and events of the characters in [his] book." In this instance, Mitchell does not clarify how his perspective shifted or precisely what contributed to it.

Additionally, White participants demonstrated inclusive attitudes by adhering to a broader, less rigid definition of what it means to be an American (DA-BP). These statements were often used to make arguments in favor of immigration and to include individuals of color into American society. Alexandria's response, in particular, captures the essence of this code:

I believe that American is not something someone can be rather something anyone can become. As common knowledge would state, American is not a nationality nor a race or anything on any spectrum of natural born identity. American is rather a culture and anyone who moves or immigrated to the USA can adapt our culture and beliefs as their own and this would in turn make someone american. It doesn't matter where you're from. Or where you've been. Or where you're going. It matters only your interpretation of the american culture and however you choose to live it.

In this response, Alexandria rejected the notion of American as a "natural born identity" or a "nationality." Notably, comments of this nature did not commit to citizenship or naturalization as

factors of the American identity; rather, they focused on American as a culture or an interpretation of culture.

The final three codes—identifying prosocial behavior that fosters ethnocultural empathy (IPB-EE), valuing activism (VA), and action-oriented statements (AOS)—demonstrated the varying degrees of conceptualizing action. These codes progressed from noting the significance of compassionate behavior on an individual level to asserting the value of group action, and finally, to charging society with specific calls to action. Each of these codes is examined separately in the following paragraphs to illustrate not only how they are different, but also how they can be seen as stages along a continuum of identity development.

In IPB-EE participants cited examples from literature, current events, and/or history that identified moments of compassion and empathy towards ethnocultural minorities. For example, Mason referred to the empathy shown by a White male teenager to a Muslim female teenager in the aftermath of a bias incident at school: “Phil does this so well. He is repeatedly checking in on Maya, trying to learn more about her, to get at least the smallest glimpse into her life, and to help her in any way, shape, or form he can.” Similarly, Michael identified empathy in action when he noted:

The neighbors always check up on one another like how Mrs. Pearl, Ms. Jones, and Mr. Charles all rush to the house on page 318 when someone shoots and throws a brick. They always have each other's best interest in mind and act like more of a family than a town. These students recognized gestures that displayed empathy, both on individual and community levels. They demonstrated an acknowledgement and an awareness of the prosocial effect of this kind of behavior and action, thus underscoring the value of empathy and inclusivity.

Data coded as VA were critical to this the theme in that they acknowledged the value of protests, marches, and other activism-oriented initiatives. These statements cited activism from literature, history, and current events. In one example, Mason recognized the conflicting views around protests, but maintained that sometimes it is the only and most powerful way to effect change:

Some people think protesting is a bad way of getting your point across but I feel it's the only way sometimes for people like Rashad. Protesting has the power to bring people together who don't even know each other. For instance, Rashad and Quinn have never met in real life but see each other at the protest because they are fighting the same war and getting their voices heard.

The use of the term “fighting the same war” to acknowledge how protests unify Rashad (a Black teenager) and Quinn (a White teenager) against injustice reinforces the power of activism. Carrie endorsed non-violent approaches to activism by citing an incident in her literature circle book where students “decid[ed] to do a ‘die-in.’ Which is when protesters lie on the floor so they can’t be forced to the ground.” She indicated that this “should happen with most protests so they can’t be mistaken with riots so they don’t turn violent.” The findings in this code illustrated how participants perceived social justice activism initiatives and clarified the parameters of those initiatives, as evidenced by Carrie’s comment about non-violent protests.

The final code in this category, AOS, offered solutions to current sociopolitical problems and charged society with the responsibility to act. These statements were direct calls to action, urging institutions and individuals to play a role in remedying a divisive sociopolitical climate. In his final log, Josh stated:

No matter who we are, no matter what makes us different from another, no matter what hatred we ourselves may face, it is our responsibility as a human being to spread love and acceptance to all. We must listen to differences, be open to them, and bond with others based on our acceptance of dissimilarities as well as our similarities.

Natalie also underscored societal responsibility when she indicated that “we need to start working at being more open-minded and listening to each other.” Both Natalie and Josh emphasized the importance of open-mindedness and compassion. Many of these statements charged society with the responsibility to disseminate awareness, spread knowledge, protect individuals of color from hate crimes, and support diversity.

Most of the data in this theme attempted to bridge the gap between *self* and *other*, recognizing the responsibility of the individual, the group, and society as a whole. Returning to Warin and Muldoon’s (2009) concept of a flexible narrative of self, these codes displayed participants’ movement along a continuum of self-awareness and identity development. Furthermore, this theme showcased how developments in self-awareness gave way to shifts in values. These shifts in values manifested not only as an acknowledgement of the benefits of empathy and activism but also as specific calls to action that implicated society as a whole.

Theme 5. Passivity that Reinforces the Status Quo

Passivity that reinforces the status quo emerged as a barrier to the development of ethnocultural empathy. Four codes were collapsed into this theme; each code can be seen as a predictor of cultural hegemony, which is operationalized as a “tacit agreement with the way that things are. It is the result of socialization, our experiences with social institutions, and our exposure to cultural narratives and imagery, all of which reflect the beliefs and values of the ruling class” (Cole, 2020, p. 1; Lear, 1985). The codes included in this theme are organized in

the order of their salience in the data: (a) assertions of lack of control over systemic problems, (b) laws are laws, (c) the gratitude effect, and (d) sensationalizing hard work (see Appendix I for a full codebook). It is important to note that the racial demographics of participants were critical to the findings in this theme as most of the responses came from White students.

One particular code that was not unique to White participants was asserting a lack of control over systemic problems (ALC). Students, regardless of race and gender, expressed the ubiquity and universality of racism. In Michael's first reflection log, he noted: "Racism is one of the biggest issues in the world that we can't control. Trying will only lead to disappointment." Mary reflected on a racially-motivated incident from her literature circle book: "that scene also brings up another point that there will always be racial violence on the streets. No matter where you live. Whether it's someone mugging another person, or its gang violence, there will always be racism." In much of the data in ALC, participants deferred to racism as an existing force that could not be outmatched. In most cases, these statements included claims that bias will always exist, and there is nothing we can do about it.

To reinforce their lack of control, several students acquiesced to the unquestionable ethicality of existing legislation. This was evidenced by the data coded as laws are laws (LAL). Often, the comments in this code noted the authority and credibility of existing laws as knowing what is best for the American people. For example, Aspen stated:

Even though I feel bad for the poor people struggling to leave their country, I do not believe any of the laws restricting them from entering the US should be altered. Laws are laws and are put in place for good reasons only to benefit the country.

In another instance, Carson acknowledged the discriminatory nature of some laws, but maintained that we should adhere to them nonetheless:

I do believe that some laws that discriminate against illegal immigrants sound harsh, especially in the situation that the characters are in and that is a reality for many people, but I strongly believe the laws should stay and have a good purpose because illegal immigration is illegal and does break the law. Even though in some cases it may be unfair as a country we cannot cross the line between legal and illegal because we feel sympathy for someone.

Though Carson's remark considered the harshness of current legislation, he ultimately maintained that "we cannot cross the line between legal and illegal." In each of these cases, the irrefutability of laws was established to make an argument against refugees and illegal immigrants. In a similar comment, Mitchell stated:

Laws are laws and the American government and its people should not try to break those laws...we are better off letting the laws go and going on with our lives and let the people struggling figure out a solution on their own or with their own government.

It is important to note that, in his second to last reflection log, Mitchell expressed that he had changed his position on illegal immigration; however, he did not elaborate on how or in what sense. For the most part, the statements in this category accepted the status quo and defaulted to the notion that existing laws cannot be questioned, challenged, or amended. These statements sometimes acknowledged and expressed sympathy for the experiences of refugees; still, they maintained the idea that laws are in place for a reason and are not to be overturned.

The data coded as the gratitude effect (TGE) attributed privilege to luck and failed to acknowledge social and civic responsibility. For example, Gisselle reflected on her intergroup dialogue experience noting that it "really made [her] think about privilege and how lucky [she is] to not have to face the things that [her] peers may have to." In another instance, Ryan stated:

I have access to a good education, I will be able to go to college, I have a good family situation, food, water, shelter, and more. I am very lucky to be living the life I am and being surrounded by great people and opportunities.

In these statements, participants shrugged off a critical examination of privilege and acquiesced to a superficial acknowledgement of it, which was readily masked by gratitude. They did not unpack privilege, nor did they take social responsibility. They did not seek justice or fairness for those without privilege, thus embodying passivity and reinforcing the status quo.

Comments that were coded as sensationalizing hard work (SHW) demonstrate cultural hegemony and reinforce the status quo by adhering to and perpetuating the myth of the American Dream. These statements assert that hard work and perseverance are the only and/or greatest indicators of success. Drew reflected on his own family indicating that:

[His] ancestors had come to America from Europe by choice for a better life. This has shaped [his] life in a good way because of how motivated and hardworking they were to get established here in America without dealing with the hate of others with prejudices. Therefore, all of their hard gave [him] the opportunity to succeed in a good school district and a pleasant town.

In another case, Aspen undermined the role of privilege and underscored the importance of hard work:

Being born as an American citizen with the family I have doesn't shape my future, it just shaped my beginning. With my personal choices, I get to choose who I want to be and what I can achieve. I understand that others may have not had the best education or the best upbringing, but they too have to shape their futures and work for what they want in

life. Whether it is being able to travel once a year or spare enough money to pay the rent each month, a true American citizen is a hard worker.

As evidenced by Aspen's remark, statements coded as SHW often defaulted to idealistic narratives of the American Dream. These statements did not account for social barriers or systemic limitations that do not give individuals a fair chance, even with hard work. All of the comments in this code came from White participants, except for one which came from a student of color:

Growing up, my parents lacked religious and financial privilege. However, this did not stop them from growing up to make a happy and successful life for themselves and family. They focused on education and did not let their surroundings and lack of privilege be an excuse for not being successful. The lack of this privilege made me realize that it enables them to work harder and instead of waiting for an opportunity, make an opportunity (Josh).

Several comments, such as Josh's, submitted to the myth of meritocracy and the idealistic narrative of the American Dream. They overlooked systemic privileges that advantaged some groups more than others.

Understanding the processes that contributed to this theme warrants an examination of each distinct code as well as how they intersect with one another. The first two codes analyzed above, ALC and LAL, showcase a submission to systemic authority. The subsequent codes, TGE and SHW, demonstrate two approaches to rationalization both of which reinforce the status quo and display passivity. Thus, deference to systemic factors, failure to acknowledge one's own agency and social responsibility, and submission to the myth of meritocracy perpetuated cultural hegemony by cementing the status quo.

Theme 6. National and Personal Self-Preservation

National and personal self-preservation also emerged as barriers to the development of ethnocultural empathy. Three codes were collapsed into this theme, displaying self-preservation on a personal level through fear and on a national level through exclusivity. The codes included in this theme are organized in the order of their salience in the data: (a) concern for the American economy, (b) concern for American safety, and (c) defining American by establishing parameters (see Appendix I for a full codebook). It is important to note that this theme consisted of the fewest codes and coded excerpts. In addition, most of the comments in this theme came from the same participants, most of whom were White males. Despite the paucity of items in these codes, the richness of participant responses makes them worthy of analysis.

Anti-immigration sentiments were expressed in the form of concern for the American economy (CAE). Participants expressed the need to prioritize Americans by saying things such as, “We have to think about our country's economy and well-being. Jobs are not easy to come by” (Carson). In another case, Mitchell acknowledged the cruelty of his own point but remained steadfast in his belief that immigrants are deleterious to the American economy:

I know these words seem very cruel but I know lots of people that have gone through terrible times in their country...America can't spend its time worrying about every person in need of help and waste its money because America has its own goals that it needs to achieve as well.

In their most extreme, anti-immigration sentiments called for deportation: “They should be deported and sent off because they take jobs away from hard working Americans. No matter if they came here legally or not, people still look at them as bad people” (Aaron). These responses,

among others, suggest that some participants were focused on themselves, even at the expense of outgroup members.

Economic concern was not the sole indicator of self-preservation. Some anti-immigration sentiments were rooted in concerns for American safety (CAS). In one particular example, Aspen cautioned against immigration: “In that case we would have to let in millions of people which may not be fair for others and could do harm to society with drug trafficking and sex trafficking.” In another instance, Natalie acknowledged the inhumanity of deportation but ultimately made the argument that it was the only way to ensure safety:

I wanted to bring up the fact that while it is inhumane to kick people back into danger, it is the best we can do to ensure safety for all. Going back to the house demonstration, if a man comes to your home screaming about a gunman, how do you know they could be dangerous too?

As evidenced by the excerpts above, there was a clear prioritization of self and a desire to protect the well-being of the American people, at any cost. In some cases, participants defaulted to stereotypes of immigrants (e.g., job thieves, drug dealers, criminals) to make arguments against immigration. Given the nature of these attitudes, the focus on self can be seen as a hindrance to the development of ethnocultural empathy.

Not only did participants express concerns about the economy or their safety, but they also demonstrated exclusivity about who could and could not be considered American. The need to define American by establishing parameters (DA-EP) was also seen as a detriment to ethnocultural empathy, particularly because these statements readily *othered* anyone who is not a naturalized citizen. In his reflection on what it means to be an American, Jackson noted:

I feel that an American is someone with the right documents. If they are here illegally they are not considered a American. For the thousands of other immigrants who went through the process of being a legal citizen, it is unfair to them if others can just come for free. We have the rules like this to make sure the people coming to the U.S are not criminals and [are] willing to live the american way.

Possessing the appropriate documentation was important to many students who expressed their positions against illegal immigration. This is further exemplified in Andy's remark:

You can't call yourself an American without going through the legal process of becoming an American or being born here. Those rights that our founding father gave us are for those of us who respect the law to come here legally.

Much like Andy, several participants leaned on American history to make their case about who does and does not have the right to call themselves American. Andy's argument about "the legal process of becoming an American" can be seen as a preservation of national identity.

The codes in this theme suggest that individual and national self-preservation gave way to fear, scapegoating, and exclusivity, which limited the development of ethnocultural empathy. The remarks in these categories were often products of stereotypes perpetuated by the media, stories shared by participants' families, and allusions to American history. None of the examples cited intergroup experiences and very few cited their literature circle readings or their research.

Research Question 2 Conclusion

It was conjectured that the following mediating processes would be evident in participants' process data: (a) using hypothetical statements to take on another's perspective; (b) assertions of current/historical bias and/or discrimination against ethnocultural minorities; (c) dismantling prejudices against ethnocultural minorities; (d) expressions of anger and/or

frustration on behalf of victims of bias, discrimination, and/or hate; and (e) expression of appreciation in the culture and backgrounds of ethnocultural minorities. Each of these conjectured processes emerged in the data analyzed. This section synthesizes the salient elements of each of the themes discussed above, articulates the relationships among them, assigns credit to each of the conjectured processes, and sheds light on other existing processes. Six themes emerged in the analysis of the data. The first four themes contribute to the development of ethnocultural empathy; whereas, the final two limit it.

The four themes that were identified as mediating processes of ethnocultural empathy are: (a) understanding and appreciating culture, (b) awareness of bias and privilege, (c) foregrounding counter narratives and taking perspective, and (d) valuing inclusivity and social justice activism. Collectively, these themes chart the development of ethnocultural empathy. Based on the qualitative data analyzed, it seems the development of ethnocultural empathy is a gradual progression wherein one discovers *self* and *other* simultaneously. Most participants demonstrated these mediating processes in the order in which they are presented; however, the depth and the extent to which they demonstrated these skills varied. The two themes that limited the development of ethnocultural empathy were (e) passivity that reinforces the status quo and (f) national and personal self-preservation. Both of these themes were driven by self-interest, protection of American identity, and fear of disrupting the natural order of things.

Connections Across Themes

It is important to consider the relationships among the themes that contributed to the development of ethnocultural empathy and those that limited it. The findings in the themes that contributed to the development of empathy relied heavily on the elements of the learning environment design. On the other hand, the data in the final two themes rarely, if at all,

referenced the learning environment embodiments. Rather, these data relied heavily on personal experience, family testimony, news, and media. It is worth noting that some of the perspectives and positions that were founded to be limiting elements of ethnocultural empathy early in the intervention were later resolved by participants by their final reflection logs. This suggests that the intervention may have been grounds for shifts in perspectives and viewpoints. Collectively, these findings indicate that the design of the intervention elicited more mediating factors that contributed to empathy than those that limited it.

