

A Multiliteracies Approach to Teaching YA Graphic Novels & Memoirs
in a Secondary English Language Arts Classroom

by

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ABSTRACT

This classroom-based qualitative study examines a multiliteracies approach to teaching Young Adult Literature graphic novels and memoirs within a five-week book club study unit that took place within a twelfth-grade secondary English language arts classroom in an urban school in the Southwest. It explores the teaching and take up of several multiliteracies approaches including written language, oral language, visual representation, audio representation and spatial representation to support adolescents in reading and responding to this unfamiliar genre of Young Adult Literature. Data collection included a demographic survey, pre and post reading habits surveys, student interviews, student drawing and writing in response to texts, visual analysis, and digital graphic narratives. Findings from this study reveal how a multiliteracies approach to teaching Young Adult Literature graphic novels/memoirs supports student reading by allowing for personal and real-world connections to text. It also showed that summarized visual responses to texts in the form of doodling allowed students to come to a deeper understanding of visual literacy through the words and images of the Young Adult Literature graphic novel/memoir. Other findings showed that through the creation of graphic narratives, students grew to appreciate and understand the complexity of Young Adult Literature graphic novels/memoirs as well as discover a newfound appreciation for the genre. Lastly, through participating in literature circle discussions, students gained new insight and perspective from talking in groups on the interpretation of the words and images from their books. In addition, they were able to clarify confusions, work through problems and advance their understanding of their Young Adult Literature graphic novel/memoirs. These findings support the use of a multiliteracies approach to teaching

Young Adult Literature graphic novels within the secondary English language arts classroom and point to the value of expanding access to this genre within the formal English language arts curriculum.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This qualitative classroom-based study examines how teaching visual, verbal, written and digital forms of literacy may be combined to support the reading and understanding of YA graphic novels/memoir in a secondary English language arts (ELA) classroom. In this study I draw from a Multiliteracies Theory as a framework for understanding how adolescent readers take up multiliterate practices to make meaning and develop understanding of YA graphic novels/memoirs (Cole and Kalantazis, 2018; The New London Group 1996). This chapter shares my introduction to this study, which includes my pathway to teaching YA literature, using graphic novels in my classroom and the reason I wanted to study more about using multimodal literacy practices in response to YA graphic novels/memoirs. I also share my theoretical framework for the study and a review of current research connected to teaching English language arts using multiliteracy approaches, the teaching of graphic novels and the teaching of YA graphic novels/memoirs in the middle and secondary ELA classroom.

Setting the Stage

I have been an English language arts teacher for 10 years. Teaching is my second career and had been a dream of mine for many years prior to entering the profession. When I became fed up with the corporate world, I threw caution and money to the wind and decided to go back to school to pursue this dream. My notions of what it meant to be a teacher and what it actually is like to teach were quite divergent. I thought I would be strict, full of expertise, and share “great works of literature” (meaning the literary canon). My teaching philosophy evolved and changed the day I stepped into my secondary

English classroom in an urban school located in the city center of Phoenix, Arizona. My students, primarily Hispanic, came from communities and cultures different from my own and I needed to work as a teacher and person to learn about their interests, cultures, and lives. I had some success teaching the *Crucible* and *The Scarlet Letter* because at the time there was an immigration bill passed in the state that impacted many of my students' lives. They could compare the Red Scare, Communism and the Salem Witch Trials to what was happening in the state with immigration politics. But, still, these books felt far away and not reflective of their lives. I lost them with books like *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Great Gatsby*. It took me time, but I learned these books were important to me or to what I thought it meant to be an English teacher, but they did not meet the needs of my students. I wanted them to love reading and see themselves in the stories we read together. I realized I had more work to do to learn about more current diverse authors, YA literature, and more diverse genres and text forms. I started to read with my students in mind and to reflect on what it means to be an adolescent reader in today's world.

As a young adult, I loved authors like Stephen King, Danielle Steele, and V.C. Andrews. I connected to the characters in these author's books because they swept me away to faraway places; however, as a teenager there were very few books, I remember reading that I could see myself through the characters in the books. I was a ten year-old girl when I read *Blubber* and *Are You there, God? It's Me, Margaret* by Judy Blume. These books taught me about becoming a young woman. I felt less alone in my experiences of being body shamed because of the character, Jill Brenner, in *Blubber*. Through *Margaret*, I learned about adolescence, religion and coming of age. In

my mind, I could talk with Margaret about things I couldn't bear to share with anyone else. Those experiences and those books have stayed with me to this day.

As I grew through adolescence, I could not find books that spoke to my experience like the ones I had when I was ten. I looked for the story of a teen who was lost and looking for her place in life, wanting to fit in and help me understand what I was feeling was all right and somewhat universal. It wasn't until years later, when my own daughter was a teenager and I became an English teacher, that I was introduced to the world of YA Literature, which as a publishing industry and field of study had exploded between my generation and that of my daughter's. Books like John Green's *Paper Towns* and *The Fault in our Stars* and Laurie Halse Anderson's *Speak* had my daughter and me hooked. Although these books did not necessarily tell *my* story, I could see that they spoke to the lives of my students. With these books, I had a place to start a conversation with my daughter and my students about death, love, self love and sexual abuse.

As I became more immersed in reading YA books, I began growing my classroom library and expanding the kinds of reading selections I offered in my English language arts classes to move beyond the canon. I brought books to my classroom after my daughter read them to add to what little I already had. *Harry Potter*, *Looking for Alaska*, and the *Twilight* series flew off the bookshelves. I went to book sales, second hand stores, and applied for book grants. As my classroom library grew, it had books my daughter and I liked; however, it did not have enough books that reflected the experiences of my Latinx students. I wanted to find books that told their stories.

To become more responsive to students from a range of ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, I decided to pursue graduate studies to strengthen my teaching

practices and learn more about research in connection to teaching reading and writing. I signed up for a course on YA Postcolonial literature and the syllabus was full of unfamiliar book titles. My ignorance regarding Postcolonial Theory was apparent from the first class discussion. I had no idea that this world of literature existed and that I could offer it to my students. I read *Climbing the Stairs* by Padma Venkatraman, *The Red Umbrella* by Christina Diaz Gonzalez, *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas and *Americanized: Rebel Without a Green Card* by Sara Saedi. In the class, I investigated the application of a postcolonial lens in YA literature. I learned about hybridity, marginalization, and othering. I also began to think about ways to use YA literature to support adolescents in becoming agents of change. I began to examine my white privilege and how to navigate the teaching of diverse and pluralistic cultures in my classroom.

This course changed me as a teacher of reading and as a person. The culminating project for the class was to create a unit of study that included one or more Postcolonial YA text(s) from the class. This project became the starting point for my current study. After the course, the professor, Dr. Sybil Durand, invited students to take part in a collaborative panel presentation at the YA Literature Summit in Las Vegas, Nevada (and this would be presented at the Arizona Teachers of English annual conference in Phoenix, Arizona, The National Council of Teachers of English annual conference in Houston, Texas). In preparation for these conferences, I implemented a pilot study using a Postcolonial YA Literature book club unit that I had created for the class. I wanted to understand my students reading practices and takeaways in connection to Post Colonial YA literature such as *Now is the Time for Running* by Michael Williams, *Absolutely True* *Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie, *American Born Chinese* by Gene Luen

Yang, and *Long Way Gone* by Ishmael Beah. This was a new practice for me and for the first time, I offered graphic novels as a reading choice in my classroom.

When the unit began, I noticed that those students who were reading the graphic novels were outpacing the reading of the others by leaps and bounds. The traditional texts were taking the students upwards to three weeks, whereas the graphic novel readers were finished in a few days. This was a problem that needed resolution because I had students working at a completely different reading pace. In addition, I wanted to understand if my students who were reading the graphic novels were reading these texts carefully and in depth or just zipping through them using the pictures/visuals as a guide.

It wasn't until I was assigned *The Best That We Could Do* by Thi Bui in another graduate course that I began to think more deeply about what it means to read a graphic novel. I realized I struggled as a reader with this unfamiliar genre. I questioned the format, the colors, the speech bubbles and the reading directionality. I did not know how to follow the panels. I became interested in better developing and understanding the role of visual literacy in reading and making sense of graphic novels. I created a second pilot study using the graphic novel *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi, which I had access to as a class set. I started gathering as much information as I could on how to teach graphic novels. Information was difficult to find and many articles focused on middle and elementary school with a focus on reading comics or using children's books.

Around this time, I visited a colleague's classroom to observe a lesson on *Catcher in the Rye*. When I walked in, I heard the quiet voice of Holden Caulfield coming from an audiobook being broadcast in the classroom. I also heard the sound of pencils tapping on paper as students were doodling. I was in awe. Everyone was engaged in creating

images and words on paper. The students in the classroom were making connections to the setting, the characters and the themes of the book as they were listening to it being read through an audio recording. As I observed, I began to wonder how the practice of drawing and doodling would pair with the teaching of visual texts like graphic novels. I wanted to know if doodle annotations could help students read and make sense of the themes of graphic novels. How would interacting with visual literacy support the reading of visual texts?

After teaching the unit of study on *Persepolis* I started to pair graphic novels and graphic novel techniques with other assignments. I began to introduce multiliteracies to my teaching of visual and digital texts as well as to traditional classroom texts like *Macbeth* and *Othello*. My independent book projects involved graphic novel components and students began to brainstorm argumentative writing with pictures. My graphic novel library expanded and I became more intrigued by the teaching and learning of visual and textual literacy. This is how I came to this dissertation project. I wanted to better understand how to teach YA graphic novels/memoirs using a multiliteracy approach to support adolescent readers. In addition, I want to support other English language arts teachers and teacher leaders in using YA graphic novels/memoirs and visual forms of literacy learning in secondary English language arts classrooms.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this classroom-based study was to examine what happens when high school students use multiliteracies to support their understanding of YA graphics novels/memoirs in a high school language arts literature circle book study unit. Specifically, I wanted to explore the use of visual texts, Socratic discussion, and the

use of digital platforms to make meaning in connection to the reading of YA graphic novels/memoirs. I created a five-week book study unit where students read YA graphic novels/memoirs and practiced different multiliteracies to support their reading, engagement and understanding of the texts. I approached this study with the stance that students need to be taught how to 1) read a graphic novel as a genre, 2) become familiar with the discourse and vocabulary associated with reading YA graphic novels/memoirs, 3) learn forms of visual literacy, 4) engage in discussions about what they are reading, and 5) create their own interpretations of a graphic narrative through visual and digital platforms. I also came to this study with questions in connection to my research.

Research Questions

This qualitative study aimed to answer the following research questions:

Big Question: How does the use of multiliteracies approaches to teaching reading support 12th grade students in reading and understanding YA graphic novels/memoirs within a high school language arts literature circle book study unit?

Sub Questions: These questions focus on multiliteracy forms including doodle annotation, visual analysis, and graphic narrative, literature circle discussions:

- a. How does the use of multiliteracies such as writing/creation of a visual analysis using YA graphic novels/memoirs support students in reading, understanding, and making sense of YA graphic novels/memoirs?
- b. How does doodle annotation as a form of visual literacy and writing, support students in reading, understanding, and making sense of YA graphic novels/memoirs?

- c. What happens when students create their own graphic narratives in response to YA graphic novels/memoirs?
- d. How does the use of literature circles as a form of multiliteracies support students in reading, understanding and making sense of YA graphic novels/memoirs?

I have included a brief list of key terms and abbreviations. These are meant to provide a sense of how I defined and approached the teaching and use of multiliteracies in my study. Many of the terms are also connected to doodling and to the reading and teaching of reading of graphic novels.

Key Terms and Abbreviations

Multiliteracy: A layered approach to pedagogy which involves semiotic modes to make meaning of available knowledge that learners bring to the classroom from social and cultural contexts (Cope and Kalantzis, 2019; Gee, 2017; Kress, 2003; Jewitt, 2009; Luke, 1995; New London Group, 1996; Serafini and Gee, 2019).

Graphic Novel: The use of images in words paired with color, panels, gutters and other visual elements in book form.

Visual Literacy: The ability to make meaning through the use of images and pictures in varying contexts.

Visual Analysis: The method of scrutinizing, understanding and interpreting pictures and images to make meaning in graphic novels.

Doodle Annotations/Doodle Notes: A form of note taking that involves both words and images.

Literature Circle: A gathering of readers to discuss, evaluate and collaborate on pieces of literature.

Panel: Within a graphic novel, a single frame that depicts one sequence of the story.

Gutter: A blank space between panels in a graphic novel.

Thought Bubble: A bubble used to indicate a character's thoughts in graphic novels.

Dialog Balloon: A bubble that contains communication between/among characters in a graphic novel.

Caption: A box that contains details of the story told by the narrator.

Foreground: The panel or part of a panel that is closest to the viewer.

Midground: The center of a panel or how an author uses this space helps to create tone and mood.

Background: The backdrop of an image where illustrators will tend to place objects that help create backstory, subtext, or other additional information.

The Image Mage: A literature circle role that has the reader analyze and explain the image and its placement on the page of a graphic novel.

The Gutter Dweller: A literature circle role that has the reader analyze and explain the placement, shape and organization of panels on the page of a graphic novel.

The Text Maven: A literature circle role that has the reader analyze and explain the words and its placement on the page of a graphic novel.

The Palette Cleanser: A literature circle role that has the reader analyze and explain the use of color on the page of a graphic novel.

The Synergizer: A literature circle activity that takes place after the literature circle discussion and the group summarizes what they learned from the literature circle discussion.

CHAPTER 2

Theoretical Framework and Review of Literature

This study draws from Multiliteracies Theory, which was initiated by the work of the New London Group (1996) and has since launched a whole realm of research and teaching in the fields of Rhetoric and Composition, English Education, and Literacy Studies. The New London Group is the first group of scholars to study, name, and theorize around literacy learning in connection to an ever-evolving, pluralistic world with new and shifting digital literacy practices. They designed and developed a theory that would support the influx of new literacy needs within technology, multimedia, and other digital platforms. They also sought to address pedagogical practices to support individual students' literacy needs (Alvermann, Moon, and Hagood, 1999; Cope and Kalantzis, 2000; Gee, 2003; Kress, 2010; Jewitt, 2009; Luke, 1995; New London Group, 1996).

Multiliteracies Theory is grounded in the idea that all people learn best when engaged within familiar social, linguistic, and cultural contexts. The New London Group articulated a demand for diversity in approaches to studying and understanding literacy practices and inclusion of diverse cultures, languages, practices, and methods (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000; Jewitt, 2007; Kress, 2010; Leander and Bolt, 2013; New London Group, 1996). The foundation of Multiliteracy Theory is the inclusion of the reader or writer's language, culture, and identity as part of meaning making and as part of multimodal ways of learning (Alvermann, Moon, and Hagood, 1999; Cope and Kalantzis, 2000; Frey and Fisher, 2011; Kress, 2010; Jewitt, 2009; Luke, 1995; New London Group, 1996). This theory views literacy as a multidimensional and layered practice that involves more than

the traditional reading and production of analog texts. It is inclusive of multiple ways of communicating and producing meaning through writing and reading and oral language.

Multiliteracies Theory uses six modes of meaning making or learning as a way for educators to conceptualize the knowledge students need to gain through literacy practice and how they learn through literacy instruction. These include: 1) linguistic meaning, 2) visual meaning, 3) audio meaning, 4) gestural meaning, 5) spatial meaning, and 6) multimodal patterns of meaning. Multimodal meaning is when the first five modes work together. Linguistic elements of meaning within multiliteracy are “intended to focus attention on representational resources” (New London Group, 1996, p.79). These resources include metaphor, vocabulary, organization and other various modes of digital platforms such as video, graphics and animation. Visual meaning elements address images, page layouts, color, perspective, foreground, background and other visual elements (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000; Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2003; New London Group, 1996). Audio meanings are inclusive of sound effects, music and voice. Gestural elements constitute behavior, feelings, kinetics, emotions and body control. Spatial Meaning are elements that include the ecosystem and other geographical, architectural and placement of the semiotic signs in which meaning is created. Of all the modes of meaning, “Multimodal is the most significant, as it relates all the other modes in a quite remarkably dynamic relationship” (New London Group, 1996, p.80). The end goal with this framework is to use these six modes or approaches of meaning making to meet learners' cultural and societal needs through literacy learning.

At the heart of multiliteracies pedagogical approach (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000; New London Group, 1996) is what the New London Group call The Designs of Meaning

and is made up of four essential characteristics: 1) Situated Practice, 2) Critical Framing, 3) Overt Instruction, and 4) Transformed Practice. Situated Practice has a foundation within a student's own life experiences and learning is grounded within those experiences. Critical Framing supports students in interpreting the social context and purpose of the resources or modes of meaning. Overt Instruction is where students develop a “metalanguage” to aid in the designing of meaning. Transformed Practice has learners become designers of their own meaning (New London Group, 1996). Embedded in the Designs of Meaning are the modes of meaning making that can be used to examine adolescent’s visual, verbal, written and digital literacy practices while participating in a book study of YA graphic novels/memoirs in a secondary English language arts class.

I also draw from the Cope and Kalantzis iteration of Multiliteracies Theory (2019) because it incorporates updated terminology relevant to today's classroom pedagogies and its inclusion of digital affordances (Cope and Kalantzis, 2019). The rationale behind the change is that these affordances allow individuals to have access to literacy now in the digital age, at any time and almost any place through digital tools and platforms. Cope and Kalantzis focus on how literacy learning is an active process where individuals are not just receiving information, but they are actively engaged in their own learning. They also frame this approach to literacy with the understanding that individuals now have the ability to give and receive feedback immediately through online and digital spaces, so the process of learning to read or write is no longer a solo act. Literacy learning is something individuals engage in with others collaboratively, working together to make meaning, to support one another, and to give and receive feedback (Cope and Kalantzis, 2019).

The modalities of meaning have been adapted and reconfigured with the innovations of social media and digital platforms. This iteration of multiliteracies not only reconceptualized modalities of meaning but added a seventh mode to reflect these innovations. Cope and Kalantzis name these modes Written Language, Oral Language, Visual Representation, Audio Representation, Tactile Representation, Gestural Representation, and Spatial Representation. “The new media mixes modes more powerfully than was culturally and even technically possible in the earlier modernity that was dominated by the book and printed page” (Cope and Kalantzis, 2018). Through the interconnection of these modes that are layered and interwoven, learners make a combined meaning of these individual spaces. These updated modes of meaning are more appropriate for the current classroom that has technology as a central means of communication as well as new text genres such as graphic novels and the digital platforms in which learners engage both in and out of classroom settings.

Multiliteracies Theory influenced my approach to the teaching of the YA graphic novels/memoirs in my 12th grade class in part because it expanded my perspective, definition, and approach for what counts as literacy learning. For the purposes of this study, I define multiliteracies as a layered approach to pedagogy which involves semiotic modes that include, but are not limited to, 1) Written Language, 2) Oral Language, 3) Visual Representation, 4) Audio Representation, 5) Tactile Representation, 6) Gestural Representation, and 7) Spatial Representation to make and transform meaning of available knowledge that learners bring to the classroom from social and cultural contexts (Alvermann, Moon, and Hagood, 1999; Cope and Kalantzis, 2000; Frey and Fisher, 2011; Kress, 2010; Jewitt, 2009; Luke, 1995; New London Group, 1996). My study on

teaching YA graphic novels/memoirs was not inclusive of all seven modes of meaning. The study excludes the use of Tactile Representation and Gestural Representation. I have excluded both tactile and gestural representation because those fall outside of my research questions and methods design. According to Cope and Kalantzis (2019), Tactile Representation is the use of the five senses which include touch, smell and taste. Gestural Representation relates to body movement, facial expressions, eye movement and other personal representations of the person making meaning and these are not the focus of my interest in examining student's reading comprehension or experience with YA graphic novels/memoirs at this time.

My study of a YA graphic novels/memoir unit draws on expanded view of Multiliteracies Theory (Cope and Kalantzis, 2019) and will examine five key modes of representation:

1. **Written Language:** Writing through visual analysis worksheet, reading graphic novel, screen through computer responses (Cole and Kalantzis, 2019, p.178).
2. **Oral Language:** Literature circle and graphic novel discussion, Flipgrid Presentations, Padlet responses.
3. **Visual Representations:** Drawing, interpreting, and analyzing images and creating images using doodling.
4. **Audio Representation:** Listening to others in literature circles.
5. **Spatial Representation:** Visual analysis of graphic novels that addresses layout, spacing and building of graphic narratives.

Together, these components made up the multimodal literacy practices I taught with and asked students to use within a YA graphic novel/memoir unit in my high school class. The YA graphic novel/memoir unit allowed participants to use multiple modes of learning to make meaning, not only within the YA graphic novel/memoir itself, but through the use of visual and digital literacy practices. A Multiliteracies framework allowed me to examine how students dismantle, rebuild, discuss, reflect, and create their own visual and written representations while reading YA graphic novels/memoir.

There has been a fair amount of attention devoted to research of the teaching and use of multiliteracies in English language arts classrooms. My review of the research focuses on classroom-based studies in English language arts classrooms or school-based studies that have taken place in the past 20 years and since the contributions of the New London Group. My review of the literature is organized by three topics:

1. **Teaching English Language Arts Using a Multiliteracy Approach -** outlines the practices that English language arts teachers are using that have a focus on the relationship of the use of multiliteracies and multimodality in qualitative research. The existing scholarship shows that teaching with a multiliteracies approach produced increased engagement and motivation through purposeful tasks. There is a connection to authentic and real-world application through writing, empathy and human emotions. The practice of using multiliteracies and multimodality also increases critical thinking, deeper understanding and self reflection in middle and secondary schools as well as outside of the classroom.

2. **Teaching Graphic Novels** - explores the historical context of graphic novels and their evolution as a genre, the obstacles the field of English language arts has had for inclusion of the graphic novels in middle and secondary English classrooms. This section also explores how teaching graphic novels has pushed back against the stigma and gender bias in relation to graphic novels. It shows how the genre has allowed for increased engagement from reluctant readers, building confident readers and real-world authentic practices that allow students to self-reflect.
3. **Teaching YA Graphic Novels/Memoirs** - discusses historical context and evolution of the YA graphic novel/memoirs and educational practices that include the use of teaching YA graphic novels/memoir in middle and secondary English language arts classrooms.

This review of the literature focuses on the teaching of reading in the ELA classroom using multiliteracies as well as the teaching of the graphic novel and the YA graphic novel/memoir. The purpose of this section is to contextualize the study within the use of multiliteracies and multimodal learning in the field of English language arts, primarily in secondary classrooms and in connection to the teaching and reading of YA graphic novels/memoir.

Teaching Using a Multiliteracy Approach with Secondary Students

Research on the practice or teaching of multiliteracies in secondary English language arts classrooms is relatively new and the main body of research in this area is situated in college composition classrooms. The majority of the research on teaching at the secondary level focuses on updating and expanding traditional literacy practices used

in everyday classrooms to include digital, multimodal, and visual forms of writing and reading (Alvermann, 1999; Cope and Kalantzis, 2000; Frey and Fisher, 2011; Kress, 2010; Monin, 2010; New London Group, 1996). The literature that addresses the use of multiliteracies with secondary students is inclusive of two main aspects of Multiliteracies theory, 1) the use of multiple modes to make meaning and 2) the communal aspect of learning. Several recent qualitative studies focus on the use of multiliteracies and multimodality that lead to increased engagement and motivation through purposeful tasks, authentic and real-world application through writing, empathy in relation to human emotions, and critical thinking skills and self-reflection in middle and secondary school as well as outside of the classroom.

Connecting the Old to the New

A body of research on multiliteracies reveals that educators use multiple modes of meaning, along with digital platforms and social media outlets in learning spaces. Educators have been successful in creating multimodal units of study that connect the old (canonical texts) and the new (Facebook, Instagram, etc.). For example, White and Hungerford-Kresser (2014) and Lewis (2012) conducted classroom research where students used social media networks to create online character journals and engage in character analysis through replicating social media posts in secondary English language arts. White and Hungerford-Kresser's study found that "social networks can provide a culturally relevant, collaborative and multi-genre forum through which students can make new meaning with texts" (2014, p. 642). Through these platforms, students were effectively engaged with character analysis and showed empathy for each other and the characters they met through the social media platforms.

Lewis (2012) had similar findings on the ability to make meaning in multiliterate spaces. In this classroom-based study led by two teachers, participants replicated online social media sites to complete character analysis. Lewis stated that classroom teachers discovered that by using alternative means of making meaning and stepping away from traditional classroom practices “allows students to demonstrate a deeper, more multidimensional understanding of character than the routinely assigned essay” (2012, p. 289). In both these studies, the use of social media platforms gave students the ability to draw upon and synthesize aspects of literary knowledge and come to a deeper understanding of the core text using multimodal platforms (Lewis, 2012; White and Hungerford-Kresser, 2014).

Teacher researchers and scholars have used multiliteracies to assist students in acquiring a deeper level of understanding, critical thinking skills and increased engagement in connection to the study of canonical texts, and poetry. Harvey (2019) along with a pre-service teacher created multimodal workstations to aid adolescent learners in understanding the context and history within the canonical writings of Shakespeare. They found that through engaging in multiliteracies while working in a community of learners that “Multimodalities allow for authentic interaction with and alongside the timeless truths of humanity found in Shakespeare and offer learners agency to construct understanding of the world and themselves” (Harvey, 2019, p. 567). With the addition of multimodal learning, adolescents who at times struggle with complex texts were able to achieve higher levels of thinking and deeper understanding of canonical texts.

Poetry, Remixing, and Multiliteracies

A body of research has been performed on teaching poetry using a multiliteracies approach in secondary classrooms (Scott-Curwood and Cowell, 2010; Bowmer and Scott-Curwood, 2016). Scott-Curwood and Cowell (2010) undertook this approach in a three-year study in a 10th grade English language arts classroom. For the purpose of the study, they implemented the writing of iPoetry. This type of poetry takes all aspects of traditional poetry and adds audio, visual, textual elements to create in a visual poem. The iPoetry project was introduced to “prompt student achievement and engagement by drawing attention to the multiple modes that are used within digital poetry and that are integral to making meaning,” (Scott-Curwood and Cowell, 2010, p.112) and to examine effects multimodal poetry would have if any on promoting achievement and increasing students engagement. The findings revealed that through multimodal composition such as iPoetry adolescents had increased engagement. Scott-Curwood and Cowell (2010) also found that “Through integrating visual images, words, sounds and transitions students were able to gain hand-on experience in multimodal compositions” (p.114).

The current literature on pedagogical practices in secondary English languages arts classrooms has included the practice of Remix, paired with multiliteracies. “Remix” is the act of mixing traditional classroom literacy practices and pop culture. (E. Gee and Serafini, 2017; J. Gee, 2003; Knobel and Lankshear, 2008). The practice uses prior knowledge and current sociocultural experiences to create new meaning. Remix, along with multiliteracies in English language arts classrooms has revealed that “successful students exhibit behaviors identified through research as correlating with motivation, including having purpose or reason for completing a task, being able to identify a task

goal, valuing learning and perceiving oneself as being able to complete the task” (Guthrie and Wigfield, 2000).

For example, Bowmer and Scott-Curwood (2016) used multiliteracies and remix in a 9th grade ELA classroom as a way for students to explore romantic concepts within poetry. The researchers had two aims: 1) update the English language arts curriculum to be more enjoyable by incorporating popular culture in the classroom and 2) observe how remixing increases student engagement and gives learners ownership of acquiring their own knowledge. The researchers, along with the classroom teacher, designed and implemented a unit of study which was composed of canonical text, pop culture and multimodal components. This study had substantial findings on how participants engaged in a combination of pop culture and romantic concepts within poetry. First, participants were able to make clear connections between “romantic concepts, romantic and pop culture texts and society in diverse ways” (Bowmer and Scott-Curwood, 2016, p.144) and that remix allowed students to have feelings of autonomy, engagement and enjoy working within multiliteracies through remixing.

Gainer and Lapp (2010) developed a multiliteracies study that incorporated lessons in which students could explore multiliteracies practices through remix. Their goal was to create a multimodal curriculum to aid educators in remixing traditional literacy practices. This was accomplished by creating a classroom environment that included the use of digital tools. Students participated in four separate multimodal units of study which combined traditional classroom practice with creating personal montages, multimodal texts and documentary poems. In these applications students were active

constructors of their own meaning and they were remixing, recreating and redesigning all while making meaning of existing knowledge.

In both of these studies, researchers revealed that through multimodal compositions, in this case poetry, personal montages, evaluating canonical texts and remixing traditional literacy practices, participants were allowed to think critically while working in multiple modes of meaning making. Secondary students became active constructors of their own knowledge by remixing, recreating and redesigning existing knowledge with the use of multiliteracies.

Multimodal Writing Practices

In the past decade, there have been numerous classroom-based pedagogical studies examining the use of multiliteracies to develop and support middle and secondary writing practices. Many of these studies have shown the use of multiliteracies and multimodal writing platforms to support the teaching of argument writing. The findings were similar in the sense that all of the multimodal writing practices were a place where participants found work that was authentic and meaningful to them which created an environment for increased motivation and engagement.

For example, researcher Nancy Bailey and classroom teacher Kristen Carroll, in a 9th grade English language arts class, evaluated the importance of multimodal learning through a multi genre research project with a focus in Multiliteracies approach. Participants selected multimodal outcomes such as music, videos, children's books and comic strips to create and replace the traditional research project. The students used prior knowledge and created different forms of representation of knowing. Bailey explains in this classroom-based study students learning was "informed by ideas that the

nature of learning is sociocultural, constructivist, semiotic, situated in cultural knowledge and real inquiry of students and often multimodal in nature” (Bailey and Carroll, 2010, p. 79). The researchers discovered that by replacing the traditional research paper with a multimodal, multigenre research project, students “turned information into real knowledge that was meaningful to them” (Bailey and Carroll, 2010, p. 78).

Leekeenan and White (2021) found that multiliteracies can aid in creating positive identity as a writer and increased engagement in their community. In their work, they created a space to build community and writing through writing groups in an 11th grade English language arts classroom. Built within the social and community aspects of Multiliteracies Theory, their intent was “to further explore how writing can be used to sustain students’ emotional and intellectual development,” (Leekeenan and White, 2021 p. 92) and “how writing groups constructed and reinforced students' identity as writers,” (2021 p. 97) through multimodal platforms. Students used linguistic, spatial, and audio multiliteracies to engage in stories of themselves, their lives and the communities in which they live. The results showed that the writing groups provided a space for students to have positive identities as writers which resulted in “increased engagement with writing practices for longer amounts of time, sustained work on writing pieces and assignments outside of class and a desire to share their struggles and success with peers,” (Leekeenan and White, 2021, p. 97) through the use of multimodal writing and multiliteracies.

Pytash, Kist, and Testa (2020) believe there is a growing need for an improved teacher preparedness and improved English language arts curriculum at STEM schools. The researcher, along with pre-services teachers in a STEM school writing elective class

on multimodal memoir, explored experiences of one student's (Esther) life through a multimodal autobiography (MA). This updated autobiography replaced the traditionally text-only genre with images, videos, and music to tell Esther's experiences and life story in a multimodal project. The research has indicated that within the modality of writing, the case study participant was able to use multimodal composition to connect to past literacy experiences and the relationship to their present day lives. It also has implications within the multimodality of writing not only in English language arts, but across the curriculum.

The end result in all of these studies was that students realized a positive writing identity. In addition, they became constructors of their own knowledge within authentic and meaningful writing assignments which in turn increased student motivation and engagement.

Argument Writing and Rhetorical Analysis

An extensive body of literature documents the use of a multiliteracies approach and the practice of argument writing and rhetorical analysis at the secondary level. Recent research has examined interventions that allowed high school students to create multimodal arguments using multimodal platforms that were aimed at improving high school conventional writing instruction (Carpenter, 2020; Howell, Butler and Reinking, 2017). Howard, et. al. (2017) asked the question, "How can using digital tools within a process orientation to writing be integrated into conventional instruction to help students construct effective multimodal and conventional arguments?" (186). Under guidance from their classroom teacher, students created websites for multimodal

arguments, public service announcements from a self-selected social cause and a photo essay of their argument that was created in Google Slides.