An analysis of the mediating processes that contributed to the development of ethnocultural empathy suggests that each process moved participants along the continuum of self-awareness and identity development. As evidenced by the reflection log data, participants' intergroup contact shaped their appreciation of culture and understanding of diverse experiences (theme 1), which laid the groundwork for their research portfolios. These research portfolios facilitated the development of an awareness of bias and privilege (theme 2), which was enriched by students' intergroup experiences. The findings of this theme suggest that students had built a knowledge base around bias, discrimination, and hate in America. The knowledge that students had acquired in the second theme gave them the currency to foreground counter narratives and participate in perspective taking (theme 3). They often engaged in repositioning as a means of sense-making, which occasionally manifested as anger and/or frustration on behalf of those targeted by bias. The cognitive and affective engagement of the first three themes fueled the development of inclusive, activism-oriented values (theme 4). Most of the data in this theme charged society with the responsibility to disseminate awareness, spread knowledge, protect individuals of color from hate crimes, and support diversity. A sequential examination of the themes illustrates how each one builds on the affordances of those that came before it.

Identifying the relationship between the two themes that emerged as limitations to ethnocultural empathy warrants an understanding of implicit and explicit tendencies to maintain the status quo. The initial limiting factor, passivity that reinforces the status quo (theme 5), emerged as an implicit tendency to maintain cultural hegemony (Cole, 2020; Lear, 1985). Many participants deferred to systems of power, failed to acknowledge their own agencies and social responsibilities, and submitted to the myth of meritocracy. These indicators of hegemony made it so that participants did not have to profoundly involve themselves in the experiences of ethnocultural minorities. In contrast, individual and national self-preservation (theme 6) explicitly sought to maintain the status quo. The codes in theme were characterized by fear, scapegoating, and exclusivity, which limited the development of ethnocultural empathy. Though seemingly different in their intent, both of these themes operated as barriers to the development of ethnocultural empathy. Not only did they interfere with participants' abilities to interact with and understand outgroup perspectives, but they also made it difficult for participants to better understand themselves in the context of a racially and culturally polarized sociopolitical climate.

CHAPTER V

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the design of a literacy intervention and understand the development of ethnocultural empathy in the context of a 10th grade ELA unit of study. This chapter provides a summary of the results, situates the findings in a broader empirical and theoretical context, and notes the implications and limitations of the study. Finally, I leverage the limitations to make recommendations for future research.

Summary of Findings

This section summarizes the methods and findings of each research question. Importantly, this section highlights how each hypothesis was tested and how the results compared to the conjectured outcomes.

Research Question 1

The research design of this study used quantitative methods, namely descriptive and inferential statistics, to evaluate the efficacy of the intervention. Students' writing samples from the beginning and end of the study were collected and analyzed. A quantitative analysis of student writing was used to evaluate progress on a measure of ethnocultural empathy, the adapted IKC Rubric. Based on this 8-point rubric, a score of a 6 indicates overall proficiency. On the pre-assessment, participants scored an average of 3.78 with a standard deviation of 0.82. On the post-assessment, participants scored an average of 5.76 with a standard deviation of 1.28. This indicates participants' pre-assessment scores were below the mark of proficiency and their post-assessment scores were nearing proficiency. In addition, there was less variance to the mean in the pre scores when compared to the post scores. In other words, the data were on average

closer to the mean on the pre-assessment. The *t*-test comparing pre and post scores revealed a statistically significant increase ($p < 0.0001$) in participants' levels of ethnocultural empathy.

Research Question 2

The research design and methods for this study also set out to examine and understand the nuanced ways in which participants made sense of ethnocultural experiences while engaged in the intervention. A qualitative thematic analysis (which employed provisional coding) was used to examine student writing for mediating processes of ethnocultural empathy. It was conjectured that the following mediating processes would be evident in participants' process data: (a) using hypothetical statements to take on another's perspective; (b) assertions of current/historical bias and/or discrimination against ethnocultural minorities; (c) dismantling prejudices against ethnocultural minorities; (d) expressions of anger and/or frustration on behalf of victims of bias, discrimination, and/or hate; and (e) expressions of appreciation in the culture and backgrounds of ethnocultural minorities. The findings from this study confirmed the presence of each of the aforementioned mediating processes, collapsing some into categories and themes, as well as detecting the emergence of other mediating processes. Thus, four themes were distilled as mediating processes that contributed to the development of ethnocultural empathy: (a) understanding diverse experiences and appreciating culture, (b) awareness of bias and privilege, (c) foregrounding counter narratives and taking perspective, and (d) valuing inclusivity and social justice activism. Two additional themes emerged as limitations to the development of ethnocultural empathy: (e) passivity that reinforces the status quo and (f) national and self-preservation.

Designing for Ethnocultural Empathy

The following section discusses the quantitative and qualitative findings of the study with great consideration given to how the results contribute to the existing field of research. I take note of how these findings align with and diverge from the theoretical frameworks and empirical studies that influenced this design. To do so, I investigate the salient aspects of my data and consider the design elements that may have produced those effects. Because this work intends to inform curricular and pedagogical interventions for all students, the focus of this analysis is on how the findings relate to the learning environment design and its intended effect.

The Prosocial Effects of Intergroup Contact, Dialogue, and Critical Literacy

Recent studies have shown the prosocial effects of intergroup contact and dialogue (Bachen, Hernandez-Ramos, & Raphael, 2012; Behm-Morawitz, Pennell, & Speno, 2016; Diaz, 2009; Eastin, Appliah, & Cicchirillo, 2009; Griffin, Mikel, Brown, & Warren, 2012; Groom, Bailenson, & Nass, 2009; Laman, Jewett, Jennings, Wilson, Souto-Manning, 2012; Lopez & Nastasi, 2012; Nordstrom, 2015; Reason, Roosa Millar & Scales, 2005; Zúñiga, Lopez, & Ford, 2012); however, there is a dearth of research that has evaluated the effects of these theoretical frameworks on adolescents in academic contexts, particularly in suburban schools. Consequently, there is a lack of research that endorses a particular pedagogical framework or instructional approach to support adolescents in their development of ethnocultural empathy. This section discusses the results of the quantitative analysis, which suggested that the learning environment design (predicated on intergroup contact, dialogue, and critical literacy) had favorable effects on participants' levels of ethnocultural empathy. It not only discusses noteworthy elements of the statistical findings but also investigates possible reasons for these results in the context of other empirical studies that shared similar theoretical frameworks.

The Development of Empathy

A descriptive analysis of pre and post scores on the 4-point empathy subscale of the IKC Rubric suggests that the mean for each subgroup increased between pre- and post-test. Importantly, as the means increased between pre- and post-assessments so did the standard deviation for all subgroups, except for males of color. When considering the increase in both the means and the standard deviation of those means, it is important to address what this suggests about individual participants and how it may have affected the aggregated descriptive analysis. These findings imply that, as a result of the intervention, the discrepancy between participants' scores on this measure increased. This could be the result of several factors including but not limited to participants' varying degrees of engagement with the learning environment design, limitations in participants' abilities to express empathy through a written medium, the rigidity of participants' preconceived notions and beliefs about outgroup members, and/or the number of participants in each subgroup. The increase in discrepancy among participants' scores is a critical finding because it suggests that the efficacy of the intervention (as measured by the empathy subscale) varied based on the participant.

Another important finding on the empathy subscale was that White males demonstrated the most growth between pre- and post-test; they also possessed the highest mean score on the post-test (2.80 ± 0.62). This suggests that White males were most affected by the elements of the intervention that were designed to elicit an affective response. Because research indicates that White males are more likely to disengage from this work (Solomona, Portelli, Daniel, & Campbell, 2005) and this intervention was designed with resistance and reluctance to racial discourse in mind, the scaffolds in place likely supported White males in their development of empathy. For example, the learning environment design gave students regulated choice in the

context of young adult books with protagonists of color, it gave students multiple opportunities to engage in dialogue and problem-solving alongside outgroup members, and it provided ample opportunities for engagement with non-fiction through research. All of these elements supported and scaffolded the development of participants' awareness of outgroup experiences in a way that was non-threatening to their own identities.

The Development of Knowledge

A descriptive analysis of pre and post scores on the 4-point knowledge subscale also indicates that the mean for each subgroup increased between pre- and post-assessments. While the standard deviation between pre and post increased for White participants, it decreased for participants of color. This suggests that, on the post-assessment, White participants had a greater variance in their knowledge of outgroups' values, histories, politics, beliefs, and practices. This could be attributed to a variance in White participants' receptivity to and understanding of the information provided by the primary knowledge embodiment (research portfolios). Students of color may have had an easier time assimilating newfound knowledge into pre-existing schemas of experience. Interestingly, White males demonstrated the largest increase between pre and post means (+1.50), followed by females of color (+1.28), males of color (+1.25), and White females (+1.20). Females of color had the lowest scores on the knowledge subscale at the onset of the study and demonstrated the second greatest increase by the end. While it is unclear why this was the case, and the sample size was not large enough to make speculations, one could consider current systems of public education as culprits of knowledge deficits. Academic curricula rarely provide students with opportunities to develop knowledge of other cultures, which has deleterious effects on all students regardless of race and ethnicity.

The findings from this study suggest that a change in ethnocultural empathy from pre-test to post-test was mediated more by cognitive elements than affective. These findings contradict previous findings that have suggested positive intergroup contact relies more on affective mediators, such as decreased anxiety and increased empathy (Islam & Hewstone, 1993; Stephan & Stephan, 1985; Swart, Hewstone, Christ, & Voci, 2011). Though there may be validity to the point that affective mediators are predictors of prejudice reduction (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008; Hayward, Tropp, Hornsey, & Barlow, 2017), one should not discount the role of cognitive mediators such as knowledge. In all subgroups, regardless of race and gender, the knowledge subscale demonstrated significantly more growth than the empathy subscale. Perhaps the cognitive and the affective aspects of empathy become increasingly connected in perspective taking tasks so much so that the medium of the expression dictates which one leads the charge. Because the unit of analysis in this study was student writing, it is possible that knowledge was easier for the participants to convey and the researcher to detect.

Mediating Processes of and Barriers to Ethnocultural Empathy

The purpose of this section is to discuss the mediating processes that were predictors of and barriers to ethnocultural empathy. In addition, this section clarifies the relationships among the data, the mediating processes, the design embodiments, and the guiding theoretical frameworks. To do so, I closely examine how the findings assign credit and/or blame to the facets of the learning environment. In turn, this adds clarity to the theoretical frameworks that were the basis of the designed intervention.

Theme 1: Understanding Diverse Experiences and Appreciating Culture

Understanding diverse experiences and appreciating culture was a critical mediating process that emerged from participants' reflection logs. To better understand the role of this

mediating process to the overall development of ethnocultural empathy, one must consider the role of White fragility. White fragility is “a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves” (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 54). It points to the notion that “our largely segregated society is set up to insulate whites from racial discomfort,” which has resulted in a “lack of ‘racial stamina’ to engage in difficult conversations” (Waldman, 2018, p. 1). In the context of this study, when participants engaged in those difficult conversations about race, they began the work of dismantling White fragility. It is important to note that the willingness to engage in these difficult conversations was not unique to White participants.

The analysis of this theme revealed that both White students and students of color were able to demonstrate an understanding of one another. For example, Aliyah, a student of color, displayed an understanding of an outgroup member’s experience by saying:

Before this I didn't ever think about how white people must feel when we talk about police brutality. There was a girl in my circle whose dad is a cop and she was talking about how he gets stereotyped all the time. This opened my eyes to the feelings of cops kids because not all cops are bad.

Similarly, Yvonne, a White female, noted:

People who were in my group who are a different race than me talked about some of the struggles they have, such as people joking about them being Mexican. This opened my eyes to issues that they can face every day even though we go to the same school.

Both of these reflections demonstrate a shift in the participant’s sense of self and understanding of others as a result of the stories shared by their outgroup peers. Interestingly, both participants use the phrase “opened my eyes” to suggest that they had shifted from a position of ignorance to

empathy. The usage of this phrase allowed participants to safely enter a space of understanding without having to engage with the discomfort of how and why these truths were not evident to them before. Notably, the design element that may have elicited many of the responses in this theme, the storytelling approach of the initial intergroup dialogue session, sought to ensure that participants did not feel overwhelmed by or implicated in systemic racism. As such, it allowed participants to listen without feeling compelled to engage or respond.

In most instances, participants credited their newfound understandings to the stories shared in the intergroup dialogue circles. Research corroborates the connection between storytelling and empathy, noting it as one of the most effective ways to implement intergroup dialogue and ethnocultural discourse. Some researchers advocate for storytelling as a means of reducing prejudiced attitudes and increasing ethnocultural empathy (Caruthers, 2006; Caruthers, Thompson, & Eubanks, 2004; Golobski Twomey & Bifuh-Ambe, 2012; Kim, 2016). Feshbach and Feshbach (2009) indicate that storytelling gives participants a safe entry point into strengthening their cognitive abilities to discern the affective states of others. The findings in this theme note the value of storytelling not only as a force that breaks the silence around race and culture (Caruthers, 2006) but also as a valuable component of transformational spaces that help individuals analyze ethnocultural knowledge and identities (Rodriguez, 2010). This theme extends the findings from Rodriguez's study (2010), which was limited to students of color, and corroborates the results from other studies that note the value of storytelling as a tool that validates the lived experiences of all participants and increases appreciation of culture (Caruthers, 2006; Caruthers, Thompson, & Eubanks, 2004; Golobski Twomey & Bifuh-Ambe, 2012).

Zuniga, Lopez, and Ford (2012) examined how dialogue opens up doors and allows individuals to transcend the limitations imposed by society. In the context of ethnocultural discourse, intergroup dialogue gives individuals a chance to communicate, critically reflect on self and society, and transform collaboratively. It is important to note that intergroup contact and dialogue have generalizable effects (Allport; 1954; Pettigrew, 1998). In this theme, these effects consisted of participants relating to the experiences of outgroup members, admiring their characteristics and personality traits, and demonstrating an appreciation of cultures that have been historically marginalized.

Students taking note of similarities between themselves and their Muslim peers, admiring the strength and courage of Black teenage activists, and reflecting on the contributions of Black Americans during the Harlem Renaissance demonstrate the transformational power of intergroup contact (Allport, 1954) and dialogue (Zuniga, Lopez & Ford, 2012). In these instances, participants engaged willingly with the experiences and cultural contributions of outgroup members. Erle and Topolinski (2017) conducted five perspective taking experiments; the results of these experiments note that perspective taking led to increased perceptions of similarity and, subsequently, more favorable attitudes towards outgroup members. The findings of the current study produced similar outcomes but were mediated by intergroup contact and dialogue rather than perspective taking. It can be argued, however, that the nature of the contact and dialogue created a simulative experience akin to that of the perspective taking tasks in Erle and Topolinski's study (2017). This further corroborates the transportive and transformational power of intergroup contact and dialogue. Notably, effective intergroup dialogue transcends individual differences and engages multiple perspectives to make meaning (Freire, 1972; Bakhtin, 1984 as cited in Rule, 2009; Sorenson, 2010; Zúñiga, Lopez, & Ford, 2012).

Theme 2: Awareness of Bias and Privilege

Awareness of bias and privilege was a prominent mediating process that emerged in the data. Participants relied on primary and secondary sources to develop their understandings of existing inequities. This theme played a pivotal role in the development of ethnocultural empathy, particularly because it supported participants in building a knowledge base around systemic racism. Students were not only able to recognize the devastating effects of bias, but also orient themselves in systems of power and privilege.

One way that White participants demonstrated an awareness of bias and privilege was by identifying instances in which their experiences differed from those of outgroup members. For example, Peter indicated, “If I were to get pulled over by the cops, I would have no fear that my parents and I could be in danger of getting shot.” Peter’s ability to juxtapose his reality with the realities of others suggests that he had developed an awareness of how skin color grants him and those that look like him a certain amount of power and privilege. Participants took note of differences in experience on an individual level and effectively situated these isolated incidents into larger institutionalized inequities. For example, Jade acknowledged systemic problems that plague inner-city communities including “police brutality,” “higher rate of juvenile crime,” and “poor schools.” Comments such as these indicate that participants recognized racism as an institutional problem that systemically marginalizes people of color. It is important to note that participants did not all gravitate to single instances of bias or discrimination; rather, they sought to investigate the relationship between and among these identified injustices.

It is evident that participants began to overturn the status quo by questioning power, privilege, and oppression. They examined historical, social, and political power structures to identify and acknowledge differences in experiences on account of race, culture, and/or ethnicity

(Freebody & Luke, 1990 as cited in Stevens & Bean, 2007; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993). For instance, Aspen held up a magnifying glass to White privilege when she noted that she “never [has] to think twice about a police officer pulling [her] over for a broken tail light, or leaving a store with a hoodie on...[or]...keeping [her] hands visible at all times, or justifying [her] purchase for something that [she’s] being accused of stealing.” It is likely that both intergroup contact and critical literacy shaped Aspen’s experience because her statement demonstrates an acute awareness of *self* and *other*. In their study on the effects of intergroup contact, Reason, Roosa Millar, and Scales (2005) indicated that exposure to a diverse student body and meaningful interactions across social identity groups allowed White students to reflect deeply upon their understanding of self in the context of racial identity perceptions. Additionally, literacy research finds that today’s readers partake in practices that position them at the center of their readings and interpretations (Thomas & Stronaiuolo, 2016). Critical literacy can equip readers with the skills to investigate their own positionalities in relation to others’ (Lewison et al., 2002; Shor, 1987). Aspen’s amplified awareness of her privilege displays a shrewd understanding of how she has been positioned, thus laying the foundation for her repositioning.

The findings in this theme map onto the immersion stage of White racial identity development (Helms & Cook, 1999/2005, Linder, 2015). Linder (2015) notes that in this stage, “White individuals begin the search for an understanding of Whiteness, specifically as it relates to racism and the privilege they receive as a White person. The person seeks accurate information about Whiteness and racism, working to understand socialization related to White privilege. Often, White people in the immersion stage focus on relationships with people of color to understand their White identity” (p. 536). The data from this theme reveal that White participants were engaged in the immersion stage of White racial identity development when

they identified current and historical inequities, noted injustices, and reflected on biased feelings and actions towards ethnocultural minorities. Jade's reflection on police brutality, rates of juvenile crime, and disparities in academic opportunities illustrates an understanding of current and historical inequities. Clearly, Jade leveraged her research to acquire "accurate information about Whiteness and racism" in an attempt to "understand socialization related to White privilege" (Linder, 2015, p. 536). Aspen and Peter drew from their intergroup experiences and their literature circle books to try to understand their White identities and the power it affords them when engaging with law enforcement.

These results indicate that the designed intergroup contact, both literary and interpersonal, gave way to a heightened awareness of inequities and created opportunities for critical self-reflection (Adams, 2007; Maxwell, Fisher, Thompson, & Behling, 2011; Mayhew & Fernandez, 2007; Sorenson, 2010; Zuniga, Nagda, Chesler, Cytron, & Walker, 2007). In most cases, participants' research was driven by issues of bias, discrimination, and/or hate that emerged in their intergroup dialogue and/or their literature circle books. Importantly, these interactions supported participants' investigations of self and society. The self-awareness acquired through these interactions and experiences laid the foundation for the critical repositioning and perspective taking that prepared them to subvert dominant discourse.

Theme 3. Foregrounding Counter Narratives and Taking Perspective

The data that emerged in this theme reinforced and clarified the function of critical literacy as an integral theoretical and pedagogical framework. To understand how this mediating process was a predictor of ethnocultural empathy, it is important to establish that critical literacy engages students in: "(a) disrupting the commonplace, (b) interrogating multiple viewpoints, (c) focusing on sociopolitical issues, and (d) taking action and promoting social justice" (Coffey,

2008; Lewison et al., 2002, p. 382). By giving participants the tools to engage with issues of power, critical literacy enabled them to foreground counter narratives and take alternative perspectives.

By foregrounding counter narratives and engaging in perspective taking, students disrupted the commonplace (Lewison et al., 2002) and dismantled hegemonic structures (Lears, 1985). In some cases, this consisted of examining the immigrant experience, ranging from a lack of opportunities to facing White supremacy in America. Participants also interrogated multiple viewpoints (Lewison et al., 2002) when they unpacked the cognitive and affective aspects of the immigrant experience: “This makes me wonder if migrants crossing the desert ever regret their decision? Do they ever think that the pain is actually worth it? Or perhaps they fear life in Mexico so much that they are willing to go through the pain” (Baker). Baker considered the role of fear and pain as he investigated and reflected on immigrants’ journeys across the Mexican border. While this interrogation of multiple viewpoints was critical to foregrounding counter narratives, many participants constructed a monolithic narrative about the immigrant experience—painting it as rife with difficulty.

In keeping with the tenets of critical literacy, the reflections that contributed to this theme all focused on sociopolitical issues including illegal immigration, police brutality, poverty in communities of color, and bias crimes against Muslim Americans. Participants’ tendencies to gravitate towards sociopolitical issues (Lewison et al., 2002) in their reflections suggest that they were cognitively and affectively engaged in making sense of how these issues affect outgroup members. Importantly, this interaction with sociopolitical issues prompted participants to reflect on the damage caused by bias and consider how one might set the record straight. For example, Sadie discussed Trump’s views on illegal immigrants: “He thinks that every single illegal

immigrant is going to cause harm and is a drug dealer, but most of them are just looking for asylum.” In this reflection, Sadie sought to identify and dismantle a stereotype that was perpetuated by a person in a position of authority. Many of the comments that corrected stereotypes and bias-based statements did so with evidence to the contrary by drawing from intergroup dialogue sessions, literature circle books, and research. This not only shows how participants displayed a sense of social justice but also demonstrates how the design elements armed them with the agency to right wrongs.

By minimizing the distance between *self* and *other*, critical literacy prepares us to cognitively explore and affectively understand perspectives, which is a precursor to ethnocultural empathy (Wang et al., 2003). When compounded with intergroup contact and dialogue, critical literacy motivates participants to share the burden of bias, which further diminishes the distance between ingroup and outgroup members. In her remark about bias against Muslims in America, Gloria said she felt “sickened for the safety and happiness of Muslim citizens.” She went on to say that it “utterly disturbs [her] that there are citizens who harass Muslims for embracing their culture.” Her ability to leverage her intergroup contact experiences to corroborate her research and reading was evident when she said that this kind of hate “does not only exist in books but in real life as well.” In this example, and many others like it, students displayed a proximity to outgroup experiences and often expressed a visceral reaction to bias incidents. Participants’ tendencies to share the burden of bias can be best understood through research on perspective taking and simulation.

Perspective taking and simulation research notes that contact with outgroup members leads participants to adopt their thoughts and feelings and increases perceptions of similarity (Erle & Topolinski, 2017). To better understand why this occurs, it is important to consider the

role of transportation in perspective taking. Empathy scholars underscore the value of transportive elements, especially in activities such as reading literature and engaging in simulations. In addition, research finds that transportation is a key predictor of bias reduction and increased empathy (Bachen, Hernandez-Ramos, & Raphael, 2012; Behm-Morawitz, Pennell, & Speno, 2016; Eastin, Appliah, & Cicchirillo, 2009; Groom, Bailenson, & Nass, 2009; Peck, Seinfeld, Aglioti, & Slater, 2013; Pelligrini, 2009; Yee et al., 2009). As such, participants' tendencies to channel the anger and frustration of those targeted by bias, almost as if it were their own, can be attributed to the transportive elements of the texts that students read and the intergroup dialogue they engaged in. The transportive elements of the narratives they experienced underscore the finding that intergroup contact, when mediated by perspective taking, reduces bias and increases empathy. The qualitative findings in this theme shed light on the nature of these processes among adolescents as they engage critically with literary and interpersonal contact. Therefore, these results acknowledge the criticality of student-directed inquiry, especially in regard to identifying patterns in experiences and countering dominant discourse.

Theme 4. Valuing Inclusivity and Social Justice Activism

Valuing inclusivity and social justice activism was a critical predictor of ethnocultural empathy. This theme demonstrated participants' flexible narratives of self (Warin & Muldoon, 2009) and commitment to social justice on individual, group, and societal levels. Through this mediating process, participants demonstrated the complex capacity to understand themselves and others by asserting inclusive values and articulating the function of social justice activism as a means to achieve those ends.

Importantly, this theme clarifies how adolescent participants developed their ways of seeing and knowing. More specifically, when Jade credited better interpersonal relationships to empathy and perspective taking, she advocated for a multi-dimensional way of seeing the world. This was corroborated by Tom who acknowledged the limits of his own one-dimensional point of view:

I've grown up and experienced life through one generic point of view...I will never truly know what it's like to go through life as another person of a different background, but history has taught me that I at least have to make an attempt to understand other people and their experiences as Americans and as individuals.

Tom's recognition that he will never truly understand another person's life experiences and his assertion that he still has to try can be seen as the crux of ethnocultural empathy; this is where awareness and compassion intersect, moving him along the continuum of White racial identity development (Linder, 2015). In comments such as Tom's, students were beginning to come to terms with their own identities and the roles they played in society.

In the context of racial discourse, intergroup dialogue gives individuals a chance to communicate, critically reflect on self and society, and transform collaboratively (Zuniga, Lopez, & Ford (2012). In his final reflection log, Josh commented on how the dialogue sessions shaped his understanding of himself and his society when he said:

No matter who we are, no matter what makes us different from another, no matter what hatred we ourselves may face, it is our responsibility as a human being to spread love and acceptance to all. We must listen to differences, be open to them, and bond with others based on our acceptance of dissimilarities as well as our similarities.

Josh's ability to assign responsibility to individuals in society on account of being human beings further demonstrates how he is on the path to collective transformation (Zuniga, Lopez & Ford, 2012). While Tom spoke to his responsibility to try to understand others, Josh employed unifying pronouns to establish a collective and communal responsibility.

In the reflection logs, participants corrected misconceptions, resolved earlier beliefs, and developed stances on controversial topics. For example, Sam was able to develop an opinion on football players kneeling during the national anthem:

Before reading this book, I never really had an opinion on football players kneeling during the National Anthem, but now that I have finished *The Hate U Give*, I think it was the right decision because the players can help end hate crimes by using their status.

In another case, Mitchell noted that he was "able to reconsider [his] perspective on illegal immigration and see how [his] research of the topic relates closely with the experiences and events of the characters in [his] book." While Sam articulated what contributed to his perspective shift, Mitchell simply indicated that he had reconsidered his perspective. As seen by these two examples, participants decided what and how much they disclosed in their reflection logs, which made it difficult to ascribe the word "change" to participants' identity development. To prevent a dilution or exaggeration of the shifts that occurred, this analysis focused primarily on the design embodiments that may have elicited these shifts.

Whether students shifted their viewpoints, developed a position, or corrected earlier misconceptions, the most critical contributor to this mediating process was the fact that students had the liberty to decide how and to what degree, if at all, they shifted their views. It is probable that students felt comfortable reflecting on their personal views and beliefs because the learning environment design gave them multiple opportunities to reflect, but did not dictate the necessary

depth, extent, or nature of that reflection. By giving students multiple opportunities to reflect, the design of this intervention provided students with the means to develop their identity capital (Côté, 1996). It is likely that as students developed this capital, they grew more willing and comfortable to reflect on their positions in society.

The emphasis that was put on action (on individual, group, and societal level) suggests that students had developed an active understanding of social and civic responsibility. Mason pointed to the unifying power of protests when he observed that, “Rashad and Quinn have never met in real life but see each other at the protest because they are fighting the same war and getting their voices heard.” In another instance, Carrie endorsed non-violent approaches to activism by citing an example from her literature circle book. In both cases, Mason and Carrie felt comfortable citing social justice activism as one of the most effective ways to overturn the status quo and dismantle historical, social, and political power structures (Freebody & Luke, 1990 as cited in Stevens & Bean, 2007; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993).

It is important to note how intricately connected social justice activism is to valuing inclusivity (Wang et al., 2003). Without activism, valuing inclusivity only moves individuals so far on the continuum of identity development. When individuals possess values that they do not act on, they limit their potential to fight for justice alongside outgroup members. The data in this theme were rife with mentions of activism; this indicates that participants had conceptualized ways of disseminating inclusive messages and advocating for justice. Thus, this mediating process was found to be one of the strongest predictors of ethnocultural empathy.

Theme 5. Passivity that Reinforces the Status Quo

Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony frames the discussion of how a passive outlook reinforces the status quo and, subsequently, limits the development of ethnocultural empathy.

Lears (1985) translated Gramsci's characterization of hegemony as "the 'spontaneous' consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group" (p. 568). Lears (1985) elaborated on this by noting that "the concept of hegemony has little meaning unless paired with the notion of domination" (p. 568). Historically, this domination was the result of one's prestige and position in the world of production. An analysis of this theory revealed that "the values, norms, perceptions, beliefs, sentiments, and prejudices that support and define the existing distribution of goods, the institutions that decide how this distribution occurs, and the permissible range of disagreement about those processes" (Lears, 1985, p. 569) are all components of a dominant culture that require consent. But for Gramsci, "consent and force nearly always coexist, though one or the other predominates" (Lears, 1985, p. 569).

When considering the implications of cultural hegemony on the findings in this theme, we must understand how the displayed cognitive processes submit to, and are derivative of, the dominant culture. For example, comments that acknowledge the ubiquity of racism and the futility of trying to combat it (such as those from Michael and Mary) give "spontaneous consent" (Lears, 1985) and reinforce the dominant discourse. The very process of inaction is action enough to maintain the status quo. This is best exemplified by comments such as "laws are laws and the American government and its people should not try to break those laws" (Mitchell). The theory of cultural hegemony indicates that most subordinate consent takes the form of an active commitment to the established order, as evidenced by Mitchell's insistence on maintaining existing legislation. Lears (1985) clarified that the tendency to adhere to the established order may be "based on a deeply held belief that the rulers are indeed legitimate" (p. 569). Failure to critically examine laws for the ways in which they reproduce cultural hegemony further cements

the status quo. Theorists who study cultural hegemony note that both the dominant and the subordinate play a role in maintaining it. In fact, cultural hegemony is so deeply embedded in society that even those who are disadvantaged by it often end up actively supporting it.

In the context of this research, participants of color gave “spontaneous consent” and active support to cultural hegemony by succumbing to the myth of meritocracy. Idealistic perceptions of hard work made it so that even those who have historically been on the periphery of dominant culture upheld it:

Growing up, my parents lacked religious and financial privilege. However, this did not stop them from growing up to make a happy and successful life for themselves and family. They focused on education and did not let their surroundings and lack of privilege be an excuse for not being successful. The lack of this privilege made me realize that it enables them to work harder and instead of waiting for an opportunity, make an opportunity (Josh).

In this excerpt, Josh recognized his parents’ lack of privilege but failed to see it as a consequence of cultural hegemony designed to maintain the dominant discourse. Rather, he submitted to the bootstrapping argument, which was designed precisely to present the illusion of equal opportunities for success in America. It is important to note that cultural hegemony is not reproduced by any single individual, but rather the collective’s acquiescence to the established order of things. In this study, the established order of things took shape in participants’ perceptions of legislation as “right,” and all things that challenged it as “wrong.” Dichotomizing right and wrong, good and bad, illegal and legal were all ways in which cultural hegemony was propagated.

Even the sheer failure to engage deeply with the sociopolitical problems faced by members of one's outgroup can be characterized as both the origin and byproduct of cultural hegemony. In this theme, this manifested as expressions of gratitude for privilege. Rather than critically examining privilege, many participants acknowledged that their life experiences differed significantly from others' and attributed those differences to luck. For example, Gisselle reflected on her intergroup dialogue experience and noted that it "really made [her] think about privilege and how lucky [she is] to not have to face the things that [her] peers may have to." Similarly, Ryan attributed his "access to a good education, a good family situation," and "food, water, and shelter" to luck and "being surrounded by great people and opportunities." In both cases, participants sidestepped the key issues at hand and overlooked the factors that contributed to differences in experience.