Carpenter (2020) in his 11th grade English language arts classroom used the multimodal platform of *The Prime Minister* videos on Youtube to reinforce and teach rhetorical analysis. In this pedagogical practice he used the Prime Minister's televised questions as an opportunity to use a multiliteracies approach to rhetorical analysis. Students engaged in visual representation of arguments through videos, spatial and audio representation with class discussion, and linguistic representation with the writing and working together as a community in the classroom.

The outcome of these studies was a greater understanding of argument writing, rhetorical devices and how they can be used in multiple modes of representation. It was also noted that there was increased engagement and the ability to make meaning through unconventional modes. Howell et al. (2020) found even with the obstacles that stemmed from the use of digital spaces, there was increased engagement and enthusiasm in regards to the multimodal component of the argument. Carpenter surmised with the use of multiliteracies, "students were afforded greater exposure to real-world rhetorical transactions and consequences, which is something becoming more relevant each successive school year in our increasingly global world" (75).

According to Howell et al. (2018), there is a significant need for the integration of multimodality into English language arts writing research. The goal of Howell et. al's classroom-based research study was to improve the standard of multimodal arguments in both text and digital formats. Within the study, participants used digital spaces to form multimodal arguments via infographics, websites and public service announcements. The

findings have implications that signify that 1) digital platforms and multimodal composition may provide a scaffold for students to learn to formulate arguments; 2) authentic use of digital platforms and multimodal tools can improve student engagement with creating arguments; 3) students' transfer of skills can increase along with their engagement with the use of multiliteracies.

Ultimately participants in these studies revealed a high level of engagement, a noted increased initiative and improved quality of writing arguments while using multimodal and digital spaces.

Outside the Classroom Walls

The newness and unknown aspects of the multiliteracies approach has made it challenging to find a space for it within traditional classrooms. Even with the prominence of digital spaces and an increasing digital world, classrooms still find themselves without access to an adequate number of computers and those who do have computers are faced with software and devices that are out of date, damaged and inoperative. This has sent those researching multiliteracies theory out of the traditional classroom and into after school programs where it is easier to implement research on multimodal spaces.

For instance, Wargo (2018) took the use of a multiliteracies approach beyond the traditional classroom and utilized a Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) after school program to carry out an ethnography of LGBTQ youth and to examine multiliteracies through sound, story and space. Specifically, Wargo explored how one particular participant used multimodal writing in the form of sonic cartography to “orchestrate identity, navigate inequality, and connect to their community” (Wargo, 2018). The case study participant

used music and sound from her community and mapped out these spaces to tell her life experiences. The findings in this study revealed that multimodal composition allowed the participant a place to explore her own civic and communal space. She was able to investigate her own resistance and survivorship within the community while navigating personal injustices and engaging in self reflection.

Additional research on the inclusion of multiliteracies has been executed by Turner and Griffin (2020) who called upon twin sisters in a case study to self-reflect with the use of 21st century literacies and evaluate their own professional and personal futures. During the case study the twin sisters were engaged in visual and verbal modalities through the use of visual narratives in the form of a digital dream board. Turner and Griffin (2020) explain that the twins were able to “articulate the need for more opportunities to engage multiliteracies in the form of professional, aspirational auditory (i.e. music) and African American Girls Life Literacies that would protect and advance their own future interests, goals and aspirations” (124). The research highlighted that through their multimodal digital vision boards the twin sisters were able to articulate and envision a more equitable professional world for Black career women.

The literature above suggests that the use of a multiliteracies approach in after school programs and middle and secondary English language arts classrooms has a positive impact on today’s adolescents. Research has shown that by addressing the needs of 21st century learners through the use of multimodal platforms will allow them to engage in real world literacies that they participate in every day. The research also reveals a gap and lack of inclusion of updated texts in the form of YA literature and YA graphic novels/memoirs. There clearly is a need for further research in this area that

combines YA graphic novels/memoirs with multiliterate practices specifically in secondary English language arts classrooms.

Teaching Graphic Novels

In 1978, Will Eisner's graphic novel was published; it was said to be the first graphic novel. *A Contract with God*, a story about the Jewish ghettos in New York, set the stage for the inclusion of the graphic novel genre in the mainstream literary community. However, the journey into school classrooms has not been an easy one. It wasn't until 1980, when Art Spiegelman published his Pulitzer Prize winning graphic novel *Maus* that educators started to find value in teaching with graphic novels. Since then, *Maus* has been studied in both English and History classrooms. Many other graphic novels such as *Persepolis* and adaptations of canonical texts are being used to introduce students to the world of graphic novels. This section of the review of literature is dedicated to reviewing key insights from a body of research that includes the argument for the inclusion of graphic novels in secondary English language arts classrooms, addressing the stigma attached to the genre, how graphic novels are being used to improve comprehension and engagement with English Language Learners and pedagogical practices that have used a graphic novel a centerpiece of research.

An Argument for Inclusion

The existing literature on graphic novels focuses upon the need for implementing multimodal literacies in a world that centers upon digital media, social media, videos and web-based forums. The emphasis of these literacies “place emphasis on who students are, both culturally and as individuals and place an emphasis on the visual image and its value and relationship to print-text literacies.” (Monin, 2010). Katie Monnin (2010) has

challenged educators to rethink current classroom literacy practices and evaluate “what has counted as literature in the past, what counts as literature in the new media age, and how we envision multimodal literacies in our classrooms.” (40). By re-envisioning what students read in the secondary English language arts classroom, we make space for ever-evolving literacy forms including new media and graphic novels.

English language arts teachers are often faced with the challenge of justifying the value and worth of anything “new” within their curriculums (Carter, 2008; Chinn, 2004; Conners, 2010; Cook, 2017; Fisher and Frey, 2008; Gorman, 2008; Moeller, 2010; Monin, 2010). Since 1992, graphic novels have won prestigious awards, which has aided in lending credibility to the genre. However, even with these accolades English language arts teachers have faced challenges in incorporating graphic novels into their literacy curriculum. The argument is that graphic novels are too often seen as not “serious” or rigorous literature and, instead, are thought of as entertainment or a pop-culture fad that do not have a formal place in the English language arts curriculum alongside works of literature. A few graphic novels that have covered serious and rigorous topics have started to make their way into the curriculum such as *Maus*, which is a story of World War II, *Persepolis*, a story of a young girl during the Islamic Revolution and *A Contract with God* that depicts the lives of Jewish immigrants in New York. All of these are based within historical contexts.

The Graphic Novel Stigma and Gender Bias

Current research and writing on teaching with graphic novels focuses on the gender bias and stigmas that are often attached to this genre. In the past graphic novels were used primarily to motivate reluctant readers and aid those who struggle with reading

comprehension and have been called “boy” books. This idea in itself has led to the stigmas that have been attached to the world of graphic novels. According to Connors (2010) “Graphic novels support struggling readers, promote multiple literacies, motivate reluctant readers or lead students to transact with more traditional forms of literature.” However, “better readers and self-conscious students are likely to want to distance themselves from the genre,” (Hansen, 2012, p.60). In addition, gender differences have been a key component attached to the stigma as well with the preconception that “Video games, graphic novels and comic books are the works of nerd culture,” (Kearn, 2016). This culture is one that many female students do not feel a part of in the classroom. The inclusion of violence and depiction of sex has also been a barrier for educators and a lot of female students (Moeller, 2011).

Motivating the Reluctant Reader

Recent literature has shown that graphic novels have changed the attitudes of reluctant readers and has increased interest in reading inside and outside of schools. For example, Gorlewski and Schmidt (2011), tasked self-identified reluctant readers in a college-prep Writing 100 English Skills class with a choice of graphic novels such as *The Arrival* by Shau Tan, *American Born Chinese*, by Gene Luen Yang, *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi and graphic novel adaptations of *Macbeth*, *Frankenstein* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and paired them with writing assignments in varied styles and length in relation to themes depicted in these books. Gorlewski and Schmidt (2011) discovered that through reading graphic novels, those “students who were supposed to be non-readers, wanted to now read books for fun,” (106). The graphic novels, paired with writing, turned reluctant readers into lifelong readers. The results of the study showed

students enjoyed the ability to pick their own books and discuss them with classmates. The students also recognized that they were more confident in their reading and no longer thought of themselves as bad readers. In both studies, graphic novels and book choice helped make reading fun, relaxing and interesting.

Writing with Graphic Novels

Pedagogical research on graphic novels has not only been focused on the reading of the genre, but it has also shown a close relationship between reading graphic novels and writing in English language arts classrooms. A body of research has been explored pairing graphic novels with the writing of narrative and multimodal composition that reflects the lives and experiences of today's adolescents.

For instance, classrooms with English Learners (EL) are using multicultural graphic novels to aid in building critical literacy skills and giving those students a place to tell and connect to their own stories through graphic narratives. Danzak (2011) found that graphic novels as a genre increase engagement and, in many cases, it is due to the relevant topic that breaches bias, addresses difficult topics such as violence and rape, as well as brings culturally relevant texts into the classroom. However, this approach to identity takes on a different angle when it is explored with graphic novels; instead of students reading about themselves, they can actually see themselves. In a study conducted in an ESOL classroom, participants explored their identity as they participated in a project called Graphic Journeys. After engaging in scaffolded lessons on how to read and understand graphic novels, participants read a selection of YA graphic novels/memoirs that included *American Born Chinese* and *Skim*. The middle school adolescents were then asked to write their own graphic narratives about their stories of

immigration. Danzak explained that through a multiliteracies framework that focused on identity and self, “this project provided a rich set of authentic writing opportunities to engage teens in literacy production and the literate community” (Danzak, 2011, p.195). Participants were able to reflect on their lived experiences through understanding the graphic novel genre and graphic narratives.

Much like the use of a multiliteracies framework, a body of research has shown the use of graphic novels to update canonical texts, update approaches to character analysis and understanding themes in these texts. It has also allowed through these updated practices for students to realize the critical skills involved in reading these texts, as well as gain a better understanding that this genre is challenging and complex and deserves a place in classrooms.

An extended body of research has shown the use of graphic narratives have led to positive outcomes when paired with graphic novels. Dallacqua (2018), Faughey (2020) and Hughes et.al (2011) used graphic novels and graphic novel adaptations to create graphic narratives that “transform the way students think about reading and writing and to empower them as readers and writers as well as legitimize graphic narratives as a literacy practice. The research found that when learners “applied their knowledge about the graphic novel genre and shared their own ideas, they found unprecedented ways to represent their thinking and revealed the depth of their knowledge about each text” (Faughey, 2020, p.78). In general, participants in all three of these studies were engaged and motivated to not only create graphic narratives but, they started to think of themselves as readers. They became confident and “took ownership of their work that showed an awareness of connections to the space around them, whether it was

constructed space like an apartment block or a natural one,” (Hughes et. al, 2011, p. 610). Others found this space helped to develop multimodal literacies allowing students catharsis from tragic life experiences.

The research on the use of graphic novels in secondary English language arts classrooms has increased over the past ten years. However, the quality and amount of research still has a vast opportunity for growth. Even more so, the number of studies that combine graphic novels and a multiliteracies approach is quite limited. This further shows the need for original research that addresses these two components of my proposed research.

Teaching YA Graphic Novels and Memoirs

In the past ten years, there has been an explosion of YA graphic novels/memoirs in the publishing industry and this has helped this genre continue to find its way into the formal curriculum of English language arts classrooms. Proponents have written in solidarity for the inclusion of the genre through scholarly works (Sotor and Connors, 2009; YALSA, 2008) and research within the field of English Education (Cook, 2017; Schmidt, 2011; Sotor and Connors, 2009). The field of YA graphic novels/memoirs now include a breadth of genres including, nonfiction, fiction, dystopian, mystery, memoir, historical fiction, and more. In this section of the literature review, I will include a wide body of research that addresses YA graphic novels/memoir in middle and secondary English language arts classrooms. I will include the rise and force that drives the implementation into mainstream curriculum. The research reveals the story of the use of YA graphic novels/memoir in evaluating identity, racism, and stereotypes. It further

explores how the concept of gender myths and bias can be dispelled through the use of YA graphic novels/memoirs.

The rise of the YA Graphic Novel/Memoir

Within this wider context of publishing, reading, and teaching of YA graphic novels/memoirs in secondary English language arts has only recently found its way into the graphic novels movement and into the secondary English language arts curriculum (Cook, 2017; J. Griffith, 2019; P. Griffith, 2010; Meyer and Jimenez, 2017; Monin, 2010). The increase can be associated with the prestigious book awards that YA literature and graphic novels have won, such as the Walter Dean Myers Award ([We Need Diverse Books](#)), YALSA, The National Book Award which include the Michael L. Printz Award, Coretta Scott King Award and William C. Morris Award ([YALSA Book Awards](#)). These awards recognize authors in YA literature for first time authors in the genre, excellence within the genre, African American authors of YA literature and diverse books written by diverse authors. In addition, young readers and educators can find top book lists on familiar platforms like NPR, Good Reads and YALSA website. Large chain bookstores and online shopping forums have included young adult literature and YA graphic novel/memoir categories. The internet and social media are full of teens that blog about these books. The terms “bookstagrammers” and “booktubers” are common terms in the industry. Some influential young adults have created these forums such as *Vicky Who Reads*, *Paperback Nat and Reading and Writing and Me*. These platforms were started and continue to flourish because of the passion from teens, adults and educators for the genre of YA graphic novels/memoirs. Readers of YA graphic novels/memoirs vary in age, race, ethnicity and educational

background. The stories are those of youth, but those stories ring true for adults as well (Connor and Sotor, 2009). They share love, teen angst, violence and issues in which today's youth can connect (Aziz, Wilder and Mora, 2019; Crandall, 2009; Halse Anderson, 2019; Hughes et. al, 2014; Shaffer, 2017). YA graphic novels/memoirs is a genre in which young adults can not only read about themselves, but see themselves in the images on the pages and within the characters of each book (Bean and Moni, 2003; Chiquito, Restrepo and Mora, 2019; Crandall, 2009; De La Pena, 2015; Durand, 2013). Research has shown that teaching YA literature and YA graphic novels/memoirs in middle and high school classrooms increases engagement with texts (Ward and Young, 2011; Monnin, 2008; Hanson, 2012; Hughes, King, Perkins, and Fuke, 2011; Cook, 2017), with writing (Frey and Fisher, 2009; Dallacqua, 2018; Gorlewski and Schmidt, 2011) and in the classroom (Low and Jacobs, 2018).

Gene Luen Yang's, YA graphic novel, *American Born Chinese* put the YA graphic novel genre in the forefront of YA literature. Published in 2006, it was a finalist for the National Book Awards for YA literature. The book is about Jin, a Chinese American who longs to fit into American culture. It is a story of identity, marginalization and teen struggle to find a place between culture and self. The YA graphic novel/memoir is not just another coming-of-age story about a boy who can't find his way. It is a cultural journey in which the reader visually interprets Jin's story through the illustrations. This book's acclaim gave the genre of YA graphic novels/memoirs more attention and made it easier to introduce to a broad audience. It set forth the inclusion of the YA graphic novel/memoir into secondary English language arts classrooms as part of the formal curriculum.

The majority of the research on teaching graphic novels and the field of YA graphic novels/memoirs in secondary classrooms has been a challenge to find. There is a lack of quality peer-reviewed research that is about the use of YA graphic novels/memoirs in secondary English language arts classrooms. This makes sense because this genre is so new and has recently entered the formal curriculum. There is a small amount of teacher and librarian research showing different teaching strategies and approaches for using YA graphic novels/memoirs in the reading curriculum. However, the vast majority have had the focus of one award winning YA graphic novel, *American Born Chinese* by Gene Luen Yang. This can be attributed to the acclamations and awards that the book has received. With these awards, it has been easier to include and introduce the YA graphic novel/memoir into classrooms (Cook, 2017; Kern, 2016; Marlatt and Dallacqua, 2019; Strong-Hansen, 2012; Thomas, 2011). In this section, I include several studies on recent practices used in YA graphic novels/memoirs middle and secondary schools as well as after school programs, many of which used *American Born Chinese* as its centerpiece.

Evaluating Identity, Racism and Stereotypes

YA graphic novels/memoirs have set a precedent for allowing educators and students a space to explore complex issues such as race, identity and stereotype. For example, Melissa Schieble (2014) in her highly influential piece on YA graphic novels/memoirs set the stage for conversations on racism, identity and the Asian stereotypes. She utilized the award winning YA graphic novel *American Born Chinese* to highlight Asian stereotypes in today's literature and to help educators find ways to share this text and start uncomfortable conversations in their own classrooms. Schieble found

that this particular YA graphic novel best confronts a youth's struggles with race, identity and the Asian culture. Using a critical visual literacy lens, Schieble analyzes each frame and the language used in the book to highlight instances of othering, marginalization and racism shown in the book. Schielble (2014) stated that educators must “foster dialogue in the classroom around issues of equity and address historic and modern day complexities about race and racism,” (49). Through the analysis of panels and words, Schielble shared her findings to aid educators in teaching these topics in their own classrooms.

Schieble used the same YA graphic novels in a previous study that focused upon the training of pre-service teachers and teaching of students in a collaborative digital learning environment to investigate a critical approach in teaching adolescents with the graphic novel *American Born Chinese*. She argues several key points in this work: 1) Reading critically with YA graphic novels may not be enough to enact social change; 2) *American Born Chinese*, along with multimodal texts such as images and videos can address ways of interacting with reading and writing; and 3) Pre-service teachers must be trained on strategies that interrupt dominant cultures both in and out of classrooms. What she found was that adolescents in the study were able to try on multiple perspectives by reading the YA graphic novel with a critical approach. However, the pre-service teachers and adolescents “neglected to probe and identify racism as a structural problem rather than an individual problem,” (2011, p. 209). Scheible explained that this is a good starting point for pre-service teachers and with more probing questions all participants involved will be able to come to a better critical understanding.

Classroom teacher Mary Rice and librarian Heidi Hammond created studies that used *American Born Chinese* by Gene Luen Yang because of the awards and praise that

the book had received. The goal of both studies was to see if students understood the implications of racism in the book and if students could recognize complex issues in a YA graphic novel/memoir. Rice and Hammond in separate studies worked with the participants on context, historical background, and building the toolbox needed to read graphic novels. Rice used the YA graphic novel/memoir while teaching summer school to a group of English language learners. She found that students were unable to attain the level of critical thinking that they were aiming for but did find some success with honors levels students and other graphic novels. She also noted that “graphic texts engage students’ interests in reading and they have helped both sophisticated and novice readers to develop discursive skills” (Rice, 2012, p. 43). Hammond, on the other hand, had great success with her group of adolescents. Hammond (2012) explains, “Graphic novels were not popular with general student populations,” (29), however, students believed that with more books available and an increase in popularity that YA graphic novels/memoirs that students would be able to recognize issues of race and social injustice in books like *American Born Chinese*.

Gender Myths and Bias

YA graphic novels/memoirs have been used not only to address strategies for teaching of such sensitive topic of racism and discrimination but have also been used as a tool to inform educators on how to dispel myths about gender and sexuality in secondary English language arts classrooms. In a qualitative study, classroom educators and researchers, Kedley and Spiering (2017) argued that the “format and content of graphic novels that depict LGBTQ experiences are a unique and effective pedagogical tool to engage students in critical discussions about gender and sexuality,” (p. 54). They offer

classroom strategies to aid in dispelling myths about gender and sexuality with the YA graphic novels/memoirs *Honor Girl* and *Adrian and the Tree of Secrets*. Kedley and Spiering surmised that with the use of these two books and their LGBTQ characters, educators can dispel three myths associated with these topics. First is that the preconceived notions of gender and sexuality are naturally connected. Second is that gender and sexual identities cannot be fluid and are permanent. Third is that gender identity is presumed and normal. Within their work they provide examples and provide strategies to dispel these myths with the use of YA graphic novels/memoirs.

Moeller (2011) investigated a different type of bias with the reading of YA graphic novels/memoirs and found that the use of these books with formal curriculum creates opportunities for students to use skills such as critiquing and analyzing gender bias and astigmatism within multimodal platforms. Using a selection of three YA graphic novels/memoirs, Moeller set out to dispel myths about gender bias that were associated with the reading of the genre. She found many participants responded that they were “nerd books” and would not be caught in public reading them because they were not “cool.” Further developments showed all gendered participants were interested in reading and connecting to the characters in the YA graphic novels/memoirs that they read. The females in the study shared feelings for characters and looked at relationships between other characters. The males discussed the actions that were or were not taken by the characters in the YA graphic novels/memoirs. Through reading YA graphic novels/memoirs adolescents are able to think critically about gender bias and the stigmas about the value to the genre.

It was difficult to find qualitative peer review research on teaching YA graphic novels/memoirs in the secondary ELA classroom using a multiliteracies approach. By creating a book unit study using a Multiliteracies approach and YA graphic novels/memoirs, I had hoped to add a much needed brick to the wall of scholarship on the use in secondary English language arts classrooms.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This study draws from two past pilot studies that took place in my 9th grade English language arts classrooms. The first study was on YA literature in a book club study unit and it then evolved from that study and focused on the graphic novel *Persepolis*. The unit of study I created on YA graphic novels/memoirs is designed to provide teacher leaders with a guide and tools to use in their own classrooms. In this section I will describe the context and details for my dissertation research. I will explain the school, its curriculum, my role as a teacher researcher, outline of the study and the data collection. These components have allowed me to explore and answer my research questions for the study.

School Context

This study took place in the Fall of 2021 at Mid-City High School (all names are pseudonyms), a tuition-free public high school in a large urban city in the Southwest. The student body was composed of 2166 students and was made up of 13.62% Hispanic, 1.89% African American, 2.77% Asian, 75.62% White, .83% Native American students, and 5.13% reporting as multi-race (Arizona Department of Education, 2020). The school was not classified as a Title I because 93% of the student population did not qualify and only 7% of the students were classified for free and reduced lunch. The campus for the 2000 plus students was situated in a neighborhood where many of the students lived. However, due to the status and reputation of the school, a great number of students from outside of the neighborhood and district came to the school with hopes of a good education. Learners from cities all around were allowed

to attend because the district has open boundaries for admission. The families that lived in the zip code where the school was located had a mean income of \$90,3989 (Censtats, 2021). The zip code demographics showed that 82% of the population was white, .95% reported as black, .25% Native, 8.79% Hispanic and 2.38% mixed race (Censtats, 2021). Of the people who lived in the area 33% had a bachelor's degree and 20.4% have a master's (Censtats, 2021).

The school was on the border of two large metropolitan cities in the southwest. It was situated in an area that houses large resort hotels, a golf course, upscale shopping malls and fine dining restaurants. The cement block and brick buildings were decorated with green and gold school logos and slogans. The heart of the school was a large courtyard filled with picnic tables, cement block seating and environmentally conscious artificial green turf pads for the student body to gather in between classes and lunchtime. Interspersed between the cement seats were planters filled indigenous plants that can survive the southwest's harsh temperatures. The classrooms for the school were a labyrinth of corridors that led to the center courtyard. The classrooms had state-of-the-art interactive flat screen televisions and module desks that lent to an ease of student interactions in the classroom. The school had many facilities for extracurricular activities such as two large school gyms and a dance room, playing fields for football, baseball and soccer. At the opposite side of the school were tennis courts and an auditorium for performing arts classes. The average class size for English language arts for all grades was approximately 30 students per class. The school had a 97% graduation rate and a state level letter grade rating of an A (AZ Report Cards. AZDE.gov, 2020).

At the inception of my research at Mid-City High School, the political and cultural climate left me faced with a barrage of challenges. During those days, our state legislation invoked a law that made it illegal to teach Critical Race Theory in the classroom. By implementing this law, it set a domino effect that led to issues of book banning and parental push back on what we taught and how we taught in our classrooms. One of the final issues that had an impact in my classroom and the surrounding areas was issues of immigration that our state has recently faced. The topic of the border walls and child immigrants being held without their parents are daily headlines in the community that surrounds Mid-City High School. Students who are undocumented have been stripped of their chance to have a pathway to citizenship. Topics such as these are taboo and teachers are discouraged to speak about them. These challenges had a substantial impact on the books I was allowed to choose for the study and the level of comfort that I, the researcher, had at times during the research itself.

To start, at no time did I ever consider using Critical Race Theory (CRT) in a secondary English language arts classroom, but it still made me and others nervous about how we approached teaching sensitive topics. This was largely due to the grossly inaccurate perception of how parents and people of the state defined CRT. With this in mind, I had second thoughts regarding what books I was selecting for the study. Parental interference on what is taught in the classroom puts a sense of fear in myself and other educators. There were legal implications attached to these fears. Our jobs were at risk if we did not stick to district mandated books, so I needed to find books that would not set

off red flags and possibly negate having my research approved from the district. It was a fine line I had to walk between politics and the school in which I taught.

My next challenge was instances of book banning at Mid-City High School. At the inception of the research, a parent from the school objected to the teaching of the book, *So You've Been Publicly Shamed* by Jon Ronson. The book, assigned by an AP English teacher, is about being canceled and cancel culture. Although a permission email had been sent prior to assigning the book, the parent set off a sequence of events that led to the principal being removed and other school leaders being demoted or put on leave. This set a sense of fear throughout the English Department and the school. For me, I was nervous that my research would be jeopardized.

Finally, at the end of former President Trump's presidency the wall that he had promised to build on our borders was halted. The children who were separated from their families at our border were still being held with little hope of them being reunited with their families. The politics behind the wall and immigrant children also bled into the classroom. As much as I wanted to discuss these topics, I was reminded by leaders that "we don't talk about these things." I was unable to speak of topics relevant to what was happening in the world. This too impacted the books I chose and possible discussions I would have generated to connect what was happening in the world to what was happening in the book. In the end, I navigated my way through these obstacles. However, I wonder what may have been if they were removed prior to my study.

Twelfth Grade English Class

This study took place in my third period 12th grade English language arts class. The class had 24 students who had a range of high to low GPA's. There were 11 males and 13 females who ranged from 17 to 18. This district mandated that the 12th grade curriculum focus on mixed selection of literature and cover College and Career Readiness standards required by the state (Arizona Department of Education, 2021). The books for the 12th grade classes were selected from a district-wide prescribed reading list for seniors, which included *1984* by George Orwell, *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad, *Siddhartha* by Hermann Hess and just-added YA Literature *Mexican White Boy* by Matt De LaPena. The majority of the texts, with the exception of *Mexican White Boy*, were classic texts that had been taught at the senior level across the district and the country for years. At the time of the study, the district was just starting to add current YA Literature texts such as *Mexican White Boy*, *Dear Martin*, *Long Way Down* and *Long Way Gone*. Only one graphic novel, *Persepolis*, was on the district reading list and it was listed as "Honors Valued" and "Sensitive Content."

Students at the school were required to write an argumentative essay, a narrative, an informative essay and explore non-fiction texts. Poetry was added as an accompaniment to the units of study found in each classroom's curriculum. Even with these parameters, teachers were free to choose which books from the district list they wanted to teach and when. Teachers could also add other kinds of texts through independent reading or literature circles. However during the time of the study took place, the district came under scrutiny by parents of students at the school. Due to legal issues with the families, teachers were instructed to have students gain permission to read

their selection of independent reading books. Still, each teacher was allowed to choose what and when they will teach in their classroom as long as they follow the district parameters and district-approved texts for whole class reading.

Access and Permissions

I received all necessary permission from my school administrator, district superintendent of curriculum, and the university to conduct this study. In spring 2021, I met with the principal at Mid-City High School to start the process of permission to conduct the study at the school and she then directed me to the district to seek final approval. I went through any necessary district level or school level permissions to conduct research in my classroom. As part of the approval process, I was asked to provide state standards that align with the unit of study, an evaluation of the language in the parent permission letter and the use of non-district approved texts. Prior to approval the language needed to be changed in the permission letter to align with the district's curriculum mandates and alternative assignments needed to be identified for those students whose parents did not want them participating in the study or reading a YA graphic novel/memoir. I then needed to clarify that the YA graphic novel/memoir book club allowed for students to select the book that they wanted to read. I was allowed to have students read books that I had available and I could stipulate that the book be a YA graphic novel/memoir. I was also asked to provide further information on alignment with the state standards and the district wide mandated curriculum. The school principal, the district cabinet and the superintendent of curriculum approved and allowed me to conduct research in my own classroom in the fall of 2021.

Prior to data collection, I recruited students from my 3rd period class by first explaining the purpose of the study. I shared with them the process that had brought me to this place and what the end result of the study may be. I then gave a preview of the unit design and the selection of books that were used. It was important that all students understand that everyone will be expected to complete the assigned work for the book club unit. However, it was optional to have their work included in the study. Any student who would participate in the study would need to have a parent permission form signed and could opt out of the study at any time. In addition, each student who willingly participated signed an assent form that explained their role in the study. If a student did not have permission and the parent did not approve of the book selection provided, those students would be allowed to choose any YA graphic novel/memoir book they either bought themselves or used one that I had in my classroom library. This stipulation was an agreement made with the district for those students who were opting out of participating in the study.

Participants

The typical size of a 12th grade English class at this school was 30 students. My study had 24 participants, 11 males and 13 females. The students from my 12th grade English class ranged from 17 to 18 years old. The class period met daily each morning for 55 minutes. I chose this class period because it was just after my prep period, close to lunch and from my observations, students tended to be more active at this time. I had also taken into consideration that due to where the class fell on the day I could prepare and complete notes as well as look at data soon after class. Participants in the study were enrolled in my classes as full-time students in good standing and willingly participated in

the study. If they choose not to participate in the study, they still took part in all required coursework for the class, but their work was not collected or included as part of the data. The class included a range of high and low performing students and was not tracked or sorted for honors curriculum.

Of the 24 students in the class, 19 signed permissions to take part in the study. There were 10 females and 9 males. From the initial pool of 19 students I selected six participants to be in a case study (Figure 3.1) for the YA graphic novel/memoir literature circle book study. The criteria for selection was based on several factors. First the student must have completed and had submitted all components of the unit. Second, I used the demographics survey to select an array of participants that came from different races, ethnicities, first language, gender and overall GPA. The selection also included one participant from six of the eight book groups. The remaining two book groups did not have participants that had permissions to be included in the research.

Figure 3.1

Case Study Participants Demographics

Participant Name	Age	GPA	Gender	Ethnicity/Race	Book Club YA Graphic Novel/Memoir
Alex	17	3.22	Male	White/Caucasian	<i>Dragon Hoops</i>
Jordan	17	3.5	Female	White/Caucasian	<i>Speak</i>
Oliver	17	2.95	Male	White/Caucasian	<i>You Brought Me the Ocean</i>
Piper	17	2.85	Female	White/Caucasian	<i>Hey Kiddo</i>
Raphael	17	3.82	Male	Hispanic	<i>Long Way Down</i>
Veronica	17	3.67	Female	White/Caucasian	<i>I am Alfonso Jones</i>

The Researcher

At the time of the study I was a middle-aged white woman and I lived in the district in which I taught. I was 56 years old and teaching was my second career. After a long time working in the restaurant and construction industry, I received my Master's in Secondary Education and teaching certificate in 2011. I had been in an English language arts classroom for 10 years. When I entered the doctoral program my focus was on writing. I had spent two summers with the Central Arizona Writing Project, a division of the National Writing Project. Through this organization I had amazing opportunities to work on grants and programs that focused on real world writing, argument writing and the intersection between science and writing. So it was a surprise that this researcher ended up with a passion for research on YA graphic novels/memoir. I have always had an interest in YA Literature, but never had read a graphic novel until I took a graduate course in which I had to read one, and that is where my journey began. This was followed by presenting at national conferences and publishing an article. My world had become about graphic novels. My role in the study was that of a participant observer (Spradley, 2016) within my own 12th grade English language arts classroom. As an observer participant, I designed and taught the unit in which the study took place. As an observer participant I had interaction with students as the teacher in the classroom during direct instruction at the start of the study. I took field notes and created voice memos while participants were actively participating in the research. This was followed up with case study participant interviews that closed out the research process.