Whether it is deliberate or unintentional, this sidestepping of critical discourse fails to challenge the status quo, thereby legitimizing it. As such, cultural hegemony is cultivated implicitly over time. When we begin the process of investigating it, questioning it, and challenging it, we enter willingly into an abyss that questions many of our fundamental truths. The discussion of these findings in the context of cultural hegemony suggests that our submission to the status quo begins much earlier than we can imagine. The remarks made by students in this theme can be traced back to subversions of the truth that have been passed down through hegemonic systems, including but not limited to public schools, families, and mass media.

Theme 6: National and Personal Self-Preservation

Unpacking the findings in this theme warrants a closer examination of White identity politics and the preservation of Whiteness. Whiteness as a construct can be defined as "a set of

practices that function to protect and maintain privilege” (Leek, 2013, p. 214 as cited in Lindner, 2018). This attempt at protecting and maintaining privilege manifested in participants’ remarks about the defining characteristics and attributes of being an American, particularly as it relates to citizenship and naturalization.

Students often relied on nationality as the defining element of membership in American society. Andy’s remark, and many others like it, exemplified a desire to preserve American nationality:

You can't call yourself an American without going through the legal process of becoming an American or being born here. Those rights that our founding father gave us are for those of us who respect the law to come here legally.

In an attempt to preserve Whiteness, students created an arbitrary hierarchy that recognized some members of society as more American than others. At the top of this ladder were those who were born here and whose ancestors were born here. The second rung was occupied by those who had undergone the process of naturalization and could speak fluent English. Notably, naturalization functioned as an initiation in the sense that one’s individual identity was shed in deference to a larger group identity. The third rung was inhabited by those who had been naturalized but could not speak fluent English. All others who did not possess the same sociopolitical capital fell to the bottom. By creating a hierarchy of legitimization, participants clung to and preserved their own American identities.

In another instance, a student defined an American as someone “with the right documents,” and he noted that “we have the rules like this to make sure the people coming to the U.S are not criminals and are people willing to live the American way” (Jackson). This remark invites us to examine what drives opposition to immigrants, especially among White Americans

who are far more opposed to immigration than other Americans (Abrajano & Hajnal 2015; Espenshade & Hempstead, 1996; Kinder & Sanders, 1996 as cited in Jardina, 2019). Jardina (2019) notes that “in contemporary debates, immigration opponents often frame the issue as an economic problem; immigrants, they argue, take jobs from American citizens, depress wages, and are a heavy burden on the social welfare system” (p. 156). Jackson’s point about “the right documents” and “the American way” corroborates the finding that protecting Whiteness is a means of self-preservation. By equating the possession of citizenship with a willingness to live the American way, he strengthens the notion that naturalization is a dissolution of one’s initial identity in deference to a new identity.

Many of the comments in this theme expressed concern for American safety and alluded to illegal immigrants as unknown variables that could compromise the physical safety and economic well-being of Americans. Aaron noted that “[immigrants] should be deported and sent off because they take jobs away from hard working Americans. No matter if they came here legally or not, people still look at them as bad people.” For Aaron, perception was the most important indicator of Whiteness. According to him, legal immigration does not lend any legitimacy to immigrants. Aaron’s statement, advocating the deportation of all immigrants, maps right onto the findings of Jardina’s study (2019). Though Aaron cited economic concerns, at the core of his argument was an uncompromising desire to preserve his personal and national identity. His call for deportation, regardless of immigration status, suggests that the hostility that fuels anti-immigration sentiment is about racial and national identity preservation.

Racial and national identity preservation manifests even in statements that express concern for physical safety. For example, Aspen said that letting in “millions of people...could do harm to society with drug trafficking and sex trafficking.” Additionally, Jackson

dichotomized criminals and citizens, implying that legal documentation of citizenship certifies that one is not a criminal and is willing to live the “American way.” Implicit in both arguments is this notion of American citizens as safe and immigrants as threats. In their conception of immigrant-induced violence, these participants overlook the prevalence of violence committed by White Americans. It seems that their concerns regarding threats to American safety were fundamentally connected to race and ethnicity.

Mingus and Zopf (2010) cited the theory of racial formation (Omi & Winant, 1994) to argue that race plays a factor in media and public discourse only when the perpetrator of any crime is not White. They indicated that “mass shootings represent a particular form of racial project that results in a differential representation of white and non-white shooters such that the raciality of whiteness and the privilege it contains remains intact” (Mingus & Zopf, 2010, p. 64). They referenced the coverage of the Columbine shooting to note that “by denying race a role in the explanation for the unanticipated violence by two White boys, the hegemony of whiteness is reinforced, given a position of normalcy, and made invisible” (Mingus & Zopf, 2010, p. 65). Kimmel and Mahler (2003) noted that “as shooters have become White and suburban middle-class boys, the public has shifted the blame away from group characteristics to individual psychological problems” (p. 1443, as cited in Mingus & Zopf, 2010, p. 66). The tendency of media and public discourse to spotlight race when it fits their narrative of the dangerous outsider provides an appropriate context for the remarks categorized in this theme. It becomes clear that at the core of participants’ concerns for American safety and well-being is a desire to preserve themselves by keeping Whiteness intact.

Discussion Across Themes

A chronological examination of the first four themes, specifically those that contributed to the development of ethnocultural empathy, suggests that each process steered participants to a greater understanding of *self* and *other*. Though it is tempting to succumb to the narrative that all participants moved through these stages sequentially and ultimately developed greater ethnocultural empathy, this was not the case. In fact, several participants did not move chronologically through these mediating processes, and others did not move through them at all. The complexity and multiplicity of identity development indicate that the identified mediating processes were the greatest predictors of ethnocultural empathy. It is likely that each learning environment experience laid the groundwork for the kinds of thinking and reflecting that would emerge in subsequent experiences. Because the mediating processes are closely tied to the learning environment embodiments, one can expect that they, too, relate intricately to one another.

To begin, understanding diverse experiences and appreciating culture (theme 1) illustrates the process of building the racial stamina that dismantles White fragility. Participants willingly engaged in difficult conversations about race, recognized differences in experience, and demonstrated an appreciation of culture. Many of these conversations were driven by storytelling and intergroup dialogue, which minimized the tendency to silence one another's truths. Notably, these intergroup contact experiences left students with more questions, which laid the groundwork for their collaborative inquiry research portfolios. As students sought to answer these questions, they developed a knowledge base that contributed to their awareness of bias and privilege (theme 2). Reflections on bias and privilege indicate that this mediating process overwhelmed participants and, ultimately, left them in a state of cognitive dissonance. It is likely

that foregrounding counter narratives and perspective taking (theme 3) was an attempt at negotiating this dissonance. As students repositioned themselves and subverted the dominant discourse, they reassigned power to outgroups; however well-meaning, this too is an exertion of power. Both awareness of bias and privilege and foregrounding counter narratives by taking perspective were sense-making stages—the former cognitive and the latter affective. Valuing inclusivity and social justice activism (theme 4) stands apart from the first three themes as the most action-oriented mediating process. It is in this stage that participants can see the implications of individual, group, and societal action.

It is also important to consider how the mediating processes that limited the development of ethnocultural empathy emerged. Both the passivity that reinforces the status quo (theme 5) and individual and national self-preservation (theme 6) manifested in the context of the learning environment. Though the data from these themes rarely cited the design embodiments, it is possible that the nature of the intergroup dialogue, research, and perspective taking heightened some participants' self-preservation instincts. Both passivity and self-preservation were likely motivated by a compulsion to protect Whiteness. Importantly, even in these themes, participants were able to acknowledge the cruelty of the points they were making, which implies some degree of sense-making. As a whole, this suggests that the design of the learning environment compelled participants to reflect on race, culture, and identity in the context of justice and morality.

Implications

Implications for Design

The findings of this study suggest that ELA courses can be intentionally designed to foster ethnocultural empathy provided they take a scaffolded and multifaceted approach. This

work calls for a departure from the traditional approach to ELA instruction, making critical literacy a favorable framework. As such, many of the design embodiments were devised with the tenets of critical literacy in mind. To consider how each embodiment contributed to the development of ethnocultural empathy, we must examine the relationship between the embodiments and the findings. It is important to note that because the data did not show a relationship between the embodiments and the themes that limited the development of ethnocultural empathy (themes 5 and 6), this section does not discuss the implications of those findings. Rather, it focuses on the intent, outcomes, and implications of the design.

Diverse literary texts (first embodiment) were designed to be the initial point of contact and intended as a scaffold for intergroup dialogue. In addition, the intergroup dialogue sessions (second embodiment) were devised to harness the power of storytelling and collaboration. These voluntary intergroup dialogue sessions sought to give participants a forum for open discussion on race, culture, and society. Furthermore, the collaborative inquiry and research portfolio (third embodiment) aimed to support participants in their development of knowledge. The cycles of inquiry that culminated in the research portfolio sought to give students the confidence to engage in racial and cultural discourse. Moreover, it was hoped that the knowledge gleaned from the inquiry process would support students in writing their research-based perspective pieces (fourth embodiment). Finally, the weekly reflection logs (fifth embodiment) were designed to afford participants a space for private, uninterrupted, unstructured sense-making.

The findings of the study suggest that participants often referenced their literature circle books and their intergroup dialogue sessions as they expressed their understanding of diverse experiences and their appreciation of culture (theme 1). In addition, the collaborative-inquiry research portfolio was critical to participants' development of knowledge, particularly as it

related to an awareness of bias and privilege (theme 2). Furthermore, in the research-based perspective pieces, many participants employed narrative techniques (inspired by their literature circle books and informed by their research portfolios) to foreground counter narratives and take perspective (theme 3). Moreover, literary and historical examples of social justice activism inspired participants to assert inclusive values and consider ways in which they, too, could make a difference (theme 4). Notably, participants did not attribute any of their shifts or developments to the process of reflecting through writing. Thus, the reflection logs were the only design embodiment that could not explicitly be linked to a mediating process.

These findings underscore the validity of a scaffolded approach to intergroup contact, particularly when designing for ethnocultural empathy. In the context of ELA, this design notes the merit of using both diverse literature and face-to-face dialogue as complementary modes of intergroup contact. Finally, the results emphasize the criticality of design embodiments that support the development and organization of new knowledge.

Implications for Practice

One of the objectives of literacy education is to increase the extent and effectiveness of students' abilities to use literature as mirrors and windows to better understand themselves and others. In keeping with this philosophy, a key implication for practice is the importance of creating a climate where the mirrors and windows approach is expanded beyond the classroom and authenticated through interpersonal connections. As evidenced by this study, students leverage critical literacy and dialogue to better understand diverse experiences. Additionally, these findings highlight the value of intergroup contact, particularly when it is driven by a collaborative co-construction of reality. Furthermore, these results clarify how literature that

employs diverse perspectives could operate as an effective scaffold and an initial point of intergroup contact for students who may be reluctant to engage in ethnocultural dialogue.

Research indicates that educators are underprepared and, therefore, hesitant to engage students in ethnocultural discourse. For those educators, this study offers some guidelines for designing instruction. Importantly, the qualitative analysis provides a degree of predictability regarding the trajectory of students' identity development as they navigate a unit of study that foregrounds ethnocultural discourse. Understanding the processes that have emerged in this study may clarify the indicators of ethnocultural empathy and the design elements that elicited them.

The quantitative and qualitative outcomes suggest that it is possible to design for ethnocultural empathy. This implies that future educational practitioners can ameliorate intergroup relationships among students and staff by supporting the development of flexible, ever-evolving, identities that take into account the diverse ethnocultural perspectives of others. An understanding of the mediating processes discussed in this study provides future design-based scholars with a testable high-level conjecture that can be adapted based on context. Thus, this work lays the foundation for future research in varying contexts, which will ultimately contribute to the refinement of existing theories and the development of new ones.

Limitations

The Role of the Researcher

My role as a teacher of color conducting research in my own classroom can be considered a limitation to the validity of this study. It can be argued that this approach to research may have led to challenges such as participant coercion, researcher bias, attribution errors, and/or exaggeration in data analysis. However, in keeping with the methodology of

design-based research, I have taken the necessary precautions to address these concerns. To limit coercion and ensure that participants' identities remained anonymous, participants' consent and assent forms remained sealed throughout the study; they were opened once grades were finalized and the study had concluded. In addition, participants' reflection logs were not evaluated for content but rather for regular, thoughtful completion. Finally, I kept a teacher journal throughout the study, reflecting and logging at least once a week. This teacher journal helped me chronicle my observations, thoughts, reflections, and insights. I researched myself and engaged in a process that continued to question my representations and interpretations of reality, which became a valuable tool for cross-examining my findings. Even with attempts to mitigate coercion and engage in self-reflection, the interplay between my identities (as a teacher and researcher of color) can be seen as a limitation.

Research Design

In regard to external validity, participants in this study were all students within my American literature class who self-selected to partake in the research; this raises questions about the generalizability of the findings to contexts outside of the current research setting. In terms of internal validity, the absence of a control group makes it difficult to attribute the findings to the learning environment design. Because the participants in this study were also enrolled in other coursework during the time of the intervention, some may argue that there was an interaction effect by confounding variables that were not controlled for. While this may be the case, the statistical significance of the *t*-test and the connection between the embodiments and the elicited mediating processes reinforce the favorable effects of the design.

The demographic makeup of the sample presents another limitation in the research design; the number of White participants ($n = 30$) significantly outnumbered the participants of

color ($n = 11$). In turn, the findings of this study are far less representative of the effects of intergroup contact on people of color. Critics may note that a “truly comprehensive account of intergroup contact must solicit both majority and minority perspectives” (Hayward, Tropp, Hornsey, & Barlow, 2017, p. 348). I do not challenge this claim; however, this particular study was limited geographically and demographically to a participant sample that was representative of the racial homogeneity of the larger school and community population.

To add, while these findings indicate that the intervention increased ethnocultural empathy, there was no evaluation of the retention rates of ethnocultural empathy beyond the end of the study. Thus, it remains unclear whether the results of the intervention are short-term or long-term. It is also unclear whether the intervention had resulted in a reduction of bias. Without a measure that assesses the reduction of bias and a research design that investigates the long-term effects of the intervention, the results of the study should be celebrated with caution.

Furthermore, it is problematic that the data collection and analysis rested entirely on written expression. Participants could have succumbed to a social desirability bias that made them susceptible to writing what they felt was socially acceptable. Additionally, the range in participants’ writing abilities could have made it so that some students were able to more clearly articulate their thoughts than others. Because both layers of analysis hinged on students’ abilities to articulate their ideas through writing, the validity of the data could have been compromised. More specifically, participants’ writing abilities could have affected (impeded or aided) the clarity of their self-expression, and therefore, could have misrepresented (underrepresented or overrepresented) their growth and development. A more robust and diverse means of data collection and analysis could have addressed this limitation.

Learning Environment Design

It is important to acknowledge that one of the primary limitations of this intervention was its reliance on literacy as a means of consuming and creating content. In the intervention, students were regularly engaged in reading, researching, and reflecting. It can be argued that deficits in reading could have impeded participants' abilities to fully experience the learning environment. If participants encountered challenges with literacy, it is likely that they struggled to effectively navigate much of the learning environment design. Though the literature circle books were diverse, high-interest, and at grade-level, not all students in this context are reading at grade-level. Thus, the learning environment design must take a multifaceted approach to disseminate content that recognizes the academic limitations and affordances of each learner.

The learning environment design was also limited by the inherent power dynamics in the intergroup dialogue circles, which could have affected the nature of student engagement. Because teacher and administrator volunteers were present during some of the intergroup dialogue circles, it is possible that the authenticity of the dialogue may have been affected. Furthermore, participants who consented to be in the study were engaged in the learning environment alongside students who had not consented to be in the study but were completing the same exercises as part of the academic curriculum. Importantly, a student who is subjected to a learning environment as per the curriculum may not have the same proclivity for engagement as someone who self-selects to be in the study. The presence of both consenting and complying participants could have produced an interaction effect, which was not accounted for. The absence of intergroup data from the dialogue circles makes it difficult to indicate how the presence of adults and complying participants affected the experiences of consenting participants.

Recommendations for Future Research

As noted in the limitations section, there are a few things that would have ultimately strengthened the validity and reliability of this study. Future researchers should attend to the following suggestions to refine and enrich the results of the current study.