Instructional Design

This study took place as a five-week instructional unit on reading YA graphic novels/memoirs. I met with my 3rd period class every day for 55 minutes over the course of these five weeks. The participants in my 3rd period English language arts class were recipients of explicit teaching of visual literacy techniques on how to read graphic novels, modeling of practices for assignment expectations, graphic novel roles for literature circles, visual analysis, doodle annotations, group and individual digital presentations in response to the weekly discussions, use of digital platforms such as Padlet, Flip Grid and graphic narratives that were created in a digital format and all in connection to the text that they choose. The selection of books included, *Speak Graphic Novel* by Laurie Halse Anderson, *A Long Way Down–The Graphic Novel* by Jason Reynolds, *Hey Kiddo* by Jared Krosoczsk, *Dragon Hoops* by Gene Luen Yang, *Almost and American Girl* by Robin Ha, *You Brought Me the Ocean* by Alex Sanchez and Julia Maroah, *I am Alfonso Jones* by Tony Medina and *I Was Their American Dream* by Malaka Gharib. (Figure 3.2)

Figure 3.2

YA Graphic Novel/Memoir Selection

Book Name	Author	Description
<i>Speak- The Graphic Novel</i>	Laurie Halse Anderson	A high school freshman girl is raped over the summer and completely silences herself to cope with the tragedy. The book follows her home, school and personal life as she remains silent.
<i>A Long Way Down- the Graphic Novel</i>	Jason Reynolds	The story of a young man who lives in a world of gang violence. He has lost another family member and has had enough. As he leaves to seek revenge, he meets those he has been close to in a long elevator ride down. The people he meets are ghosts from the past.

<i>You Brought Me the Ocean</i>	Alex Sanchez and Julie Maroh	A teen's search for his identity that becomes mixed with the realization that he possesses DC Comics superpowers. The book brings to light questions of family, self, sexuality and friendship.
<i>Almost an American Girl</i>	Robin Ha	A story of Robin who has relocated from Seoul, Korea to Huntsville, Alabama. Robin tries to assimilate to a new world, new family and new life that she never expected.
<i>I Was Their American Dream</i>	Malaka Gharib	A graphic memoir about the life of Malaka, a first-generation immigrant living in America. The story highlights the sacrifices her parents made to give her the American Dream.
<i>My Name is Alfonso Jones</i>	Tony Medina	The story of Alfonso who wants nothing more than to be the lead in the high school play. After a police officer mistakes a coat hanger for a gun, Alfonso dies and is seen in the rest of the book as a ghost as he travels on a train with other well-known black men who were killed by police. This is a book that looks closely at police brutality and the Black Lives Matters movement.
<i>Hey Kiddo</i>	Jared Krosoczsk	A graphic memoir of a teen who struggles with identity, place, family addiction and finding a way to survive.
<i>Dragon Hoops</i>	Gene Luen Yang	A reflection of the author's true life encounters with his own teaching, his family and his dislike for sport.

During the five weeks that the unit took place, the participants were engaged in the unit four out of the five days during the school week, and the entire class period was used to prepare for and participate in YA graphic novel/memoir book club. The remaining day of the school week was dedicated to independent reading and vocabulary acquisition. Week One started with a demographic questionnaire and a Pre-Survey on reading YA graphic novels/memoir and exposure to multiliteracies. Mini lessons focused on questions such as: what is a graphic novel as a genre and what is visual literacy? The week closed with how to read a graphic novel in which participants learned the complex and unique components of the genre. Participants learned and applied a new vocabulary that was solely associated with YA graphic novels/memoirs. This included key

terminology such as panel, gutter, thought bubble, frame, perspective, and text bubbles. These terms aided students' abilities to discuss and analyze the components needed to participate in multiliteracies practices with the graphic novels that they read.

As week one continued, participants were given directions on how to complete doodle annotations and visual analysis. Students learned to doodle in response to texts and questions. I gave students examples of how to doodle by modeling specific examples of doodle expectations. As a whole, we moved from daily writing into daily doodling. We explored what it meant to doodle and wondered why we engage in doodling? Students responded to daily writing into the day in their journals through doodling. They were taken through a series of models on how to complete doodle annotations in response to reading of YA graphic novels/memoirs. Included in this week was the introduction to visual analysis and literature circle expectations. Toward the end of week one students read reviews of the books on GoodReads.com and researched the authors of YA graphic novels/memoirs. Once this task was completed they chose the books they would like to read. All participants had a list of three choices because there was limited availability of each YA graphic novel/memoir.

During week two, participants were given specific roles for literature circles. In addition to assigning roles they were tasked with daily doodle journal entries and doodle annotations and a specific task to complete as a group. Week two involved four components: 1) Individual task of reading and visually analyzing along with completing doodle annotation of the YA graphic novel/memoir; 2) mid-week literature circles in which students were assigned specific roles in which they prepared and then used for the discussion; 3) a group synergizer or summary of the week's discussions; and 4) Flipgrid

digital presentations in which participants shared what they learned for the week through a digital platform.

During week three, participants were given new roles for literature circles, daily doodle journal entries and doodle annotations, a specific task to complete independently and as a group. Week three involved four components: 1) individual task of reading and visually analyzing along with completing doodle annotation of the YA graphic novel/memoir; 2) mid-week literature circles in which students were assigned specific roles in which they prepared and then used for the discussion; 3) a group synergizer or summary of the week's discussions; and 4) Flipgrid digital presentations in which participants shared what they learned for the week through a digital platform.

In week four, participants were given new roles for literature circles, daily doodle journal entries and doodle annotations, a specific task to complete independently and as a group. Week three involved four components: 1) individual task of reading and visually analyzing along with completing doodle annotation of the YA graphic novel/memoir; 2) mid-week literature circles in which students were assigned specific roles in which they prepared and then used for the discussion; 3) a group synergizer or summary of the week's discussions; and 4) Flipgrid digital presentations in which participants shared what they learned for the week through a digital platform

In week five students completed a final reflection on the classroom discussion on what they had learned about themselves as a reader of YA graphic novels/memoirs. The culminating event for this unit was to create a graphic narrative that connected to the final reflection. Participants drafted a six-panel graphic narrative about what they learned while reading the YA graphic novel/memoir. Once the draft was complete, students used

the digital platform of StoryboardThat! to complete their final narrative. On the final day of the unit, participants were given a post-questionnaire on their feelings in relation to YA graphic novels/memoirs.

CHAPTER 4

DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

For the purpose of this study, the data collected reflected the daily and weekly activities that took place during the span of the five-week case study. The pieces of data included samples of the following from students who participated in the study: 1) demographic survey, 2) book selection worksheet, 3) Visual Analysis and Doodle Notes Worksheet 4) Padlet Responses, 5) Literature Circle Preparation, 6) literature circle transcripts, 7) synergizer worksheet and FligGrid presentation with transcripts, 8) graphic narratives with reflection, 9) interview transcription and 10) pre and post questionnaires. The data was collected and placed in a color coded folder for the book study groups and then organized in a binder by week. Once all the data was collected the digital components were stored in organized folders on a secure drive on my personal computer. The other paper documents were sorted by book study group, then by week and finally put in sequential order of when the work was completed. The materials from those students who were not included in the case study were then put in a banker's box for future use.

Data Collection

Demographic Survey (APPENDIX D). The day prior to starting the book study unit, I asked all participants who had signed permissions to complete a demographic survey. The survey asked participants to provide the following information: 1) age, 2) gender, 3) GPA, 4) ethnicity, 5) first language spoken, and 6) parental education background. The solicited information was later used to provide background information

for the participants and to support my thinking through participant selection. I aimed to include a diverse set of participants from varying backgrounds.

Book Selection Worksheet (APPENDIX E). On the first day of the study, all 19 participants had a chance to explore the selection of YA graphic novels/memoirs that were chosen to include in the study. The books I selected for the study included, *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson, *A Long Way Down* by Jason Reynolds, *You Brought Me the Ocean* by Alex Sanchez and Julie Maroh, *Almost and American Girl* by Robin Ha, *I Was Their American Dream* by Malaka Gharib, *I am Alfonso Jones* by Tony Medina, *Hey Kiddo* by Jared Krosoczsk, and *Dragon Hoops* by Gene Luen Yang. I chose these books for several reasons. First, *Speak* and *Long Way Down* were on the school approved book list. This helped in navigating any issue I may have had with parent approval. I chose *Dragon Hoops* for the sports lovers and male participants because the book was about high school basketball. The other four books were selected based on preferred genres that I had observed participants reading during their weekly independent reading. The characters and the plot reflected what they traditionally liked to read. I also kept in mind the length of the books, because I wanted participants to be at the same pace with reading. The only outlier was *Dragon Hoops* which was much longer than the other books. The final criteria I used was looking at the list of top YA graphic novels/memoirs lists. For this study, I used the YALSA 2020 and 2021 Best YA Graphic Novels booklist. This was a great place for me to find titles I had never heard of and they had excellent reviews.

The book selection worksheet itself sent students to GoodReads.com. so that they could look up all eight books that I had selected for the study and glance through what

they were about, where they took place and explore the main characters. After gathering this information, participants had to narrow their selection to three books that they would like to read. Once finished they ranked their books from 1 to 3 and filled out spaces in the worksheet that asked for the author's name, book title and why they wanted to read this particular book. Once all the sheets were created there was a blind draw in which participants took a number. The number chosen was the order in which the books were chosen. All participants participated in this activity and most were able to get their first choice.

Visual Analysis and Doodle Notes (APPENDIX F). These documents were assigned to evaluate the effectiveness of modes or spaces in which the reader made meaning of the words and the images that they were reading on the page. The visual analysis and doodle annotation worksheet was a two-sided document. Side one was for the visual analysis, side two was for the doodle annotations. Participants completed this during weeks two, three and four and after they had read of their book section for the week. There were three visual analysis and doodle annotations in total for each student. For the visual analysis, the participants were to choose a page in the book they were reading that they connected to or questioned. They were then asked a series of five questions in response to the page that they chose (Figure 4.1). On the back of the visual analysis was the Doodle Annotation Worksheet. Using the same page they evaluated for their visual analysis, participants were to doodle from the following selection questions and prompts: what they found interesting, what they questioned, how they felt about the reading, what they learned, what they connected to the most, the setting, the characters, or the plot. By asking them to use the visual analysis and to engage in doodling, the

intention was to address the spaces of meaning making within Multiliteracies Theory that includes written language, visual representation and spatial representation. Participants were tasked with making inferences and interpretations of the words, images and colors that they were seeing on the page of their book. They were using this tool to support the reading and understanding of their YA graphic novels/memoir and engaging in visual literacies practices. Students analyzed images, words and color on a selected page of the book that they chose while creating their own images with doodle notes. They were to write about the importance of placement, spacing and building of the YA graphic novel/memoir. Participants completed and submitted these worksheets over a three week period of time. In total, I collected 18 visual analysis and doodle note worksheets, three from each participant in the case study.

Figure 4.1

Visual Analysis Worksheet Questions

Question Number	Visual Analysis Question
1.	Describe the image using graphic novel terminology
2.	When you first looked at this image, what was your reaction? (Choose an emotion)
3.	What is it that you are drawn to most? Why did it catch your eye?
4.	What else did you notice about this image? What is in the foreground? What is in the background? What are the frames around your image?
5.	What are the images and the words on the page trying to convey to the reader?

Padlet Responses. After students answered their journal entry for the day and I made my daily announcement, I posted a question in a digital format called Padlet. This platform was used as part of a multiliteracies approach to the study that focused on spatial representation where students came to an understanding of what they were reading within this digital space. Padlet is a platform where educators can create and post questions to a virtual pin board. Participants can then post an answer to this question on the board. The information can be read in the platform or in the case for this analysis, downloaded and labeled with the respondent's name. My goal was to see how participants were doing each week as they read through their books. It was a virtual check in. The questions I asked were about participants' experiences reading their books. The questions I included on the Padlet were: 1) What did you learn yesterday about reading YA graphic novels/memoirs? 2) What are the first thoughts on your book? What are you finding challenging? And How were your discussions different this week? 3) What did you learn from the people in your group about your book? Each of the participants responded to each of these three questions in class during weeks two, three, and four. There were a total of 18 responses that I evaluated for data analysis.

Literature Circle Preparation (APPENDIX G). To show how participants were making sense and understanding their YA graphic novel/memoir, they prepared for and engaged in three literature-circle discussions for which they needed to prepare. These preparations took place during class time and after completing the visual analysis and doodle annotations. They were done in preparation for the actual discussion. Each person in each book group was assigned a role or roles that would target different aspects of the YA graphic novel/memoir. At times the groups would be only two people so

participants would have to take on two roles each; in others there were three people so one person would need to take on more than one role. These roles included (Figure 4.2): The Image Mage, The Text Maven, The Palette Cleanser and The Gutter Dweller (Low & Jacobs, 2018). Participants were instructed to use the page that they chose to complete their visual analysis and doodle notes upon to prepare for the discussion. On the discussion role worksheets they would write down their responses. For instance, if they were the Image Mage they would focus on the images only on the page and interpret, describe, and explain the images found on the page. The goal of this activity was to have participants focus on one to two components to share with group members. Over weeks two, three, and four there were 27 paper copies of the discussion preparation worksheets collected from all six case study participants in the book club study.

Figure 4.2

Reading Roles for Graphic Novel/Memoir Book Club

Role Name	Task
Image Mage	Known best for the magic that they perform while paying attention to the visual aspects of the book. They are tasked with interpreting the importance of the images found on the page.
The Gutter Dweller	Their role is to live between panels and have the job of analyzing placement and intention of the images on the page.
The Text Maven	They consider the use of the language and words used in the text. They answer the question: why are these words important to telling the story?
The Palette Cleanser	Is much like an artist's palette: they analyze and explain the importance of the color and the use of saturation of color in the images.

Literature Circle Transcription. After completing the literature circle preparation, participants engaged in a literature circle discussion which was recorded. Because I was unable to listen to all eight simultaneously, I invested in personal recording devices which were assigned to each group. Each group had its own assigned digital recorder and the group members were in charge of turning it on and off when they were speaking. During these literature circle discussions, participants would share what they learned about their role/roles that they were assigned. First the group members were asked to step into each other's shoes and either analyze the images like the Image Mage or play the role of the Text Maven, etc. Then, the person who started the discussion would share what they wrote for their discussion preparation. This went on until all group members had a chance to share their roles. After completing the discussion, students took notes on what they had learned in their discussion roles on the worksheets as well as what they learned from each other. In total there were eight groups; each group had the same shared YA graphic novel/memoir. From weeks two, three, and four I collected a total of 18 transcriptions and the case study's participants' responses were used for data analysis.

Synergizer Preparation and Flipgrids (APPENDIX H). To allow participants to make true meaning of their multimodal experiences and to help them become visually literate, they were asked to complete a Synergizer Sheet. On this sheet the book groups synthesized, summarized and brought together everything they learned from themselves and each other. They were to extract information from the visual analysis and doodle annotations, literature circle preparation and the discussion. They essentially were to explain what they learned explicitly and implicitly. These summaries were then used to

complete a formalized presentation in a digital space called Flipgrid. Flipgrid is a space that records people from their own digital devices. In this case it was the student laptops. This format allowed participants to speak as a group in an informal setting. After the discussion was finished and posted it could be shared with other participants without spending a lot of time watching presentations. This space for making meaning addressed the spatial, audio and written aspects of the multimodal learning experience. In addition, it helped in supporting students reading and understanding of their YA graphic novels/memoirs. The Flipgrid presentations had their own transcripts that were downloaded from the platform. The transcripts provided an opportunity for me to analyze and identify just the response of the students that were in the case study. This activity was completed at the end of weeks two, three, and four during scheduled class time. In total there were 18 synergizer worksheets and 18 Flipgrid presentations to use as data for the study.

Graphic Narratives (APPENDIX I). As a culminating event for the book study unit participants were to complete a two-page graphic narrative during week five of the study. The topic was about their experience reading a YA graphic novel/memoir and doodling. They were to address the following questions: What did you learn about yourself while reading your book and doodling? What did you learn about the process of reading a new genre? What are you walking away from this experience with that is either positive or negative? This final project in the book study allowed me an opportunity to analyze data that could identify how each participant has made meaning through written language, oral language, visual representation, audio representation and spatial representation through one assignment. In addition, it provided me with understanding

how students used this practice to support and understand the reading of YA graphic novels/memoirs. Participants were first asked to write their reflection out on a Google document. This was done during class time, but was not timed. The expectation was for them to finish it before leaving class for the day. Next, students worked at taking information from the reflection and transferring it into a graphic narrative. Using Storyboard That!, which is a digital platform for creating graphic novels, participants worked through how to use color, images, panels, gutters and words to tell their own stories. The only guidelines were that they were to have a minimum of six panels and use captions, thought bubbles, text bubbles, color and images to tell their own story. Each of the six case study participants completed the reflection and graphic narrative during week five of the study.

Interviews Protocol (Appendix C) At the end of the book study unit I took time during our scheduled class period to interview a participant from each book study group. In total, I interviewed eight participants, but after evaluation of inclusion I only used six of those eight interview transcriptions. These interviews were paramount in providing me with responses that were targeted specifically at my research questions. Prior to completing the interviews, I asked permission of students and gave them a paper copy of the interview questions. By giving them the questions, this gave them an opportunity to think about how they may answer the questions prior to being formally interviewed. The interviews took place in my classroom at Mid-City High school just before winter break. With participants' permission, I used an audio recording device during each session. After asking each question, I would ask if there was anything else that they would like to add. By asking for additional information, it could give me

insight on their thoughts that may not necessarily be attached to the question. The interviews lasted through two class periods.

Pre and Post Reading Questionnaire (APPENDIX J and K) To solicit reading habits of participants, I created a pre-questionnaire that had a total of 16 questions. There was a combination of quick one to two answers choice questions along with Likert scales and short response. This pre-questionnaire was given to all 19 participants prior to book selection in week one of the study. The post-questionnaire was given on the last day of week five. The post-questionnaire had seven questions in total. These questions were repetitive (i.e. also asked in the pre-questionnaire). The questionnaires were created and delivered digitally through Google Forms which allowed me to gather and organize the information quickly. I was interested in what participants' reading habits were prior to the study so that when I administered the post-questionnaires I could see if their reading habits changed after reading a YA graphic novel/memoir.

Field Notes. During each day of the book study unit on YA graphic novels/memoirs I would write notes to record observations that I made. The observations focused on students' emotions, moods and engagement with the task assigned to them for the day. In addition, I would notate any side conversations, or questions that participants asked before, during and after class. By taking these notes I was able to gather information on non-tangible aspects of what participants were doing while engaged with the books.

There was much consideration when I moved forward into my data analysis and I acknowledged my own positionality as a middle-class white female in her mid-50's. In addition, I realize that I myself bring my own unique ideas about the reading of YA

graphic novels/memoirs. In my role as a researcher, I kept in constant consideration of how I needed to take my positionality into account as I organized and analyzed the data I collected during the book study unit.

Organizing Data Sources

To understand the participants' interpretations and multiliteracies of their YA graphic novel/memoir through the data, I used a multi-faceted approach to analysis (Kamberelis and de la Luna, 2004). I started with several cycles of coding (Saldana 2016). I began with the initial coding of my body of research where I labeled and categorized the answer to my research questions.

At the start of the study, I purchased a set of colored pocket folders. Every week, each group received its own color-coded folder and a group number was assigned: Group 1) Yellow: *I am Alfonso Jones*, Group 2) Orange: *You Brought Me the Ocean*, Group 3) Green: *Long Way Down*, Group 4) Pink: *Speak*, Group 5) Clear: *Dragon Hoops*, Group 6) Blue: *Hey Kiddo*, Group 7) Purple: *Almost an American Girl*, Group 8) Red: *I Was Their American Dream*. Groups Seven and Eight were put aside and discarded from the study because these groups did not have permissions and/or did not complete all the work in the study. The documents from each week were kept separately in these weekly colored folders.

The first step in organizing the data was to create a master list that included: Numeric ID, Pseudonym, Participant name, Book Name, Signed Permission, Assent Form, Book Choice Document, Doodle Practice, Visual Analysis 1, Visual Analysis 2, Visual Analysis 3, Padlet 1, Padlet 2, Padlet 3, Discussion Wk 1, Discussion Wk3, Discussion Wk3, Flipgrid Wk 1, Flipgrid Wk2, Flipgrid Wk3, Graphic Narrative and

ReFlection, Journals, Demographic Survey, Pre-Questionnaire, Post Questionnaire and Interviews. As items were collected an x was placed next to each participant's name. This practice aided in keeping track of data collection and long term with selecting participants for the case study and organizing participants' work.

I then moved on to transcribing all audio recordings. I had to transcribe all literature circle discussions and interviews myself. Each transcription recording of literature circles was placed on a Google Document and labeled with the group number and week number. The interviews were labeled with participant names. The Flipgrid digital platform had a built-in transcription in which I just needed to export and save as a Google Document. These documents were labeled with group number and week and placed in a folder labeled Flipgrid Transcriptions. I then went back and watched the audio and marked the indication of when the case study participant was contributing.

I removed all names and indications of the participant and replaced it with a number that corresponds with the name of the participant. I then created two copies of all the data. One group of documents was to be used for analysis of the group as a whole and the others were used to look at the documents from each participant. After the photocopies were made, the folders were used to hold the case study participants' documents that I collected from the study and each data set that I evaluated as a group.

I continued the organization by sorting all the digital information that included the Demographic Survey, Pre-Reading Questionnaire and the Post Reading Questionnaire. All surveys and questionnaires were created in Google forms so I had easy access and the ability to download the information into a spreadsheet. All column labels on the spreadsheets were the questions asked on the forms. I first focused on the

demographic survey, because this helped in narrowing down which participants I would choose for my case study. I labeled the demographics survey and then from there I was able to make a table with the information from the survey. I then took all the spreadsheets and placed them on the same document and labeled it Content From Data Analysis.

From here, I added tabs for each data set that I would analyze for the group as a whole. The tabs were labeled: Book Choice, Padlet, Visual Analysis and Doodle Notes, Literature Circle Prep and Transcriptions, Flipgrid Prep and Transcriptions, Reflection and Graphic Narrative and Interview Transcriptions. Everything but the Padlet, Reflection and Graphic Narrative and Interviews had subheadings for week 1, week 2, and week 3. I then added a tab for each individual. The Spreadsheet was named Individual Analysis. Tabs were labeled with each participant's name and sub headings for each data set in sequential order were added.

I organized the individual data sets differently because I was looking at the data of the participant as a whole, not by the week. All data was put in sequential order: the book choice worksheet, Padlet responses, visual analysis and doodle notes, literature circle preparation, literature circle transcriptions, Synergizer worksheet, Flipgrid Transcriptions, the Reflection and graphic narrative and interview transcriptions.

After organizing the data spreadsheets, I worked through analyzing the documents and transcriptions that were collected during the study. The first of these was the Book Choice worksheets. I meticulously read through each of these documents and recorded my observations in detailed notes on what the participants' assertions were on each document. I made connections to answering the research questions for the study and

notated any outliers that may have been present. These connections were written down on sticky notes first and attached to each document. I then reviewed them and entered them into the corresponding space allocated on the spreadsheets.

I continued on with the printed Padlet responses. Each participant completed three Padlet responses during the time of the study. These Padlet responses were identified with participant name and date of entry. All responses were downloaded for each Padlet. I then put them in sequential order for further analysis. I worked through these responses making notes on how they responded to the writing prompt and made connections to research questions.

Next came the visual analysis and doodle annotations. Each participant completed three visual analysis/doodle notes worksheets. A copy of each was made and labeled week 1, week 2 and week 3. The documents were then put in sequential order. As I read through each document, I noted and recorded how each participant responded to the questions on the visual analysis and how they responded with doodle notes. As with the other data sets, I also wrote of any connections between the responses and my research questions.

The Literature Circle Preparations were separated by week 1, week 2, and week 3 and labeled accordingly. I continued to take notes as I worked my way through reading and analyzing these worksheets. I was still looking for how participants responded to the work that was asked of them as well as how they were possibly answering my research questions. This process continued with transcription from the discussion that were held after the preparation. I would only use the responses from those that had given permissions to be in the study.

I then moved on to the Flipgrid presentations that were transcribed. My final transcriptions came from 18 Flipgrid presentations. There was one from each of the six groups on three separate occasions. The Flipgrid platform had self-transcription, so I did not have to transcribe these digital presentations. I created a digital folder and labeled it Flipgrid Presentations. Each presentation's transcription was downloaded in the order that it was completed and saved to my computer. The transcriptions were then labeled with the group number and week that they were completed. I then had to go back and watch the videos with the transcriptions so that I could identify who was speaking during each presentation. This was done for all 18 Flipgrid presentations that were down over a three-week period of time. The sentences in the transcriptions were labeled with the participant's first and last initial so that I could identify who was talking each time.

The next step was to go through the Synergizer worksheet which was where the participants created summaries of information for the Flipgrids. I looked at the synergizer and the Flipgrid as one piece of data because they were connected together to see how students were making meaning of this space. I continued note taking and recording the claims being put forth by participants.

The Final Reflection and Graphic Narrative were analyzed next. I looked carefully at how one connected to the other and how well the participants told their story in graphic novel format. I took notes on patterns and connections that I was noticing during the evaluation. I also considered how these pieces of data connected each other and aided in answering my research questions.

The final step of organizing was the interview. After transcribing the interviews, a digital folder was created and labeled Interview Transcriptions. I then downloaded all

Group 1's audio. A document was created and labeled Interview- Group 1 and the participant name. I used the Application QuickTime Player to listen to the recording. As I listened to the recording, I transcribed what I heard while stopping and starting the recording to ensure that I was accurate in my transcription. At times I stopped the recording and transcription to make note of some things that piqued my interest. I continued on with each recording from all the interviews and followed the same process. This process was repeated five more times until all participants' interviews were fully transcribed. I then organized each interview by the questions I asked during the interview. This was done so I could easily compare how each participant answered each question.

This entire process was then repeated with the individual participants' data. I looked at these in no particular order of participant; it was just a random draw. All documents for each participant were put in sequential order, meaning the order in which the work was completed. This allowed me to analyze and record data for growth and changes from the start of the study to the finish. I also noted any trends, words, phrases or statements that were repeated throughout the data. These steps set me up with well-organized data that allowed me to better understand my data analysis.

Data Analysis

My study on a multiliteracies approach to YA graphic novels/memoirs employs a participant observer (Spradley, 2016) approach to analyzing the data collected during the study. To analyze the data I had collected over a five-week period, I used a constant comparative method for evaluating data in which the information was first coded and compared across categories, patterns are identified, and these patterns are refined as new

data are obtained (Seidmen, 2013). My data sources consist of a demographic survey, pre and post reading questionnaires, book selection worksheet, Padlet responses, visual analysis and doodle notes worksheets, literature circle preparation, discussion transcriptions, synergizer worksheets, Flipgrid transcriptions, Reflection and Graphic Narrative and interview transcriptions. My coding process consisted of several passes of each piece of data which allowed for triangulation of all data sets. The process led me to combine and collapse data into focused themes.

Coding

The data sources that I used for coding included the book choice worksheet, Padlet responses, visual analysis and doodle notes, literature circle preparation, literature circle transcriptions, Synergizer worksheet, Flipgrid Transcriptions, Reflection and Graphic Narrative and Interview Transcriptions. From my large amounts of recorded data, I created small themes that emerged from comparing this data to my research questions.

First Round of Coding.

Once the data was sorted and labeled, I went back through each item of collected data so that I could record the groups and participants' responses on the spreadsheets that I created. First was the group documents then I followed up with the individual participants' data. Next, I went on to create summaries of connections, trends and outliers that I would then use to create codes that I would then be able to narrow down to themes. Image 4.1 is an example of how I logged responses to each question in the visual analysis and doodle notes activity. It also includes highlights of trends that I was finding so that I could go back later to include as potential themes.

Image 4.1

First Round Coding Example

Visual Analysis Wk 1 Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5 What are the images and the words on the page trying to convey to the reader?	Doodle Notes
Uses terminology minimally. Does not include a lot of detail about the image, just an overview	Emotion= Surprised by the beauty. Refers to images as artwork	Drawn to pretty images	Able to describe the individuals in the foreground and the city in the background. Uses borders, not gutters, not using terminology	Able to work the way through the intention of the combination of images and works with visual analysis. Speaks of protagonist and relay what the images are adding to the story.	Describes Setting in Doodles- Uses images to depict won interpretation of why they saw on page
Uses terminology, gutters, panels to give a very detailed description of images on the page. Talks of text bubbles and amount of panels and placement	Emotion= Understanding, wrote of empathy for the main character because they had similar experiences	Drawn to close up pictures of the hands on the basket, but did not clearly explain why.	Noticed how well the author and artist capture the huge impact this moment was for the main character. Every panel touching basket	Able to work the way through the intention of the combination of images and works with visual analysis.	No Doodle Notes
Uses terminology but not consistently. Talks of color and the use of brown and gray being used consistently. Describes placement of panels	Emotion= relief bottom image because it captures despite problems between mother and daughter, grandmother loves and supports the baby. Emotion is clearly explained	Drawn to grandmother, further explains relationships and the relief that is felt	Talks of background and details the hospital, talks of foreground and the people and how all the panels are different shapes and abstract	Able to work the way through the intention of the combination of images and works with visual analysis. Mentions foreshadowing	Describes characters. Shows foreshadowing and symbolism. Also details characters relationships with doodles
Does not use terminology, but is able to describe the image without much detail	Does not talk of emotion or reaction, noticed that everything on the page was black	Drawn to the darkness on the page and explains the contrast of lightness from the other pages, drawn to no features on Melinda's face	Noticed attention to detail, and aspects of image, does not exactly say foreground/background	Able to work the way through the intention of the combination of images and works with visual analysis. Melinda is sad and wants to disappear	What you found interesting. Doodles answer to questions #5. Uses a combination of words and images
Very detailed description that includes use of terminology, size/ placement/ positioning of panels	Emotion= Surprised & Shocked because they knew what was going to happen when they reached the page, but it really came out of nowhere	Able to explain detail, white figure, train and hanger	Details image and writes about what they noticed as well as what is going on in the image. Speaks of context of the people on the train	Able to work the way through the intention of the combination of images and works with visual analysis. Is asking a lot of questions about the text and images and making connections	What did you question- doodles what she is writing about in questions #5
Uses the word panel, describe the image on the page in details, uses the words boxes, gutter and refers to size of box, behind the words	Emotion- lost and connected with the main characters emotion being portrayed in the page. Also feels a sense of dread	Noticed main character falling into the background and describe the words as illuminating his way down into an abyss	Does not talk of foreground, but does describe more details of the image like the smudged words and use of lettering, the gutters drawn as if they are cracks	Able to work the way through the intention of the combination of images and works with visual analysis.	What did you question- Does a good job using a balance of words and images. Asks a lot of questions about where the plot will be going

I examined and recorded words and phrases that I observed consistently across data sets in my code book. My codebook was a journal that I used for the study and collected field notes. I created a new section for each round of coding. This is where I wrote down things that I was seeing as I worked through the data. The items I wrote down were things I found intriguing and I was also interested in outliers or observations that stood out within the study. These items were notated in my code book of themes during the first round of coding. With this information I created a list of one- to two-word themes. For example, when participants were expected to complete a visual analysis they were asked five questions. One of the questions asked, “What are the images and the words on the page trying to convey to the reader?” As I read through each response for the group I noticed that the participants were growing and understanding what they were seeing on the page. Over a three-week period of time, they had come to a solid conclusion and were able to articulate their assertions.

Image 4.2

First Round Coding Example 2

Q5 What are the images and the words on the page trying to convey to the reader?
Able to work the way through the intention of the combination of images and works with visual analysis. Speaks of the protagonist and relay what the images are adding to the story.
Able to work the way through the intention of the combination of images and works with visual analysis.
Able to work the way through the intention of the combination of images and works with visual analysis. Mentions foreshadowing
Able to work the way through the intention of the combination of images and works with visual analysis. Melinda is sad and wants to disappear
Able to work the way through the intention of the combination of images and works with visual analysis. Is asking a lot of questions about the text and images and making connections
Able to work the way through the intention of the combination of images and works with visual analysis.