The Role of the Researcher

Researchers' constructions of reality are inherently connected to their positionality not only in the research context but also in the larger sociopolitical climate. As noted, ample consideration was given to limit participant coercion and document the duality of my identity as a teacher and researcher of color. While this contributed to the validity of the research design, more research needs to be done on how the positionality and identity of the researcher and/or teacher affect the outcome of the study. Future studies should employ a diverse racial and ethnic research team to investigate how the identity of the teacher affects the findings. A diverse research team could reduce the presence of blind spots in the analysis and unearth nuances in the data collected.

Research Design

Future iterations of this research design should implement a control group to minimize the threats to internal validity. A control group would be an asset to the study because it would ensure that any observed difference between the two groups could likely be credited to the intervention. As noted in the limitations, participants in the study were enrolled in other coursework that could have compounded the effects of this intervention. The presence of a control group would reduce the probability that the findings of the study are a result of confounding variables and clarify whether the increase in ethnocultural empathy can be credited to the designed intervention.

In addition, it is recommended that future researchers strengthen the recruitment methods of this current study to solicit both majority and minority perspectives and allow for more equal representation in the study's findings. One of the primary critiques of intergroup contact research is that while there is a large body of literature investigating the prejudice-reducing effects of contact among majority group members, comparatively few studies have examined such effects among minority group members (Hayward, Tropp, Hornsey, & Barlow, 2017; Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005). It is important to ensure that studies designed to increase ethnocultural empathy through intergroup contact are not tokenizing people of color in an effort to better support the growth and development of the majority.

Furthermore, to address concerns about the long-term efficacy of the intervention, it is recommended that future researchers collect longitudinal data over a longer period of time and build in a measure that evaluates bias reduction. This would allow researchers to make claims about the retention of these results by addressing time as a variable. Adding a measure of bias reduction would lend credence to the efficacy of the intervention by depicting the correlation between ethnocultural empathy and bias over time. In the context of the current study, data collected over the course of an entire academic year may be able to paint a more comprehensive and accurate representation of participants' lives, taking into account a wide array of confounding variables and offering insight into retention rates.

Moreover, a case-study approach may allow future researchers to delve deeper into the mediating processes. Yin (1984) defines the case study research method "as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used" (p. 23). This change to the methodology of the study would warrant a

diversification of the data collected to allow for a more accurate and comprehensive depiction of mediating processes. Greater variety in the data collected (i.e., observations, transcripts of dialogue sessions, focus groups, and interviews) would account for the range in participants' written expressions and mitigate the effects of social desirability bias. By giving participants more avenues of expression, the data collected would be richer. In turn, this would allow researchers to attribute mediating processes to specific design elements with greater certainty. Case study methods would shed light on the interactions during dialogue sessions, which would help explain both the process of intergroup contact and its effects on ethnocultural empathy. Additionally, it would clarify how students leveraged research in their intergroup dialogue sessions to participate in inquiry, dialogue, and reflection.

Learning Environment Design

The design of a learning environment needs to consider not only curricular and pedagogical theories but also the specific needs of the participants. The various strengths and limitations of students in a classroom underscore the importance of diversifying the ways that participants engage with the content. It is imperative that future research employs the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to support students as they navigate the learning environment. UDL recommends offering information in more than one format to give students opportunities to access content in ways that work best for them. In addition, UDL suggests that students are given more than one avenue for expression when demonstrating what they have learned. Finally, UDL recognizes that not all students are motivated in the same way, so it underscores the importance of choice as a driving force for student engagement (CAST, 2018). Thus, future researchers are encouraged to diversify the learning environment embodiments so that all participants have various entry points for engagement, means of consuming content, and

choice in regard to expression of content. This will result in a richer and more equitable learning experience that allows all participants the opportunity to leverage their academic strengths as they navigate the learning environment.

To combat issues of validity that may have arisen in this study, future iterations of this learning environment design should investigate and account for the impact of nonparticipants. Whether these nonparticipants are volunteers who choose to engage in facets of the learning environment or complying students who are partaking in activities to fulfill curricular obligations, it is important to build in structures that mitigate the impact of external forces. It is recommended that future researchers conduct the intervention only with those who have consented to participate, removing adult volunteers and other students who are fulfilling curricular obligations. This will offer a clearer depiction of intergroup contact when participants are all willing and equal in their age, position, and status.

Conclusion

While much work has been done to evaluate the impact of intergroup contact on prejudice reduction, relatively few studies have examined its effects on ethnocultural empathy among adolescents. Thus, this study fills a void by clarifying the potential of intergroup contact in academic spheres, especially when it is scaffolded by critical literacy. Collectively, this work helps inform curricular and pedagogical interventions designed for all students. The focus on perspective taking allows students with limited interracial and intercultural contact the opportunity to understand and connect with the diverse experiences of outgroup members. Ultimately, this work tests an evolved application of intergroup contact theory to evaluate and explore its versatility. Though limited in its scope, this research underscores the efficacy of the designed unit of study, particularly in supporting students' development of ethnocultural

knowledge and empathy. Importantly, these results note the favorable implications of ethnocultural discourse and challenge instructional designers, educators, and policymakers to secure opportunities for it in English language arts.

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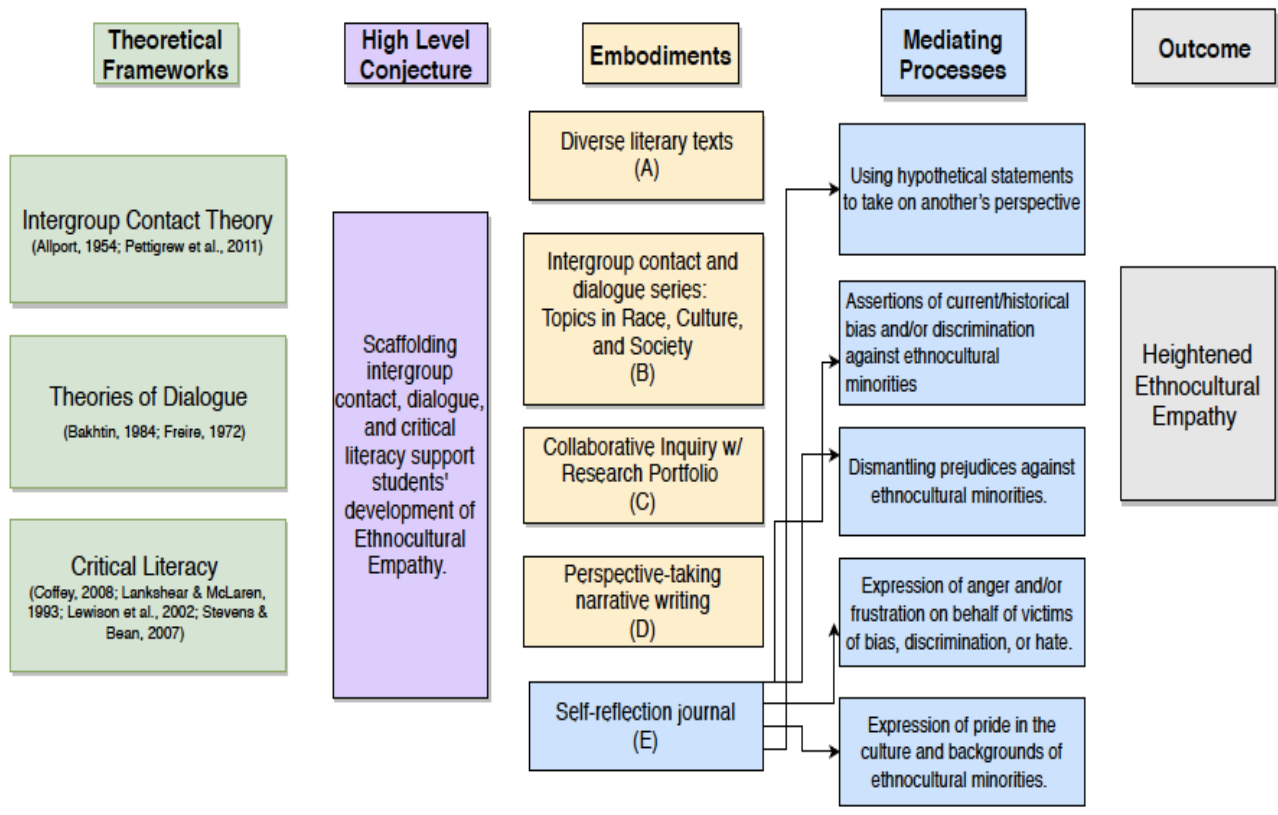
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Appendix A: Teaching Tolerance Criteria for Text Selection

1. What voices does this text include in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, class, age, ability, religion, place, immigration status or LGBT identity? Do the identities or experiences of the author(s), illustrator(s), character(s), speaker(s) or narrator(s) contribute to students' diverse reading experiences?
2. Does this text accurately reflect lived experiences in terms of setting, characters, speakers, events, language and illustrations?
3. Consider the author's attitudes, beliefs and point of view. Do they promote inclusion and equality?
4. Does the content perpetuate or rely on stereotypes, generalizations or misrepresentations?
(Note: A text may address a stereotype without relying on it.)
5. Consider the gaps and silences. Are certain people or groups left out or given only a silent or insubstantial role? Are certain questions or issues related to the topic omitted?
6. Does this text pair well with other texts that students encounter at school, home, in the media and through cultural transmission?
7. Consider the historical, social and cultural context in which the text was written. Is the text relevant now?
8. Does this text mirror the identities and experiences of my students?
9. Might this text be a window into the identities and experiences of people whose lives are different than my students' lives?
10. Does this text connect with the interests and concerns of my students?
11. Does this text relate to and build upon the knowledge my students bring with them?
12. Does this text work toward goals within the four domains of anti-bias education:
 - Identity:** Promote a healthy self-concept and exploration of identity
 - Diversity:** Foster intergroup understanding
 - Justice:** Raise awareness of prejudice and injustice
 - Action:** Motivate students to act by highlighting individual and collective struggles against injustice
13. How might this text motivate, engage or enable my students?

Appendix B: Conjecture Map



Appendix C: IRB Forms**Recruitment Flyer: Fostering Ethnocultural Empathy**

Dear Students,

You are invited to participate in a research study because you are currently enrolled in 10th-grade American Literature. The project is titled “Fostering Ethnocultural Empathy”. The purpose of this study is to examine how 10th-grade students make sense of diverse ethnocultural experiences through perspective taking and research in an English language arts classroom. The chief aim is to understand what aspects of the learning environment allow for the development of empathy and how it manifests in student writing.

The principal investigator in this study will be Kanika Chopra, who is also the lead teacher in the classroom. As a class, we will be examining diversity in literature, conducting research, and writing narratives from the perspectives of fictional and historical figures. Once the marking period closes and grades are finalized, I will collect writing samples completed during the usual instructional coursework from only those who have provided permission (both parental consent and student assent). I will then examine those writing samples to better understand how teaching practices impact student performance. If you agree to participate in the study, you are consenting to giving me permission to analyze your writing samples. Please know that your written responses will not be traced back to you.

The information learned from this study may help to strengthen our 10th-grade American Literature curriculum and contribute to a larger body of research that is based on fostering empathy in students and increasing ethnocultural understanding.

The writing samples will be a part of regular classwork and will not require any additional work outside of the instructional curriculum.

Attached you will find the Consent and Assent Forms. If you decide you would like to participate in the study, please have a parent/guardian sign the Consent Form (if they agree to your participation) and sign the Assent form (if you assent to participate). Regardless of whether or not you decide to participate, please put the Consent and Assent Forms back in the enclosed envelope and return it to the principal investigator, Kanika Chopra, by September 30th, 2019. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. For more information about this study, please contact the principal investigator, Kanika Chopra, by phone 848-932-7496 or by email, kanikac@scarletmail.rutgers.edu.

Thank you very much!

Kanika Chopra, Rutgers University
Principal Investigator

ASSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

This assent form may contain words that you do not understand. Please ask your parent or teacher to explain any words or information that you do not clearly understand before signing this document.

1. Ms. Chopra is inviting you to take part in her research study. Why is this study being done?

We want to find out how students interact with books that diverse characters and activities that involve research and perspective taking. Between 60 and 75 teenagers will be a part of this study.

2. What will happen:

You will participate in literature circles using books with diverse characters. As you read, you and your group will discuss key issues that surface in the book and you will investigate factors that contributed to such events. You will also participate in three Q&A sessions with guest speakers to better understand how their experiences compare to the ones you are reading about.

You will participate in ongoing discussion, writing, and reflection relating to the perspectives and experiences that you are learning about. At the end of the marking period, I will look at your writing responses to better understand how the books and learning activities impacted you. I will collect writing samples from our classwork from only those who have provided permission (both parental consent and student assent) after grades have been issued at the conclusion of the marking period.

3. What does it cost and how much does it pay?

You don't pay to participate in the study and you are not paid either. All activities you participate in will count for classwork.

4. There are very few risks in taking part in this research, but the following things could happen:

The risks associated with this study are no different from ordinary classroom reading, writing, and discussion. In the unlikely instance you read or discuss something that is upsetting to you, you have access to your guidance counselor at any point.

5. Are there any benefits that you or others will get out of being in this study?

All research must have some potential benefit either directly to those that take part in it or potentially to others through the knowledge gained. This research will help you navigate different perspectives, learn how to ask critical questions, and expand your understanding of research. It will contribute to teachers' and researchers' understanding of how students make sense of diverse texts and perspectives.

It's completely up to you! Both you and your parents have to agree to allow you to take part in

this study. If you choose to not take part in this study, we will honor that choice. No one will get angry or upset with you if you don't want to do this. If you agree to take part in it and then you change your mind later, that's OK too. It's always your choice!

6. CONFIDENTIALITY: We will do everything we can to protect the confidentiality of your records. This research is confidential. The research records will include some information about you/your child and this information will be stored in such a manner that some linkage between you/your child's identity and the response in the research exists. The only information collected about your child will be their writing responses from various points in the unit, which will show how they are making sense of the learning elements in the classroom. Please note that I will keep this information confidential by limiting individual's access to the research data and keeping it in a secure location (in a password protected folder). All of the collected material during the research study pertains to how the student is making sense of class content and will be used to refine future instruction.

The research team and the Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews research studies in order to protect research participants) at Rutgers University are the only parties (please modify if others will have access to the data) that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated. All study data will be kept for up to three years.

7. Do you have any questions? If you have any questions or worries regarding this study, or if any problems come up, you may call the principal investigator Ms. Chopra at:

kanikac@scarletmail.rutgers.edu
848-932-7496
10 Seminary Pl, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

8. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews research studies in order to protect those who participate). Please contact an IRB Administrator at the Rutgers University, Arts and Sciences IRB:

Institutional Review Board
Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey
Liberty Plaza / Suite 3200
335 George Street, 3rd Floor
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Phone: 732-235-2866
Email: human-subjects@ored.rutgers.edu

Your parent or guardian will also be asked if they wish for you to participate in this study. You will be given a copy of this form for your records.

Please sign below if you assent (that means you agree) to participate in this study.

Name of Minor Subject (Print) _____

Last four digits of school-sanctioned student ID number: _____

Minor Subject's Signature _____ Date _____

Principal Investigator Signature _____ Date _____

PARENTAL PERMISSION TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY
TITLE OF STUDY: Fostering Ethnocultural Empathy through Critical Literacy and
Perspective Taking

Principal Investigator: Kanika Chopra Ed.M.

This permission form is part of an informed consent process for a research study and it will provide information that will help you decide whether you want your child to take part in this study. It is your choice for him/her to take part or not. After all of your questions have been answered and you wish your child to take part in the research study, you will be asked to sign this permission form. You will be given a copy of the signed form to keep. Your child's alternative to taking part in the research is not to take part in it.

Your child is invited to take part in a research study that is being conducted by Kanika Chopra who is a student in the Graduate School of Education at Rutgers University, the principal investigator in the study, and the lead teacher in the classroom. The purpose of the research is to see if building critical thinking and perspective taking into literacy practices has a positive impact on students' understanding of and compassion towards others.

Kanika Chopra may be reached at:
kanikac@scarletmail.rutgers.edu
848-932-7496
10 Seminary Pl, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

We anticipate approximately 60-75 children will take part in the research. Your child will participate in a curricular unit of study that includes: reading texts with racially and culturally diverse characters, investigating absent voices in literature, engaging in small-group and whole class discussions, writing reflective journal entries, engaging in questioning and discussion with individuals from diverse cultural and racial backgrounds (guest speakers), and writing perspective pieces from diverse points of view. If your child consents and assents to participate in the study, his/her writing samples will be de-identified and analyzed as a means of evaluating and refining the academic program. Your child's participation in the study will be about three months.