After I recorded all these trends in my code book, I was able to come up with an extensive list of words and short phrases that would become a starting point for my themes.

Figure 4.3

First Round of Coding Example 3

<p>Graphic Novel Terminology Real World Connection Literary Device/Figurative Language Reluctant Emotion Empathy Personal Connection Color, Saturation, Shading and Why its used Words, Word Use Interpret/Infer Growth in Understanding Learning from others/collaborative learning Advances understanding with addition of each mode of learning Self Reflection/Personal Growth Degree of Difficulty Connection between words, images and colors Sequence Panel Placement Comparison to traditional text Summarize Challenging Difficult Exclusion Author's purpose and intent Visualize</p>	<p>Visualize Learned Discussed Comprehend Different Perspective Reading process of graphic novel Loved, liked, enjoyed Doodling Positive Benefits, helped, aided Solidify Convey Use of adjectives to describe Connected Differing perspective POV and insight In depth, looked further, deeper Sound argument Engaged Curiosity, question Connection to doodling=stress reliever, organize thoughts, reach deeper understanding Art Beauty Limits imagination Unique Insight Interesting Compassionate Complex/complexity</p>
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Second Round of Coding.

For the next round of coding, I passed over the notes and summaries I had made on the spreadsheets and added words and phrases that I may have missed in the first round. I then began to look at how to combine and collapse the first round of themes into more meaningful language that would connect to my research questions. I eliminated themes that did not fit with other themes or reflect on answering my research questions. I looked to connect words in ways that they made sense. The list of themes became shorter, but broader within this second round. One significant finding was that all

participants appeared to have advanced understanding of that was attributed to moving through each space in which they would make meaning. For example, in one instance I focused on the research question: How does the use of multiliteracies such as writing/creation of a visual analysis using YA graphic novel/memoir support students in reading, understanding, and making sense of YA graphic novels/memoirs? I then traced back to the themes in round one of coding. Figure 4.4 is an example of how I combined and collapsed the first round of themes into more meaningful language that connected to my research questions. I eliminated themes that did not fit with other themes or reflect on answering my questions. It shows how the list of themes were shorter, but broader within this second round.

Figure 4.4

Second Round of Coding Example 1

Round One Theme	Round Two Theme
Real World Connection Interpret/Infer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Real World Connection to book through visual analysis, doodling, literature circles, and flip grid presentations
Literary Device/Figurative Language connected Interpret/Infer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies, applies and explains the use of literary devices/figurative language through the use of visual analysis doodling, literature circles and flip grid presentations
author's purpose and intent connected Interpret/Infer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doodling benefited, aided and helped in coming to a deeper understanding of text and author's purpose and intentions

I continued this process until I was able to come up with a comprehensive list of themes in which I could articulate answers to my research questions. The table below reflects the themes for round two of coding:

Figure 4.5

Second Round of Coding Example 2

- Applies and uses graphic novel terminology i.e. panel, gutter, dialogue box, thought bubble etc. to make meaning of the placement of images, images, text, words and colors on the page
- Real World Connection to book through visual analysis, doodling, literature circles, and flip grid presentations
- Identifies, applies and explains the use of literary devices/figurative language through the use of visual analysis doodling, literature circles and flip grid presentations
- Identify literary device and figurative language element by evaluating words, images and color
- Participant reluctance, lack of interest when introduced to graphic novels
- Able to evoke emotion and feel for character as well as evaluate and identify emotion of character through images, color, placement and words
- Empathy for characters that is felt through reading graphic novels images, placement, color and words
- Participant personal connection to themes, characters and storyline. Personal reflection and personal growth through connections
- Identifies importance of color, saturation of color and shading
- Identifies importance of use and placement of words as well also the absence of words
- Participants interpret, infer and come to understandings
- Growth and understanding through collaborative learning which allows participants to advance understanding with addition of each mode of meaning making
- Degree of difficulty, complexity of text, challenging and difficult
- Connection between words, images, colors and how they all work together to make meaning
- Comparison to traditional text
- Understanding of exclusion of elements such as words, gutters, colors or images
- Understanding of author's purpose and intent within creating the graphic novel, characters, plot, color, word choice etc.
- Participants are aware of different and varying perspective of understanding and others insight or points view
- Connects and understands that there is a unique way of reading graphic novels and that the process is important to understanding
- Doodling benefited, aided and helped in coming to a deeper understanding of text and author's purpose and intentions
- Through multiple modes of making meaning participants were able to look further, have deeper understanding and create sound arguments for their points of view
- Participants questioned and had peaked curiosity while evaluating graphic novels
- Doodling was a stress reliever, organized thoughts, reinforced assertions and reached a deeper understanding of the text

Third Round of Coding

During my third round of coding the once small themes became much broader statements as I collapsed and connected themes. I reflected on what was important to my research and what story I would tell when I brought my analysis to my findings. I looked closer at these statements that were articulated to target the questions that were being asked for my research. I combined and eliminated statements that had no purpose at this time. Figure 4.6 is an example of how I combined and collapsed the second round of themes into more meaningful language that connected to my research questions. I eliminated themes that did not fit with other themes or reflect on answering my questions. It shows how the list of themes in round two were larger, but as I evaluated them they became shorter in the third round.

Figure 4.6

Third Round of Coding Example 1

Round Two Theme	Round Three Theme
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Real World Connection to book through visual analysis, doodling, literature circles, and flip grid presentations• Able to evoke emotion and feel for character as well as evaluate and identify emotion of character through images, color, placement and words• Empathy for characters that is felt through reading graphic novels images, placement, color and words	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Real World Connection to book through visual analysis, doodling, literature circles, and flip grid presentations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies, applies and explains the use of literary devices/figurative language through the use of visual analysis doodling, literature circles and flip grid presentations • Identify literary device and figurative language element by evaluating words, images and color • Understanding of author's purpose and intent within creating the graphic novel, characters, plot, color, word choice etc. • Understanding of author's purpose and intent within creating the graphic novel, characters, plot, color, word choice etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies Literary devices and elements of figurative language of images, words, colors etc. then applies and explains the use of literary devices/figurative language through the use of visual analysis doodling, literature circles and flip grid presentations. Conveys an understanding of the author's purpose and intent within creating the graphic novel, characters, plot, color, word choice etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doodling benefited, aided and helped in coming to a deeper understanding of text and author's purpose and intentions • Doodling was a stress reliever, organized thoughts, reinforced assertions and reached a deeper understanding of the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connects and understands that there is a unique way of reading graphic novels and that the process is important to understanding

Final Round of Coding

For my final round of coding, I went back to my spreadsheets and added the themes I recorded in my third round of coding. At this time it appeared that some of the themes were not significant to my findings so I eliminated them because they did not directly answer my research questions. I evaluated how to collapse the themes from round three of coding into short one to four word statements. I then applied them to the data sets that most connected to my research questions to try and understand how these applied to my research. I did this with both the group and individual data. Image 4.3 is an example of how I first listed the type of data that I evaluated. I then took the themes

that I recorded in my third round of coding to where I found them in the data. This process was repeated for the data in all weeks of the study. I did this so that when it came to writing my findings, I had context recorded as well as what the themes connected to the data.

Image 4.3

Final Round of Coding Example 1

Group Data Sets	Findings Week 1	Findings Week 2	Findings Week 3	Findings Week 4	Findings Week 5
Visual Analysis	Personal & Real world Connection	Personal & Real world Connection	Personal & Real world Connection		Personal & Real world Connection
Visual Analysis	Multimodal Meaning Making	Multimodal Meaning Making	Multimodal Meaning Making		Multimodal Meaning Making
Doodle Notes	Summarizing Learning	Summarizing Learning	Summarizing Learning		Understanding of Graphic Novel Components
Doodle Notes					Understanding of visual aspects of book
Literature Circles	Multimodal Meaning Making	Multimodal Meaning Making	Multimodal Meaning Making		
Literature Circles	Engagement/Enjoyment	Engagement/Enjoyment	Engagement/Enjoyment		Engagement/Enjoyment
Literature Circles	Perspective/POV	Perspective/POV	Perspective/POV		Perspective/POV
Graphic Narrative & Writing Reflection					Explicit Instruction
Graphic Narrative & Writing Reflection					Reluctance
Graphic Narrative & Writing Reflection					Readers Evolution
Graphic Narrative & Writing Reflection				Unique Genre	

The data collection process took several weeks to complete due to the need to transcribe and evaluate all audio and video recording as well as the documents from the participants group as a whole and as individuals. After this process of evaluation I had a discussion with my committee in regards to what story I would tell with the data. The discussion may me realize that I once again needed to collapse, combine and create headings that would best address my research questions. Through this careful consideration, I came to the final themes: 1) The use of Multiliteracies, such as Visual Analysis, supports students in making meaning of YA graphic novels/memoirs by allowing students to make personal and real world connections to their books and to books as well as examine the author's purpose and reasoning behind the existence or absence of color, color saturation, images, images placement and text on page through multimodal learning. 2) Doodle Annotations support students' reading and understanding of YA graphic novels and memoir by deciphering what they were seeing to come to a

deeper understanding of the story through explaining it visually and it gave students a way to summarize through doodles the information readers took away from their books and built upon what they had written in their visual analysis. 3) Graphic Narratives support students' reading and understanding of YA graphic novel/memoir by demonstrating personal growth and understanding by learning how to read a YA graphic novel/memoir as well as realizing that participants were at first reluctant and did not take this genre seriously. 4) The use of Literature Circles supports students in reading and understanding YA graphic novels/memoirs by providing a space in which participants advanced their understanding of YA graphic novels and memoirs through using the modes (visual analysis, doodle notes, literature circles) of making meaning as building blocks. This paired with collaboration, discussion and acceptance of other personal points of view resulted in an evolution of participants' understanding of YA graphic novels/memoirs.

Figure 4.7

Final Round of Coding Example 2

Research Question	Themes	Sub Headings
<p>How does the use of multiliteracies such as writing/creation of a visual analysis using YA graphic novels/memoir support students in reading, understanding, and making sense of YA graphic novels?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased engagement through personal and real world connections • Able to make meaning of author's purpose and reasoning behind existence or absence of color, color saturation, images, images placement and text on page through multimodal learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real World Implications • Personal Connection • Building Understanding

<p>How does doodle annotation as a form of visual literacy and writing, support students in reading, understanding, and making sense of YA graphic novels/memoirs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helped in understanding the visual aspect of the story through explaining it visually • Better understanding of placement and intention of images and words • Able to visually summarize what was already put into words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a Visual Bridge • Doodle Summaries
<p>What happens when students create their own graphic narratives in response to YA graphic novels/memoirs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realization of New Innovative Genre that takes time to learn through explicit instruction • Reluctant and dislike for genre, but understanding how to read and interpret images/words made participants come to a much deeper understanding than if they had no explicit teaching. • Understanding of genre evolved and grew over a period of time • Participants connect and understand that there is a unique way of reading graphic novels and that the process is important to understanding • Perception vs. Reality. Genre is not a serious text, but learned over time that is should be taken seriously 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Growth and Understanding of a New Genre • Perception vs. Reality

<p>How does the use of literature circles as a form of multiliteracies support students in reading, understanding and making sense of YA graphic novels/memoirs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoyment, laughter and having fun. • All participants as a group- Summarize and Connect to why this worked with a multiliteracies approach- Building from one mode of meaning to another • Advancing understanding of YA graphic novels and memoirs through collaborations and acceptance of personal points of view (How one mode builds off of another to make meaning of combined spaces) • All participants as a group- Summarize and Connect to why this worked with a multiliteracies approach- Building from one mode of meaning to another 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolution of Understanding
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CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

The multiliteracies approach to teaching YA graphic novels/memoirs allowed students to use a variety of literacy practices including drawing doodle annotations, creating visual analysis, writing graphic narratives, and participating in literature circles. This diverse instructional approach to teaching YA graphic novels and memoirs supported students in their connection to and understanding of this unfamiliar genre. The YA graphic novel/memoirs book club study challenged the participants' perception of what counts as reading and helped them gain familiarity and understanding of how to read a text with visual elements. This chapter presents the findings from my qualitative case study which came from a systematic analysis of data discussed in the prior chapter. The findings derived from the activities associated with reading a selection of different YA graphic novel/memoir such as writing, reading, and reflections during my 12th grade English language arts class come from analyzing documents, interview transcripts and observations of these six students: Alex, Jordan, Oliver, Piper, Raphael and Veronica.

The Implications of a Multiliteracies Approach Through Visual Analysis

Through my data analysis I learned that the/a visual analysis assignment served as an anchor to the book club study because it was the start of the process of understanding and making meaning of the books students read. Each activity that came after could not have happened successfully without the visual analysis. This visual analysis asked participants to deeply examine the words and images on the pages of their books through a series of targeted questions. Students completed the analysis at the start of weeks one, two, and three. The purpose of this assignment was to allow students to slow down and

come to a deeper understanding of the words and images on the pages of the books that they read. The five questions that participants answered allowed them to branch out to support the doodle annotations, literature circle discussions and their Flipgrid presentations. The visual analysis also ultimately helped them in understanding how to create their own graphic narrative. However, the data and examples reveal that through the visual analysis of the books participants read supported increased engagement by allowing students to make personal and real world connections to their books. By breaking down the words and images. In addition, students used their visual analysis assignments to examine the author's purpose and reasoning behind the existence or absence of color, color saturation, images, images placement and text on page-i.e., through multimodal learning. Students were supported in their reading and understanding of their YA graphic novels/memoirs through engaging in the complexity creating the visual analysis.

Real-World Implications and Personal Connections

The findings of my research reveal real-world and personal connections by completing a visual analysis of the images they selected. The books they read in the study were diverse and targeted multicultural themes. The books varied in topics from police brutality, rape, sexuality and race. It was because of these topics that participants were able to understand and attach the real-world implications and personal connections while reading their YA graphic novels/memoirs.

Raphael:

Raphael, a Latinx male lives in a world in which he is surrounded with a population of privileged white middle class people. He lives in a home with his two

Latinx moms who are both educated and work in the medical field. Raphael himself has goals of becoming a nurse when he graduates from college. During the study, Raphael made a strong real-world and personal connection to the YA graphic novel/memoir, *Long Way Down*. He found the situations in which Will, the protagonist, was placed made him realize how lucky he was and that he had a lot of privileges that many other people did not. Essentially Raphael believed he had escaped a world of oppression which many of his relatives have faced. He explained to me that he found Will interesting, because he came from a life that he had only heard about on the news. He had empathy for him because as a teen himself he would not want to go through the same experiences as Will. Due to these factors it made Raphael want to read more. He wanted to see if Will would escape his oppression.

The visual analysis gave the participants an opportunity to scrutinize the images and words they read on the page in much more detail. It asked Raphael and the others to not just gloss over what they were seeing on the page, but to dig deep and dive below the surface to really understand what the images were saying. The pages they chose were ones in which they were asked to connect to, have feelings about and have the ability to see what was really going on. In his visual analysis, Raphael chose a page he referred to as “fractured body.” He used these words to identify the page he read because the book itself did not have page numbers. This page and the ones after portrayed a scene of confusion. Through a combination of words and images, Will has met his father for the first time in what appears to be a dream that takes place in an elevator. His dad, a ghost, hugs him. The images and the words give the feeling not of just confusion, but sadness of what would have been. The following pages show Will hugging his ghost father and the

image is shattered, the text in bold letters is “I’m cracking.” In his visual analysis response, Raphael answered the following question, “When you first looked at this page, what was your reaction?” with much of the same insight:

I felt sad. We see Will all broken up, unknowingly of what to do as he faces his father, a man he has never spoken to. You could feel the sadness in the image. They are trying to convey how Will is all broken up. He doesn't know what to do and says he is all confused and broken.

Although Raphael was nothing like Will, he had a strong personal connection to him. He could relate to him as a teenager that had a family he loved and was devastated at the loss of his brother. When I asked Raphael to explain this statement to me a little more in depth, he not only made a personal connection, but he brought in real world realities as he completed his visual analysis. During my interview with Raphael, he shared:

“I realized that different people follow different standards. I live a pretty easy life. I wake up and go to school, I go to work, I go to the gym, I go to sleep. This is not the case for a lot of people. They don't have it that easy. There are a lot of people who don't have homes, places to sleep and don't know where they will be getting their next meal. This isn't necessarily the case for Will, but it really made me think about how unequal society has been and still is.”