Because the study will maintain an academic alignment with the curriculum, it is designed to protect all participants from risk. Still though, there may be some foreseeable emotional risks as the study may bring to the surface unresolved biases and emotions. Risks of this kind, however, are critical to the intended outcome of the study and have long-term benefits for participants. By becoming more cognizant of their biases, participants can work to resolve them and secure empathy.

Additionally, each participant has a designated guidance counselor (on the premises) with whom he or she can speak to at any given time to resolve any emotional disruption. The benefits of taking part in this study may be stronger critical thinking and close reading skills, more effective questioning and discussion skills, and greater comfort in interactions with diverse texts and individuals. Research supports that participating in intergroup contact cultivates

increased empathy and understanding and reduces bias and prejudice (Allport, 1954). This understanding and empathy, coupled with bias reduction, affords participants more promising experiences as they go on to college and navigate the workforce. However, it is possible that your child might receive no direct personal benefit from taking part in this study. Because the study is standard classroom instruction that all students will be a part of regardless of consent and assent, the primary benefit to participating is contributing to improving our collective knowledge about what makes for effective learning environment designs in this field. Your child will not be paid to take part in this study.

The researcher plans to collect your child's writing samples from various stages during the unit. This information will be stored in such a manner that a link between your child's identity and the data collected will exist, however, the records of this study will be kept strictly confidential. The Principal Investigator will collect writing samples done during the usual instructional practice for the class from only those who have provided permission (both parental consent and student assent) after grades have been issued at the conclusion of the marking period. The participants' writing artifacts will be collected at the end of the study, but will also be identified only by the last four digits of the participants' ID number. We will not include any information in any report we may publish that would make it possible to identify your child. We have plans in place to secure the data in ways that minimize the risk of a data breach, such as securing research records in a locked file, ensuring that all electronic information will be coded and secured using a password-protected file that only the primary investigator will have access to. All efforts will be made to keep your child's personal information in their research record confidential, but total confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Study data will be kept for 3 years, but all identifiers will be destroyed upon completion of study procedures/data collection. After the study is over the information collected for this research will not be used or distributed to investigators for other research.

The research team and the Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University are the only parties that may see the data, except as may be required by law. If the findings of this research are professionally presented or published, only group results will be stated. It is your choice whether your child takes part in the research. You may choose to have your child take part, not to take part or you may change your mind and withdraw your child from the study at any time. If you do not want your child to enter the study or decide to stop taking part, their relationship with the study staff will not change, and your child may do so without penalty and without loss of benefits to which s/he is otherwise entitled. You may also withdraw your permission for the use of data already collected about your child, but you must do this in writing to:

Kanika Chopra
kanikac@scarletmail.rutgers.edu
848-932-7496
10 Seminary Pl, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

If you have questions about your child taking part in this study, you may contact me at:
kanikac@scarletmail.rutgers.edu
848-932-7496
10 Seminary Pl, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

You may also contact my faculty advisor, Angela O'Donnell:
Angela.odonnell@gse.rutgers.edu
848-932-0830
10 Seminary Pl, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

If you have questions about your child's rights as a research subject, you can call the IRB Director at (732) 235-2866 or the Rutgers Human Subjects Protection Program at (973) 972-1149.

PARENTAL PERMISSION FOR CHILD

I have read this entire form, or it has been read to me, and I believe that I understand what has been discussed. All of my questions about this form or this study have been answered.

I am the [] parent or [] legal guardian of _____ (name of child) and I permit my child to take part in this research study.

Subject/Child's Name:

Parent's Signature:

Date:

Signature of Investigator/Individual Obtaining Consent:

To the best of my ability, I have explained and discussed the full contents of the study including all of the information contained in this consent form. All questions of the research subject and those of his/her parent or legal guardian have been answered.

Investigator/Person Obtaining Consent:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix D: Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Rubric (AAC&U, 2015)**Definition**

Intercultural Knowledge and Competence is "a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts." (Bennett, J. M. (2008).

"Transformative training: Designing programs for culture learning." In M. A. Moodian (Ed.), *Contemporary leadership and intercultural competence: Understanding and utilizing cultural diversity to build successful organizations* (pp. 95-110). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.)

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

	Capstone	Milestones		Benchmark
	4	3	2	1
Knowledge <i>Cultural self-awareness</i>	Articulates insights into own cultural rules and biases (e.g. seeking complexity; aware of how her/his experiences have shaped these rules, and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in a shift in self-description.)	Recognizes new perspectives about own cultural rules and biases (e.g. not looking for sameness; comfortable with the complexities that new perspectives offer.)	Identifies own cultural rules and biases (e.g. with a strong preference for those rules shared with own cultural group and seeks the same in others.)	Shows minimal awareness of own cultural rules and biases (even those shared with own cultural group(s)) (e.g. uncomfortable with identifying possible cultural differences with others.)
Knowledge <i>Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks</i>	Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs & practices.	Demonstrates adequate understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs & practices.	Demonstrates partial understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs & practices.	Demonstrates surface understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs & practices.
Skills <i>Empathy</i>	Interprets intercultural experience from the perspectives of own and more than one worldview and demonstrates ability to act in a supportive manner that recognizes the feelings of another cultural group	Recognizes intellectual and emotional dimensions of more than one worldview and sometimes uses more than one worldview in interactions	Identifies components of other cultural perspectives but responds in all situations with own worldview	Views the experience of others but does so through own cultural worldview

Skills <i>Verbal and non-verbal communication</i>	Articulates a complex understanding of cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication (e.g., demonstrates understanding of the degree to which people use physical contact while communicating in different cultures or use direct/indirect and explicit/implicit meanings) and is able to skillfully negotiate a shared understanding based on those differences.	Recognizes and participates in cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication and begins to negotiate a shared understanding based on those differences.	Identifies some cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication and is aware that misunderstandings can occur based on those differences but is still unable to negotiate a shared understanding.	Has a minimal level of understanding of cultural differences in verbal and nonverbal communication; is unable to negotiate a shared understanding.
Attitudes <i>Curiosity</i>	Asks complex questions about other cultures, seeks out and articulates answers to those questions which reflect multiple cultural perspectives	Asks deeper questions about other cultures and seeks out answers to those questions	Asks simple or surface questions about other cultures	States minimal interest in learning more about other cultures
Attitudes <i>Openness</i>	Initiates and develops interactions with culturally different others. Suspends judgment in valuing her/his interactions with culturally different others.	Begins to initiate and develop interactions with culturally different others. Begins to suspend judgment in her/his valuing interactions with culturally different others.	Expresses openness to most if not all interactions with culturally different others. Has difficulty suspending any judgment in her/his interactions with culturally different others, and is aware of own judgment and expresses a willingness to change.	Receptive to interacting with culturally different others. Has difficulty suspending any judgment in her/his interactions with culturally different others, but is unaware of own judgment.

Appendix E: Adapted Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Rubric

	Capstone	Milestones		Benchmark
	4	3	2	1
Knowledge <i>Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks</i>	Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs & practices.	Demonstrates adequate understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs & practices.	Demonstrates partial understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs & practices.	Demonstrates surface understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs & practices.
Skills <i>Empathy</i>	Interprets intercultural experience from the perspectives of own and more than one worldview and demonstrates ability to act in a supportive manner that recognizes the feelings of another cultural group.	Recognizes intellectual and emotional dimensions of more than one worldview	Identifies components of other cultural perspectives but responds in all situations with own worldview	Views the experience of others but does so through own cultural worldview.

Appendix F: Protocol for Analyzing Reflection Logs**Affective Dimension**

Consider how the writer expresses emotional reactions, or lack thereof, to the stimuli in the learning environment design.

Cognitive Dimension

Consider how the writer expresses cognitive shifts, integrates new knowledge, or rejects existing paradigms in response to the stimuli in the learning environment design.

Process Dimension

Consider how the writer communicates details about the processes that he or she engaged in when arriving at new understandings.

Identity Dimension

Consider how the writer reflects on their own identity or the identity of others.

Appendix G: Tesch's Eight Steps in the Coding Process**Table 9.4** Tesch's Eight Steps in the Coding Process

1. Get a sense of the whole. Read all the transcriptions carefully. Perhaps jot down some ideas as they come to mind as you read.
2. Pick one document (i.e., one interview)—the most interesting one, the shortest, the one on the top of the pile. Go through it, asking yourself, "What is this about?" Do not think about the substance of the information but its underlying meaning. Write thoughts in the margin.
3. When you have completed this task for several participants, make a list of all topics. Cluster together similar topics. Form these topics into columns, perhaps arrayed as major, unique, and leftover topics.
4. Now take this list and go back to your data. Abbreviate the topics as codes and write the codes next to the appropriate segments of the text. Try this preliminary organizing scheme to see if new categories and codes emerge.
5. Find the most descriptive wording for your topics and turn them into categories. Look for ways of reducing your total list of categories by grouping topics that relate to each other. Perhaps draw lines between your categories to show interrelationships.
6. Make a final decision on the abbreviation for each category and alphabetize these codes.
7. Assemble the data material belonging to each category in one place and perform a preliminary analysis.
8. If necessary, recode your existing data. (pp. 142-149)

Appendix H: Provisional Codebook

Code	Source	Criteria	Log Example 1	Log Example 2
PT	(Berchini, 2016; Nordstrom, 2015; Thein, Beach, & Parks, 2007; Wang et al., 2003)	Using first-person pronouns and salient details to hypothetically explore affective responses to marginalization.	<i>“If I were a black male living in Ferguson Missouri after the death of Michael Brown, of course I’d scared for my life. I’d be a target in my community.”</i>	<i>“If my family and I were stopped at the airport and randomly screened every single time, I’m not sure that I would enjoy traveling or vacation. The thought of walking into the airport, knowing that in just a few moments you would be not-so-randomly selected...”</i>
AOC	(Mainhart et al., 2016; Mcdougall et al., 2018; Morgan, 2014; Wang et al., 2003)	Appreciation of culture: language, attire, food, traditions, and customs.	<i>“The intricate pattern on her saree is evidence of how much attention to detail goes into the making of Indian clothing.”</i>	<i>“Quincenearas represent more than just a celebration of another birthday. There are traditions that show the importance of transitioning into a new stage of life. The Last Doll is such a symbolic way to display this transition.”</i>
CHB	(Berchini, 2016; Mainhart et al., 2016; Mcdougall et al., 2018; Morgan, 2014; Wang et al., 2003)	Assertions of current/historical bias, discrimination, and institutional barriers that affect racial and ethnocultural minorities.	<i>“Standardized tests made it impossible for people who didn’t grow up speaking, reading, or writing in English to be successful. They were set up to fail.”</i>	<i>“Blacks were twice as likely to be denied home mortgages when compared to Whites. Maybe this is based on their income to debt ratio, but even that has roots in our bleak history of oppression.”</i>

CBBS	(Bachen, Hernandez-Ramos and Raphael, 2012; Wang et al., 2003)	Correcting stereotyping and/or bias-based statements	<i>“People think that because of their skin color they are dangerous criminals. That’s the problem with news and media. But when we look at the facts, more hate crimes were committed by Whites than any other race or ethnicity. My point is, we can’t generalize.”</i>	<i>“People think she must be silenced or oppressed because she is wearing a hijab. But this is her choice. Wearing this has given her freedom to not be subject to constant scrutiny or sexualization. It liberates her to be who she wants to be.”</i>
EAF	(Bachen, Hernandez-Ramos and Raphael, 2012; Wang et al., 2003)	Expressions of anger and/or frustration on behalf of victims of bias, discrimination, and/or hate.	<i>“I’m outraged to see that people are being separated at the border and tear-gassed for seeking refuge. We have not come as far as we think we have as a society.”</i>	<i>“It was a hairbrush. He was killed for having a freaking hairbrush! He was a child and he was shot three times. Was once not enough!?”</i>

Appendix I: Final Codebook

Theme	Category	Code	Definition	Example 1	Example 2	Example 3
Valuing Inclusivity and Social Justice Activism	Flexible Narrative of Self (Warin & Muldoon, 2009; Warin, 2015).	AE (Acknowledging Empathy)	These statements are acknowledgements of the importance and value of empathy. This does not include identifying or categorizing examples of empathy, but rather asserting the value of empathy.	Having a deeper understanding to people in different situations in vital, and making the situation more humane and having compassion towards others is what our responsibility is towards other Americans and people.	I've grown up and experienced life through one generic point of view, which has consequently shaped who I am as a person today. I will never truly know what it's like to go through life as another person of a different background, but history has taught me that I at least have to make an attempt to understand other people and their experiences as Americans and as individuals.	Empathy impacts the way we treat and view others by, help giving us an understanding of what others go through in life. It helps individuals take a minute to see what goes on in another's life before we give a judgement or a comment onto that person, it often helps prevent others from giving off a negative comment for someone with a different race or background.
		SVP (Shifting viewpoints on	These statements display a development or a change in	Before reading this book, I never really had an opinion on football players	I am able to reconsider my perspective on illegal immigration	I would always have the idea that crossing the border is wrong and if it is

sociopolitical issues)	sociopolitical opinions. Participants acknowledge what they used to think/feel/believe and what they think/feel/believe now. These statements are sometimes accompanied by a rationale, but this is not necessary.	kneeling during the National Anthem, but now that I have finished The Hate U Give, I think it was the right decision because the players can help end hate crimes by using their status.	and see how my research of the topic relates closely with the experiences and events of the characters in my book.	illegal then there should be no exceptions to let an illegal immigrant in, but after reading these first fifty pages of the book my opinion has altered
DA-BP (Defining "American"-broadening parameters)	These statements establish more inclusive criteria for what it means to be an American. They are often used to make an argument in favor of immigration. These statements are used to include individuals of color into American society. They do not involve identifying exclusive criteria on account of race, religion, ethnicity, and/or culture.	I believe that American is not something someone can be rather something anyone can become. As common knowledge would state, American is not a nationality nor a race or anything on any spectrum of natural born identity. American is rather a culture and anyone who moves or immigrated to the USA can adapt our culture and beliefs as their own and this would in turn make someone american. It doesn't matter where you're	Just because you don't have citizenship doesn't mean that your not american. Also, some people have U.S. citizenship but don't consider themselves american either. For example, I was born in Canada, but because my dad was born in the U.S. I was born with U.S. citizenship, but I don't consider myself american, so In my opinion, citizenship is not all of the story for defining someone to being american. It is about how much you care about and	Living in America and being a part of american society is all it takes to be considered american. I don't agree with people who say that you have to be a citizen. Sometimes people who are citizens end up being bad to the country. We can't say that all citizens are patriotic and all immigrants are not.

			from. Or where you've been. Or where you're going. It matters only your interpretation of the american culture and however you choose to live it.	contribute to America and how much you see yourself as America.	
Individual, Group, and Societal Action	VA (Valuing Activism)	These statements acknowledge and/or assert the value of protests, marches, and other activism-oriented initiatives. They include statements where individuals identify the value of activism in literature, history, and/or current events. These statements do not suggest or offer up activism as a course of action. They merely assert the value of activism.	Another piece of evidence that relates to my research is football players kneeling during the national anthem to take a stand against police brutality. People think that just because they have a lot of money and fame that the players shouldn't speak out against this issue, but speaking out is going to cause more awareness to this. Because they have such a large platform, they can show people that police brutality is another form of hate crime and is wrong.	Just like what the protesters in All American Boys were worried about. They were worried that the police will try to push them down so they decide to do a "die-in". Which is when protesters lie on the floor so they can't be forced to the ground. Which is smart because they aren't able to do anything violent. This should happen with most protests so they can't be mistaken with riots so they don't turn violent.	Some people think protesting is a bad way of getting your point across but I feel it's the only way sometimes for people like Rashad. Protesting has the power to bring people together who don't even know each other. For instance Rashad and Quinn have never met in real life but see each other at the protest because they are fighting the same war and getting their voices heard.
	AOS (Action Oriented Statements)	These statements offer solutions to sociopolitical problems and	No matter who we are, no matter what makes us different from another, no	Finally, our responsibility as a human race is to acknowledge all of	As a society we need to start working at being more open-minded

	<p>charge society with the responsibility to act. This includes answers to the question: What should we do? Action oriented statements include assertions of our responsibility to spread awareness, disseminate knowledge, protect individuals of color from hate crimes, and show our support for diversity and culture. They are not merely an identification of action in literature, history, or research, but rather a direct call to action on our society.</p>	<p>matter what hatred we ourselves may face, it is our responsibility as a human being to spread love and acceptance to all. We must listen to differences, be open to them, and bond with others based on our acceptance of dissimilarities as well as our similarities</p>	<p>this. If we do not acknowledge this as a nation and as a world that people can have other experiences in their country because of their race and other things than we have failed as a race because if we do not acknowledge that then people will never have empathy and will never think about putting themselves in other people's shoes'. People cannot gather their information from one source and call it a day, everyone has their own specific experience in America because of their race.</p>	<p>and listening to each other. If we start listening to each other we can come to a conclusion that makes everyone happy it can help improve the lives of millions of people.</p>
<p>IPB- EE (Identifying prosocial behavior that fosters ethnocultural empathy)</p>	<p>These statements are examples from literature, current events, or history that identify ways in which individuals show compassion and empathy toward individuals of color. They display an acknowledgement and awareness of</p>	<p>Phil, a friend that Maya has a crush on, lives in a big house with a pond and a big pool in his backyard. Kareem, a kind and considerate classmate, came from a rich family and was studying to become an</p>	<p>And Phil does this so well. He is repeatedly checking in on Maya, trying to learn more about her, to get at least the smallest glimpse into her life, and to help her in any way, shape, or form he can.</p>	<p>The idea of unity is a very important thing to Garden Heights. The neighborhood is mostly black and they have to stick together to fight for themselves. The neighbors always check up on one another like how</p>

			the prosocial effect of this kind of behavior and action.	engineer. However, they never treated Maya different because of her religion and her culture. They had empathy for Maya when she was being discriminated against by the bully, Brian. When Maya was being physically assaulted during the picnic, Violet called the ambulance to take her to the hospital, while Phil beat up Brian for attacking Maya.		Mrs. Pearl, Ms. Jones, and Mr. Charles all rush to the house on page 318 when someone shoots and throws a brick. They always have each other's best interest in mind and act like more of a family than a town.
Awareness of Bias and Privilege	Awareness and Privilege	LTEH-CB (Long-term effects of history and consequences of bias)	These statements acknowledge how persons of color face long-term repercussions that continue to affect them after a bias incident is over and/or discrimination is outlawed. These statements often include considering the effects of ongoing bias, discrimination, violence, discrepancies in educational	This white supremacy lead to an upriser of hatred towards African Americans, therefore triggering a lesser chance for James to succeed in society. James was later hindered by this factor because his family is partially African American, therefore they looked up to him for guidance on staying low in life. Several tracked events in history	Indeed, government programs like Neighborhood Watch have reinforced this belief in the minds of Americans. However, studies on African-American neighborhoods show that residents are hesitant to call law enforcement compared to majority-white neighborhoods. This has a direct correlation to police	African-Americans have to deal with those issues on a daily basis from a very young age. These issues eventually manifest their way into the workplace, but they usually begin in school, and it's affecting Starr in many ways. For example, she feels the need she has to maintain a very sophisticated demeanor in her predominantly

	<p>experience, and/or the racial wealth gap. These statements are not simply assertions of historical or current oppression. They chart the impact of such biases on individuals and groups.</p>	<p>have changed James' life radically by impelling his life forwards, and simultaneously hindering his chances of succeeding.</p>	<p>brutality, which affects black neighborhoods. Inner-city areas also have a higher rate of juvenile crime, along with areas with poor schools. Typically, these areas have a higher police presence than suburbs or areas with higher-quality schooling.</p>	<p>white school just so she isn't ridiculed by the way she's used to speaking when she's home.</p>
CHB (Current/Historical Bias)	<p>These statements are assertions of current/historical bias, discrimination, and institutional barriers that affect racial and ethnocultural minorities. They include identifying instances of bias either on an individual level or a systemic level. They often include an identification of a pattern of oppressive and/or biased behavior. These statements are not blanket statements that are based on personal experiences and/or existing biases; they</p>	<p>I learned a lot throughout my research as well. For example, police officers are much more likely to engage with black civilians. It is rarer for residents of black communities to call law enforcement, which some researchers have chalked up to fear of police brutality</p>	<p>For example, Muslims have always been looked at as enemies to the United States and are threats to the American society. This all started because of the attacks on 9/11 and the other terrorist attacks within this country. This created fear for the American people as they were scared that their life was in danger whenever a muslim was around.</p>	<p>Events that can be looked at would be the Holocaust, the United States limiting rights of the Japanese-Americans after Pearl Harbor, the Mexican Repatriation, and Japan's attempt of Chinese genocide. Unarguably, all of these events have at least a small mental effect on Individuals in America no matter the race, and especially with people of particular races that were the most oppressed or abused.</p>

	are research based and/or informed.			
ADE (Acknowledging differences in experience)	These statements acknowledge and/or identify differences in others' experiences based on race, culture, or ethnicity. They involve noticing differences among other individuals; they do not involve considering how one's own experience is different from the experiences of another. These statements are more about looking in on a situation (either in literature, history, or current events) to notice how race, culture, and/or ethnicity may have been a contributing factor to the differences in the experiences of individuals.	He [Starr's White boyfriend] wanted to call the cops and later on split up but everyone told him no. He suggested these ideas because that is what he has been raised to do. He feels protected by police whereas the residents of Garden Heights feel attacked. A reason for this attacked feeling comes from when the officer put Maverick in handcuffs and healed him face down in the street in front of everyone for no reason. Events that people have gone through shape their opinions on people and decision-making skills.	Caucasians would not likely be the target of any hate crimes because people have nothing against them, they have different experiences in America than some other ethnic and religious groups like Muslims.	From researching African Americans everyday lives, I have learned that for almost all African Americans, everyday could be a struggle. Since Khalil and Starr are from "the hood", they are not going to be treated like white people are treated. Instead, people will use racist stereotypes against them and discriminate against them.
RP (Recognizing Privilege)	These statements involve acknowledging one's OWN racial, cultural, and/or ethnic privilege.	For me, growing up as a white American male I do not need to worry about any of the things Starr needs	Learning about what Starr and her community has gone through has enhanced a topic that I never truly	Even though I am Jewish, I do not face racist comments like Starr had to face. This is because in my

	<p>The participant sees and acknowledges the way(s) in which he or she maintains that privilege. Often these statements include an understanding of how one's experience compares to the experiences of others as a result of that privilege. These statements do not involve unpacking the privilege, but rather demonstrating an awareness of it.</p>	<p>to worry about. If I were to get pulled over by the cops, I would have no fear that my parents and I could be in danger of getting shot.</p>	<p>have to think about in my daily life. I never have to think twice about a police officer pulling me over for a broken tail light, or leaving a store with a hoodie on, even though black people would have to worry about keeping their hands visible at all times, or justifying their purchase for something that they're being accused of stealing.</p>	<p>school, not only are there many other Jewish people, but students have learned about the past and about how horribly both Jews and African Americans were treated and they try to not make the same bad decisions.</p>
<p>ROB (Reflecting on biased feelings and actions toward ethnocultural minorities)</p>	<p>These statements are description of students' feelings/thoughts/responses to bias. They often include personal reactions, concerns, fears, and thoughts in response to witnessing bias in person, hearing about it on the news, and/or seeing it in their research. This sometimes includes reflections on biased feelings and actions that</p>	<p>The dark truth about all of Khalil's situation is that this happens in real life and not just in fiction books. For example Allen writes, "A St. Louis County grand jury declined to indict Wilson in November 2014, and the U.S. The Justice Department declined to prosecute him in March 2015, citing evidence and witnesses</p>	<p>In the video we watched this week there was a kid of the Spanish culture and he said that he has been called El Chapo before. And that he has been called it many times before. He's not the only kid that's been called something before but people who do this do not have empathy, they don't realize how hard it is to be a different race in America. I know</p>	<p>No one should be harassed like this for verbally defending themselves. Moreover, reading this made me curious and fearful for Muslims. I wondered if this was the reality for some Islamic followers. So I read up on this concept on a database and unfortunately found out that this was actually true in America today,</p>

	have been directed at them.	supporting Wilson's claims that Brown attacked him." To explain, this exact situation happened in The Hate U Give but the only difference is that this situation happened in real life and not in a book of words. It is very disheartening to know that incidents like these actually happen in real life.	how hard it is because I am Spanish, and I have experienced many of these things that others had too.	"Muslims can face fear, threats, and trauma around Ramadan. There have been Muslims in the past that were killed by white supremacist groups. Other people should talk to their Muslim neighbors and offer them company/support" ("Four Ways to Support Muslim Friends and Family and Counter Islamophobia" during Ramadan" 1).
AP (Analyzing Power)	These statements identify and evaluate the presence of power in intergroup relations. Included in this code are the power dynamics that exist between police officers and Black males, teachers and students of color, protestors and police, and hate groups and people of color. These statements acknowledge how	Just like on May 4th, 1970 when unarmed students were protesting outside their school at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio. During this, the students were protesting against the fact that military troops bombed Cambodia for no reason. The Ohio National Guard showed up to control the crowd and ended up	Unfortunately, police abuse their power because they get scared and throw tear gas and use their night sticks. In some horrible instances, bullets are fired.	I also gathered from a few different sources that the Klan was persistent in recruiting politicians and other people of power in the federal gov't. The Klan had such an influence on the country at that time which tightened white supremacies vice grip around the public's throat

the imbalance of power negatively affects individuals of color. These statements do not call for a change in the power dynamic nor do they suggest that it is something that can be changed.

killing four students and injuring nine others. These are the worst case scenarios but many times a protest will end violently due to either the police being to scared and wanting to end this, or the protesters pissing the police off.

RB
(Recollections of bias)

These statements are personal recollections of being a victim or a bystander in a bias incident. They do not rely on secondhand information about bias incidents. They are sometimes accompanied by a reflection. *Note: not one student identified self as an aggressor in a bias incident

I remember when President Trump said that Mexicans are rapists and criminals, this disgusted, angered, and saddened me because people began to stereotype me and when they heard that I'm Mexican, they already had assumptions about me.

In Elementary school, I remember a new kid coming into my class. I forget what country he was from, but some kids were joking about the way he talked. All I can remember is thinking why. Why are these kids joking about his accent...Just because he talks differently than you doesn't mean he's any less of a human being...I should've said something, but I was too scared and confused...but I wish I did say something, and if it was present day I definitely would.

I would run past people, as I would like to think I'm fast but people would say " your only fast because your black," or "you should be that fast," as a stereotype

Foregrounding Counter Narratives and Taking Perspective	Counter Narrative	<p>RIE (Reflecting on the immigrant experience)</p> <p>Considering the challenges that immigrants face during or after their immigration into a new country. This includes physical, psychological, and emotional challenges. Many of these reflections are rooted in literature, research, and/or intergroup contact. Excluded from this code is commentary about illegal immigration or one's thoughts on policy.</p>	<p>It was shocking to read of all the constant events that occur that keep on acting as obstacles and roadblocks for the characters. This makes me wonder if migrants crossing the desert ever regret their decision? Do they ever think that the pain is actually worth it? For example, if some close friends or family are crossing together in search of a better life, and one member dies, it will probably hurt their morale and take away their will to continue. Or perhaps they fear life in Mexico so much that they are willing to go through the pain.</p>	<p>Before I started reading the book I had assumed that crossing the border was a quick sneak past security overnight and I had never imagined it to be as painful and excruciating as it was for Marcos, Gladys, Pato, and Arbo. In my research, I found that many people die from both dehydration and gang violence. In the book, Arbo nearly dies from dehydration and Gladys is shot. I originally thought that people who die at the border are those who are shot by border patrol for crossing illegally.</p>	<p>It is just sad thinking these poor people are trying to find better opportunities and then they end up getting treated the same exact way in America when they are only trying to find a resort from their own crappy country only to end up in another crappy one. In “the border” the four kids are literally risking their lives to stay alive and hopefully get a better lifestyle but they may be in for a rude awakening because the white supremacy within America will be very clear to them once they arrived and already started settling down.</p>
		<p>FC (Finding commonalities)</p> <p>These statements make connections between literary examples, current events, historical events, and/or intergroup dialogue. This is the process of analogizing to</p>	<p>To add on, this book has made me understand more about categorizing people based on their race. Brian Cruise thought that Starr and Khalil were dangerous and</p>	<p>Brian holds them responsible and disregards what she has said because he believes that Maya, Muslims, and Arabs were the cause of what happened to his sibling. Brian</p>	<p>Going back to one of my first reading logs I talked about how one of my family friends has actually jumped the border and got to America, through reading this book I</p>

	make sense of and organize new information. This is not connecting personally to someone else's experience, but rather observing connections between or among those experiences.	he also thought Khalil was going to do harm to him just because he was black. Something that relates to this within my research is Trump's views on immigrants. He thinks that every single illegal immigrant is going to cause harm and is a drug dealer, but most of them are just looking for asylum.	has no evidence of them being the cause, but continued to blame them... This section relates back to 9/11, some Americans blamed Muslims and Arabs for the attacks because they were enraged with what happened to their country and the attackers were of Arab descent.	see many similarities between each of their stories. For example, the coyotes or the guides, Both the characters in my book and the man I know has shared about how they connected with some of their guides. This makes the trip a lot easier for both.
CBBS (Correcting stereotyping and/or bias-based statements)	These statements correct stereotypes and/or bias-based statements. They can acknowledge evidence that is counter to the stereotype to dismantle bias. These statements do not replace existing stereotypes, but rather aim to correct misconceptions.	On the other hand, not all cops are racist and think that black teens are a liability. There are cops that save lives and provide protection of innocent people. They risk their lives everyday for us and we need to recognize the ones that put in that effort.	My research had to deal with Trump's influence on people's opinions on Mexicans and immigrants, racially motivated killing, and more. I believe these things are why Steve Shafer wrote the book. The book not only shows that not all Mexicans are gangsters and drug cartel members but it puts why they leave Mexico into perspective.	I was able to see that there is no connection between Muslim terrorists and regular Muslims except for race. This information depicts that society does not understand this and they often treat regular Muslims like they support terrorists. However, violence goes against Islamic code so there clearly is no ideology for both terrorists and Muslims. Terrorist have their own groups that promote

RVD
(Recalling vivid
details from
outgroup
experiences)

These statements use imagery, salient details, and/or vivid descriptions to convey powerful segments from the text. They demonstrate an ability to lift out powerful passages that evoke emotions in the reader. These statements are not statements wherein the participant takes on the perspective of the individual in the passage. They are recall statements that suggest that the participant gravitated towards a powerful, emotional segment in the text.

Little did he know they were violent police officers and they proceeded to forcibly take him down and splash his ribs on the concrete. When he got up with his hands behind his back in handcuffs the police officers did not think that that this was enough for such a “Bad criminal” and lifted him off the ground and dropped him face-first on the concrete knowing full well he had no way to brace himself from the fall on the brittle asphalt that indeed caused some damage. His nose was broken blood everywhere and if that wasn’t enough all of his front teeth

DeVante lies on the floor in the fetal position at the foot of the king sized bed. The plush white carpet is stained with his blood as it trickles from his nose and mouth.

violence, these groups are usually smaller and more shady bands of people who seek to spread fear and sacrifice their lives to murder others.

The desert cooked and nearly killed Arbo, cacti maimed Marco’s foot and sucked a lot of blood, and gang violence caused the death of Gladys. The risks and hassle one goes through just to taste life in the United States is unimaginable.

			were either broken or not even there anymore.		
	CPF-MC (Considering push factors for illegal immigrants and motivations for crime)	These statements demonstrate a willingness to look beyond the illegality of something to consider motivations or driving forces that compel outgroup members to make the choices they did. These statements acknowledge the illegality of a decision or action and make the conscious decision to overlook it. Often, they show an understanding of the factors that were/are beyond the control of the individuals who immigrated illegally and/or participated in other criminal behavior.	However, they turn to solution which unfortunately, many struggling Mexicans in real life also have to do. They have to illegally cross the border and enter the United States. This is a sad reality. Crawling with crime and corruption, Mexicans have to break the law and come into the United States illegally. The world of Pato, Arbo, Gladys, and Marcos is similar to the world of actual Mexicans in today's society where they have to take risks like these.	Drug trafficking from Mexico affects the US economy and health of its citizens greatly each year. Even though these kids are only doing a little of it I can see more clearly why some people do it. If your coming to the country for the first time illegally this is the best way to make money and easiest. Not many people will pay illegal immigrants for anything else besides drugs and it's a sad thing.	Additionally, it was just recently revealed that Khalil had a reason behind his drug dealing. He needed to provide for his family and get food on the table and clothing for him. It wasn't just because he wanted to, but he needed to. Yes, he spent some on himself, but it was also to help his family.
Perspective taking	RVPT (Recognizing the value of perspective taking)	These statements acknowledge and assert the value of perspectives and perspective taking.	I absolutely loved this book. It took me to another world while reading all of the road blocks and	It is important for me to understand these differences because then I can understand that	During the beginning of the book Rashad was beat up by a cop because the he

	<p>They consider what is gained through perspective taking as well as what could be lost without it. These statements do not involve taking perspective, but rather taking note of the value it has in society including but not limited to: greater knowledge, decreased opportunities for conflict, a shift in one's understanding of another etc.</p>	<p>another mindset when I think about racism. I am white so I don't get to see the world through a black point of view but Angie Thomas did an amazing job of showing me what being black in America is like.</p>	<p>person more. If I know about the experiences of that person than I can relate to them more. For example, in the video the teacher who grew up in the high middle class couldn't relate to some of her students that were from the lower class. So she then learned more about their experiences and how they differed to hers. This is important because now you can understand how the other person is feeling and how or why they would act a certain way.</p>	<p>never actually heard from Rashad's perspective of what actually happened. It sounds like the cop didn't want to listen to him because he was a boy a color and the women was not. That relates back to listening to every perspective no matter what the situation. Overall by doing so it will make it easier for people to understand different sides of stories.</p>
PT (Perspective taking)	<p>These statements consider and explore the experiences of outgroup members to better understand their motivations, thoughts, feelings etc. This often includes using first-person pronouns and hypotheticals to reposition oneself (if I were...), salient</p>	<p>When the gang found the group towards the end of the book they were going to kill them all. But because of something they said the man decided to shoot Gladys's dead body 6 more times in front of them to take his anger out and prove a point. They had to watch</p>	<p>At the end of the book, Marcos mysteriously vanished. This left a lot of unanswered questions. I think that if Gladys was still alive, he would have stayed with the group. I actually fear for him because he probably still has depression from losing his</p>	<p>Life for more Muslims should be more fair. Everyone deserves the privilege to express their religion and their holidays. For myself, I decorate for Christmas which is a religious holiday and I do not get any hate for it. Clearly, this should be the same thing</p>

	<p>details, and/or thought-provoking questions. These statements do not assume that one understands the experiences of others, but illustrate an attempt to understand.</p>	<p>someone they love die and then get shot more bouncing the dead body on the ground of the desert and spilling out more blood. Helpless they had to watch or else they may have not been able to live either. I could never imagine going through what they did. I wouldn't even know if I could stand there and not try to stop it or show emotion while they shoot the girl I love multiple times.</p>	<p>sister. Will he find happiness? How will he find a job without getting deported?</p>	<p>for Muslims. I could not even imagine what it would be like to go out in public and be afraid of buying decorations or props for my holidays or religion. More people should understand that they would not want to be discouraged for celebrating their holidays, so why would they have the right to violently go at others for celebrating their holidays. This just does not make sense to me.</p>
<p>EAF (Expressions of anger and/or frustration on behalf of victims of bias, discrimination, and/or hate)</p>	<p>These statements channel the emotions of victims of bias, discrimination, and/or hate. They do not include a desire to seek "justice" in the form of revenge. Rather, these expressions or responses suggest that the participant is absorbing the emotions of victims.</p>	<p>Just thinking about this makes my stomach turn. The fact that someone would go through all of the trouble to kill and/or hundreds of people all because of their skin color is beyond me. And to think that these issues are still going on today is purely insane.</p>	<p>When Officer 115 was not convicted of killing Khalil, riots broke out. Hell, I was angry too. I get why the black community was frustrated because they have faced injustice for so many years and this was just another situation where it was obvious that Khalil and Starr were in the right but the</p>	<p>Reading this made me feel sickened for the safety and happiness of Muslim citizens. It was made clear that Muslims being abused for their race does not only exist in books, but in real life as well. Furthermore, the fact that Muslims have to live through fear is highly upsetting. It utterly disturbs me that</p>

				jury never convicted the officer based on assumptions of Khalil.	there are citizens who harass Muslims for embracing their culture.	
Understanding Experience and Appreciating Culture	Intergroup Contact	AC (Appreciation of culture)	These statements show an appreciation of language, attire, food, traditions, and/or customs. They don't necessarily have to articulate that they "appreciate" the culture; it is often apparent by the connotation of the words associated with aspects of culture, fascination/intrigue, awareness of the contributions etc.	For example, The Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s and 1930s is one of the first and most important cultural movements in black history. As one of the first major recognitions of African American music, literature, and art, the works of African American authors, poets, and musicians of the day rooted African American experience in American culture and continues to shape it, even today. This part of history shaped experiences for many people and is still shaping experiences for others.	My ethnicity also plays a role in which I can empathize with other hispanics in topics only our culture can relate to. Being hispanic opens a different world in which music and foods that are diverse to the “american culture. Seasoning varies in my house, while young I am taught to love spices since it was always emerged in my dinners. I was taught how to dance bachata and learn to love the music and artist like prince royce and romeo.	I also didn't realize that there was a lot of benefits with being in a “community” like for example I was critiqued for being Spanish in a mostly white school a lot of racist comments were said but I didn't look at the benefits of being Spanish. I speak a different language which means I get more job opportunities and it would just help with my future.
		AOM (Admiring outgroup members by	These statements spotlight strength, courage, and other	This shows courage, and I could never imagine being	Aligned with this, Starr has also taught me to never give	I also gained more respect for them. Although I

considering virtues of their personality traits)	desirable traits. These statements can acknowledge limitations in oneself in an attempt to show the possession of those traits in outgroup members.	as strong as Starr is and going through all that she is, and experiencing these scary events, but yet handling it all so well.	up. Since the time of Khalil's death, Starr has been on a mission to get her words across the town and on the news about the shooting. When you want something badly enough, you can achieve your goal and that is exactly what Starr did and that taught me a valuable lesson about strength.	understand what they are doing is against the law, I give plaudits to their determination and will which drives them on beyond their past struggles to make a better life for themselves.
IGC (Expression of comfort in and appreciation of intergroup experiences)	These statements are often affective, emotion-based statements or reflections that indicate that the participant was comfortable in the intergroup experience. This can include expressions of feeling a sense of belonging through dialogue. This does not involve expressing a change in understanding, but rather a sense of belonging and/or feeling comfortable.	One thing that I liked was that people were able to talk freely without feeling like most people weren't going to judge them.	I enjoyed talking about other scenarios that people in my group talked about, because it showed me what other people go through that has never crossed my mind.	After the session I was happy I went because I realized it actually opened my eyes more to the prejudices others face around me everyday and how lucky I am to not have experienced things like these. I learned more than I ever thought and enjoyed it.

EOTS
(Eyes Opened
Through
Storytelling)

These statements demonstrate increased awareness or understanding as a result of sharing personal experiences through storytelling in intergroup dialogue. This includes expressions of coming to new understandings as a result of storytelling in intergroup dialogue. The participant acknowledges and speaks to a shift that has occurred because of the personal experiences shared through storytelling.

People who were in my group who are a different race than me talked about some of the struggles they have, such as people joking about them being Mexican. This opened my eyes to issues that they can face every day even though we go to the same school.

And with that, I learned it's important to talk about it and to accept others and empathize with them because we're not the only ones going through it. I felt this entire experience enlightened me in new ways and I will continue to live with the knowledge gained.

Before this I didn't ever think about how white people must feel when we talk about police brutality. There was a girl in my circle whose dad is a cop and she was talking about how he gets stereotyped all the time. This opened my eyes to the feelings of cops kids because not all cops are bad.

VD
(Valuing Diversity)

These statements express the value of diversity and/or intergroup experiences. This is a recognition of how individuals' experiences would be richer with greater diversity. This does not necessarily have to be a call to action; however, in some instances it can be.

Because I am exposed to a variety of races and cultures all the time at my school, I am more likely to understand these cultures and points of view as compared to people who go to an all white school who do not interact with different races and cultures. Being

If the school systems were more aware of how much the education system could affect students outside of schools they should try to appeal to a more diverse group of staff so the students can carry themselves in a better way when they are not in school.

I am more accepting of other groups of people because I grew up in such a diverse town with diverse schools. I've been taught by my teachers and family not to judge anyone based on their skin color, religion, gender, etc.

				friends with them and being with them in class helps me better understand their backgrounds.		
		RTE (Relating to the experience)	These statements demonstrate a personal connection to the experiences of outgroup members. This could include relating to interests, experiences, and/or values. This does exclusively have to deal with race, culture, and/or ethnicity. Statements in this code suggest that participants are seeing outgroup members as having similar attributes or experiences to themselves on some level.	As an African-American teenager, I can relate to the main character. Maya wanted to fit into a culture that was different from her own. However, she was not going to change herself and her beliefs just to be accepted. Maya stayed true to herself. Trying to be part of the crowd is very difficult...However, just like Maya, I refuse to compromise my beliefs and my personality just to be accepted... Maya loved her family and her culture.	Maya and I have similar parents, they can be traditional and at times strict. Every day, when we wake up, before we eat, and before we go to bed we have long prayers, we go to church every Sunday, and read the Bible. Most of my friends' parents are not as religious as mine, some make quick prayers or don't pray, not always go to church on Sunday, and not read the Bible.	I've had homophobic, transphobic taunts repeated at me (although my own thoughts will never compare), which is why I am able to empathize with Maya and those who fall victims to hate crimes so much, but the amount of sadness it brings me to know that people are abused for traits they cannot change is heartbreakingly unfathomable.
Passivity that Reinforces the Status Quo	Hegemony-Limitation	ALC (Assertions of lack of control over systemic problems)	These statements assert a lack of individual control over larger, systemic problems. They include claims	Racism is one of the biggest issues in the world that we can't control. Trying will only lead to disappointment.	That scene also brings up another point that there will always be racial violence on the streets. No matter	This is the most eye opening, and impacting scene so far throughout the book because in reality this happens

	that bias will always exist and there's nothing we can do about it. These statements often shrug off responsibility and assume no agency or control over changing the status quo in society.		where you live. Weather its someone mugging another person, or its gang violence, there will always be racism.	all the time. Even when the cop doesn't need to use force, just like in the book. Every time something like this come up in the news, whether it's a cop using unnecessary force on an innocent person, or a robbery on an innocent elderly, or a man taking advantage of a woman. I stop and think, this is the world that we live in. That there is really nothing that can stop those people from doing those evil, cruel, ruthless things.
LAL (Laws are Laws)	These statements accept the status quo and default to the notion that existing laws cannot be questioned, challenged, or changed. These statements sometimes acknowledge and express sympathy for the experiences of refugees; still, they maintain the	Even though I feel bad for the poor people struggling to leave their country, I do not believe any of the laws restricting them from entering the US should be altered. Laws are laws and are put in place for good reasons only to benefit the country.	Laws are laws and the American government and its people should not try to break those laws because they genuinely feel...so we are better off letting the laws go and going on with our lives and let the people struggling figure out a solution on their own or with their own	I do believe that some laws that discriminate against illegal immigrants sound harsh, especially in the situation that the characters are in and that is a reality for many people, but I strongly believe the laws should stay and have a good purpose because

	idea that laws are in place for a reason that they are not to be questioned, challenged, or changed.		government, as harsh as it sounds I believe this is what should happen in the world.	illegal immigration is illegal and does break the law even though in some cases it may be unfair as a country we cannot cross the line between legal and illegal because we feel sympathy for someone.
SHW (Sensationalizing Hard Work)	These statements assert that hard work and perseverance are the only and/or greatest indicators of success. They often default to idealistic narratives of the American Dream that show how hard work leads to success. These statements do not account for social barriers or systemic limitations that do not give some individuals a fair chance even with hard work.	My ancestors had come to America from Europe by choice for a better life. This has shaped my life in a good way because of how motivated and hardworking they were to get established here in America without dealing with the hate of others with prejudices. Therefore all of their hard gave me the opportunity to succeed in a good school district and a pleasant town.	Growing up, my parents lacked religious and financial privilege. However, this did not stop them from growing up to make a happy and successful life for themselves and family. They focused on education and did not let their surroundings and lack of privilege be an excuse for not being successful. The lack of this privilege made me realize that it enables them to work harder and instead of waiting for an opportunity, make an opportunity.	Being born as an American citizen with the family I have doesn't shape my future, it just shaped my beginning. With my personal choices, I get to choose who I want to be and what I can achieve. I understand that others may have not had the best education or the best upbringing, but they too have to shape their futures and work for what they want in life...a true American citizen is a hard worker, no matter where they came from or how they got here.

		TGE (The Gratitude Effect)	These statements express gratitude for privilege and attribute privilege to luck. Participants shrug off a critical examination of privilege and acquiesce to a superficial acknowledgement of privilege which is readily masked by gratitude. These statements do not unpack privilege nor take social responsibility. They do not seek justice or fairness for those without privilege.	After comparing my experience to the experience of those in my book, I can count my blessings and feel grateful for the life I have and the people I have in life. I am thankful I have parents to guide me through the difficult times of my childhood whereas, Marcos, Pato, Gladys, and Arbo are all having to cross without their parents.	I have access to a good education, I will be able to go to college, I have a good family situation, food, water, shelter, and more. I am very lucky to be living the life I am and being surrounded by great people and opportunities. I am grateful to say that I am privileged, a big discussion word in class these past few weeks	This really made me think about privilege and how lucky I am to not have to face the things that my peers may have to.
National and Self-Preservation	Fear-Limitation	CAE (Concern for American economy)	These statements cite economic concerns as the basis for arguments against immigration into America. More specifically, they discuss how jobs are being taken and the impact that this has on the American economy to make the argument that illegal immigrants should not be allowed into America.	They should be deported and sent off because they take jobs away from hard working Americans. No matter if they came here legally or not, people still look at them as bad people.	We have to think about our country's economy and well being. Jobs are not easy to come by	but just because people go through these things doesn't mean they can't come here legally and do what it takes to officially become a citizen. I know these words seem very cruel but I know lots of people that have gone through terrible times in their country and tried their hardest to escape and made it here. Lots of people

					take being here and being born here in America for granted. America can't spend its time worrying about every person in need of help and waste its money because America has its own goals that it needs to achieve as well.
	CAS (Concerns for American safety)	These statements express worry or concern for American safety as an argument to limit immigration. These concerns are often used to marginalize immigrants. These statements sometimes acknowledge the inhumanity of turning away refugees, but argue that American safety is of the utmost importance.	I wanted to bring up the fact that while it is inhumane to kick people back into danger, it is the best we can do to ensure safety for all. Going back to the house demonstration, if a man comes to your home screaming about a gunman, how do you know they could be dangerous too?	in that case we would have to let in millions of people which may not be fair for other and could do harm to society with drug trafficking and sex trafficking,	We have the rules like this to make sure the people coming to the U.S are not criminals and people willing to live the american way.
Exclusivity -Limitation	DA-EP (Defining "American" by establishing parameters)	These statements establish exclusive criteria for what it means to be an American. These statements are often used to make an	I truly believe that to be American means to live in America legally and work your ass off to live here and to pay your bills. This is	I feel that an American is someone with the right documents. If they are here illegally, they are not considered a	You can't call yourself an American without going through the legal process of becoming an american. or being

argument against immigration. This includes statements that assert the significance and importance of citizenship and legality.

just my opinion and I guarantee that there is over a million other opinions on what the definition of being an American means but after learning about what it takes to live in this country and hearing some of the stories from people that are near and dear to my heart, my opinion cannot and will not change.

American. For the thousands of other immigrants who went through the process of being a legal citizen, it is unfair to them if others can just come for free. We have the rules like this to make sure the people coming to the U.S are not criminals and people willing to live the american way.

born here. Those rights that our founding father gave us are for those of us who respect the law to come here legally.