Raphael discerned from reading the book, a comparison to himself and what was happening in the world that a lot of people are not as fortunate as him. He reflected on the inequalities of the past and how they still currently exist. What is the most amazing part of his assumptions is that he did this while deciphering the words and images on the page of a book instead of just reading it through words of a traditional text. He used his brain in a different way on his journey to becoming visually literate while completing a visual analysis and reading a YA graphic novel/memoir.

Veronica

Veronica's story is somewhat different from Raphael in the sense that she is a cisgender white female from a middle-class family that lives close to Mid-City High School. Her goals after college are to attend a four-year university and train in theater. In her work with the book *I am Alfonso Jones*, Veronica paid particular attention to the issue of social injustice and inequality that many people are faced with in society today. In her daily journal writing and class discussions she often brought into the conversation the Black Lives Matter Movement and issues of gun control. What is interesting about this is Veronica lives in a county and state that is over 50% Republican (AZSOS.Gov, 2022) and strongly supports the right to bear arms. Bringing up opposition to this topic is often met with heated arguments and discouraged at Mid-City High School due to the political climate in which we live. Her passion for social justice and interest in cultural diversity and the focus on a marginalized group was the reason why she chose this book. In the past she has mostly chosen for her independent reading coming-of-age books like John Green's *Looking for Alaska* and *Turtles All the Way Down*. She explained that she wanted to branch out by reading books she usually shied away from and when she was presented with this book she found it interesting and realized she would like to read more books with these types of topics.

When choosing her image for her visual analysis, Veronica chose a page that mimicked her interest in issues of social justice. She chose page 95 which has five panels on the page. Veronica explained that the first panel is just black, dark with the words of Alfonso saying, "When I was invisible." However, Alfonso was invisible because he was a ghost. The remaining panels reveal the conversation that Alfonso was observing

between his mother and other people and it could be seen in the images that Alfonso was trying to communicate. However, Alfonso couldn't engage because he is a ghost and not actually there. In Veronica's visual analysis she asked a lot of questions. She asked how the children in Alfonso's neighborhood find peace and equality over time. She posed the question "Why does everyone feel invisible or unseen?" She worked through the meaning of this on her visual analysis. She related her response to these images to question 5 which asks, "What are the words and images trying to convey to the reader?" She explained how the issues of social justice are being addressed:

The images on page 95 made me curious. Why did the author do this and what does it mean? The last two panels on the page are flashbacks of Alfonso looking down at a conversation that relates to how he is feeling: invisible. The images and words are trying to show how people in the world are present, but not seen. They are invisible and this can be based on race, gender, status or a number of factors. The point is, in this world all people are not treated equally.

Veronica made some telling assertions in this statement. She realized and made connections to the world outside of the book and the classroom. She connected the invisibility of Alfonso to him not being seen by anyone. She inferred that because of his race, much like others, that he is invisible and nobody cares. From her visual analysis and reading of this diverse YA graphic novel/memoir Veronica made a bold statement that "In this world people are not treated equally."

Veronica continued her visual journey through her diverse YA graphic novel/memoir and made a real-world connection of the gun violence in the book to a recent school shooting in Michigan. Veronica then went on to explain the scene in the book where Alfonso is shot and killed. She wrote:

Alfonso had a coat hanger that was mistaken for a gun by the police. Because of this mistake, and ones that happen in real life, families and people's lives are changed forever. This is another instance of racism which caused police shootings and the equality in the system.

Like Raphael, Veronica used the images and words in her book to make serious and relevant connections to the realities of the world today. This would not have been possible without her ability to discern and interpret the implicit and explicit meaning of what she was reading in her YA graphic novel/memoir.

The visual analysis practice not only allowed participants to see real-world implications, it also was a place where several of the participants made strong personal connections. On many occasions, the students personally connected to and empathized with the characters. The visual analysis was a place where participants like Alex and Piper had a place to contemplate and connect to the main characters through personal reflection.

As an educator, it is an important practice for me to find out as much about my students as possible at the start of the school year. I thought I knew Piper as a student and who she was as a person. She came to class every day, bubbly, happy and ready to work. She was always chatting and giggling with friends. She was kind and inviting to the students who were quiet in class; she made everyone feel welcome. It wasn't until I analyzed the data and read through Piper's responses to her visual analysis that I found that she had a strong connection to the main character due to the same exact life circumstances. This was alarming. The book *Hey Kiddo* is about Jarrett, who is sent to

live with his grandmother because his mother was a drug addict and couldn't take care of him and his father was absent, nowhere to be found.

Piper

For Piper, when she was working through her visual analysis she chose, on most occasions, images and words in which she could see herself, like the ones she found on page 180 in week two of the study. The panels on the page reveal a story of children playing ding-dong ditch. The images told a tale of Jarrett having fun and being happy regardless of his life circumstances. Piper shared that this page was a mirror image of her life, happy on the outside, lonely and confused on the inside. She felt connected to the page and wrote that it made her feel nostalgic about the characters in the book because they were playing a childhood game that she played herself when younger. The innocence of the scene had her reflecting and connecting back to her own childhood.

In week one, Piper chose page 136 and 137 to analyze. Again, she deeply and personally connected to the words and images on the page. To give context, this part of the story was told in two full-page panels. The color saturation is dark. The characters' faces showed anger, worry, confusion and sadness. The captions tell a story of Jarrett's mother and her problems with addiction and unlawfulness that is tearing the family apart. In her visual analysis, Piper explained in her answer to the question "What is going on within the page?" and then brought the reality of the scene back to her own personal experience. She wrote:

These pages (136 and 137) are full of faces that show confusion, sorrow and sadness. It makes me feel compassionate for the family. They all looked exhausted and defeated. I related to this because I often had the same feeling with my own family life.

In her interview Piper shared the visual analysis and reading the book *Hey Kiddo* brought out feelings that she had locked away for a long time. She made connections between the novel and herself. She realized that not everyone would have the same perspectives or feelings, but for her it was at times overwhelmingly emotional. Through the visual analysis she saw that the images speak for themselves and in this instance, they spoke to her and the comradery she found with the Jarrett in *Hey Kiddo*.

Alex

When I first met Alex, I saw a stereotypical high school athlete. He was bright, well liked and kind hearted. Alex worked hard in my class because he knew that he wanted to go to a four-year university after graduating from Mid-City High School. Alex was a self-identified and avid reader of science fiction and fantasy. He took on books like *Dune* and *The Beyonders Trilogy*. However, it was not surprising that he chose *Dragon Hoops* to read for his YA graphic novel/memoir due to a strong connection he said he felt to the main character in the book and because it was about sports. Although Alex was not a basketball player, he was an athlete. In his interview he explained that athletes all have the same experiences regardless of the game. The relationship with sports and the main character Gene showed up often in Alex's visual analysis. When completing his visual analysis in week one he chose page 43, which portrays a scene at a basketball game in which the outcome of the game was on the line and Gene was taking what would be the winning shot. Alex wrote,

My first reaction to the images was of understanding. To have a moment in a game when someone messes up a lost opportunity sticks with you and rattles for days. I totally can relate to this as an athlete myself. You can clearly see how the images show how much that moment meant to him and his day to day life.

For Alex, although there were limited words on the page Alex was able to make a strong personal connection to what was happening within the images. He explained and related his own moments of being an athlete and how they were much like those of the main characters in the book. In addition, he could read the emotion and importance of this moment all by evaluating words and images on the page. YA graphic novels/memoirs, much like their predecessor YA Literature, open the door for readers like Alex to make personal connections to the characters they meet on the page.

Alex's ability to make personal connections continued in his visual analysis in week three of the study, when he chose to analyze page 417. The story is told in ten panels. The first has images of Gene's teammates cheering him on as he is going through the process of taking a foul shot to win the game. The other panels are of the main character taking the shot. The pressure and anxiety of the moment is told with only images. When the page ends, the reader is left not knowing if he made the shot. When writing his visual analysis response, Alex connected to the nervousness that the main character felt while participating in the state championship. When asked, he related it to his own recent experience with a big game and his own state championship. However, he said, "Our game did not come down to a free throw winning the game." He went on further to explain that taking a free throw to win the game is a lot of pressure for the person taking the shot. Through his visual analysis and analyzing the words and images on the page, Alex was clearly able to build empathy and create a connection not only with the main character but with the experiences he encountered with the book. The reality and reflection of his own life came alive through a character in the book of a YA graphic novel/memoir.

These findings reiterate and bring forward the current research within YA Literature that adolescents when given an opportunity to select a book in which they see themselves, they are able to make personal connections which in turn leads to a deeper interest in the book that they are reading. However, here they are doing this with YA graphic novels/memoirs.

Building Understanding with Visual Analysis

The most interesting part of the findings for visual analysis was the fact that all of the participants were able to on varying levels, support their reading, understanding, and making sense of YA graphic novels/memoirs by evaluating how meaning is made and amplified through existence or absence of color, color saturation, images, images placement and text on page. This is important because without the ability to decipher the components that make up a graphic novel, students are not truly reading a graphic novel. By having participants complete a visual analysis they were forced to slow down and closely look at each element of the books they read. It took explicit instructions on how to read and understand the parts that make up a graphic novel for participants to find the implicit and explicit meanings of what they found on the page.

Alex

I noticed how through the visual analysis and interviews that participants' ability to make meaning was amplified by evaluating the existence or absence of color, color saturation, images, images placement and text on page. When asked the question "In what way did visual analysis help in understanding the YA graphic novel/memoir?" Alex shared that "It helped me to understand where the author was coming from." Without the evaluation of all the components on the page, Alex would not have come as deep of an

understanding of the book *Dragon Hoops*. He went on to say that without the visual analysis he would have never even taken the time to look at the colors or detail in the images. It helped him slow down and take in what the author was trying to put forth in images and words. Here he was realizing that without taking time to really look at the images and words on the page, that he would have not accurately understood the book as much as he did with the visual analysis.

In Alex's visual analysis of page 43, he was able to give a detailed description of what he was seeing on the page. Through the series of questions on his visual analysis he detailed the makeup of the page and cited that there were four panels with the gutters in the shape of a plus sign. He wrote that the thought bubbles show the characters thoughts throughout the day. He continued to share that there was a close-up picture of the game-winning shot of the game. As he continued to the next question he wrote about how one image caught his eye because it depicted a small explosion, which implied the impact of hitting the basketball rim with a hand. He finished up his analysis by explaining how he noticed how well the author captured the "huge" impact this moment in the game had on the main character because it was a very important part of the game. Through a thoughtful analysis of the images, gutters, colors and placement Alex surmised the implicit meaning behind the images.

Oliver

In Oliver's visual analysis he focused more on the use of color more than any other aspect of the page. He also wrote of the symbolism of the images he saw. He wrote of the artfulness of the images on the page. His connection to the art aspect comes from his history as a creative artist. In his interview he explained that he always used to

draw. However, as he grew older, he lost the passion. When he started reading his YA graphic novel/memoir he re-discovered his love for art. It is because of this background that he understood how the author used the images on page 186 of *You Brought Me the Ocean* to capture the symbolism behind the sunset. The scene on the page included images of the protagonist and his two friends. They were sitting on a hill overlooking the city. The sun was going down. He wrote that he believed the sunsetting was symbolic of one chapter of the characters' lives closing and that they were looking toward new beginnings. He enjoyed how he could understand what was happening on the page without even having to read a word. The visual analysis allowed him a space to think more deeply about the use of color and appreciate the deeper meaning of the story. He told me "The images tell a deeper story when you take time to look at them closely. The images tell a thousand words." Oliver's ability to evaluate how meaning is made and amplified through existence or absence of color, color saturation, images, images placement and text on page was exhibited when he answered the questions on this visual analysis worksheet. In response to his analysis on page 20 he wrote about how the author uses the small panels to highlight speech, whereas the large ones highlight the scenery and nostalgia of the scene. In the next section, he explained that the author used color to set the tone and mood on the page by using yellow to set the sadness the characters were feeling and the dark blue emphasized night. When using the visual analysis worksheet Oliver was able to understand the implicit use of color to create tone and mood and how the placement and use of panels helped in telling the story. Without the visual analysis which forced Oliver to slow down and analyze the pages he read he would not have been able to take in the intention and author's use of the images and words on the page.

Veronica

Veronica shared that she really liked doing the visual analysis. She found she was really able to describe what she was thinking when it came to analyzing the images. She was meticulous in her descriptions and made inferences about the author's choice of images, words, gutters and color. This really showed when she was connecting and understanding the author's intentions of the absence of words on page 107 of *I am Alfonso Jones*. The chapter, titled "Cry" contained six panels, all of Alfonso's mother crying. The last two panels showed Alfonso's ghost trying to hug and comfort his mother. While working through her visual analysis she started by explaining that the page had six images and no gutters. The first and fifth images are larger and go under the others as if they were split on the page. She wrote that she was drawn to the image of Alfonso floating on his back and connects it back to what she claimed, "is the main theme of racism and silencing those who are oppressed." She explained that "Alfonso in life and death feels invisible and voiceless" he is feeling invisible and not seen." She felt pity for Alfonso and his mom. His mother, distraught and not handling his death well and Alfonso a ghost and desperate to make her sadness go away. The most amazing part of her visual analysis was when she arrived at the last question and disclosed that the author did not use any words on the page: "It doesn't need any," she wrote. She explained, much like in the questions before, that Alfonso was invisible and by the absence of words on the page it reaffirms his being voiceless. Veronica shared with me that without the visual analysis she would have never come to this type of understanding and the absence of the words would not have meant anything. However, by slowing down and

scrutinizing all aspects of the YA graphic novel/memoir she was able to interpret and come to these conclusions.

Alex, Oliver and Veronica were able to support their reading, understanding, and making sense of YA graphic novels/memoirs by evaluating and understanding the author's purpose and reasoning behind the existence or absence of color, color saturation, images, images placement and text on page. The visual analysis revealed to participants a much more profound understanding of the words and images of the pages that they read. Participants' ability to unpack the author's purpose of words, images, placement, and color has implications inside and outside the English language arts classroom. In the world today, young people are asked to decipher and interpret information in new spaces, in places that are small, filled with images, words, and color. With the practice of visual analysis, it allows them to be one more step to being visually literate and make sound judgments on what they read and see.

Doodling in Response to YA Graphic Novels

It was revealed through analysis of the doodle annotations and what was said during individual interviews that the six participants in the case study discussed engaging in a practice of mixing words and images (doodling) and how it allowed them to first decipher what they were seeing in the book and come to a deeper understanding of the story through explaining visually. For example, it was through doodling that students were able to realize the scenes with doodle flashbacks, foreshadowing and symbolism of the images and words they were seeing on the page. Second, it gave students a way to summarize through doodles the information readers took away from their books and built upon what they had written in their visual analysis. These findings are particularly

important because the doodle annotations seemed to be a place where participants revealed facets of figurative language and literary elements which for the most part they did not refer to within their visual analysis. It should also be noted that the summaries, although simple, are where participants are exhibiting and approaching visual literacy. With traditional texts educators measure literacy with the ability to read and write, and an example that shows understanding in reading is the ability to summarize what the students read. With visual literacy and YA graphic novels/memoirs use doodle, annotation to show that readers are understanding the visual aspects while summarizing what they learned in a visual text.

This practice was met with challenges and initial reluctance for most of the participants in the case study. They grumbled and complained about how they were not artists, it was hard to tell a story in pictures, and they didn't understand the reasoning behind doodling. However, in the long run, participants were able to support their understanding of the YA graphic novels/memoir that they were reading through doodling. The doodling allowed students to create a visual bridge between the words and images they were seeing on the page with their own doodles as well as to summarize their reading through doodle annotations.

Creating A Visual Bridge

The practice of doodling is generally used by students to pass time when bored or express intense feelings that they may be having at that moment. However, in the YA graphic novel/memoir unit, I made it part of the reading exercise because it is a part of becoming visually literate. Participants were asked to doodle instead of using words to annotate as they read their book. Much like traditional annotations, students were asked

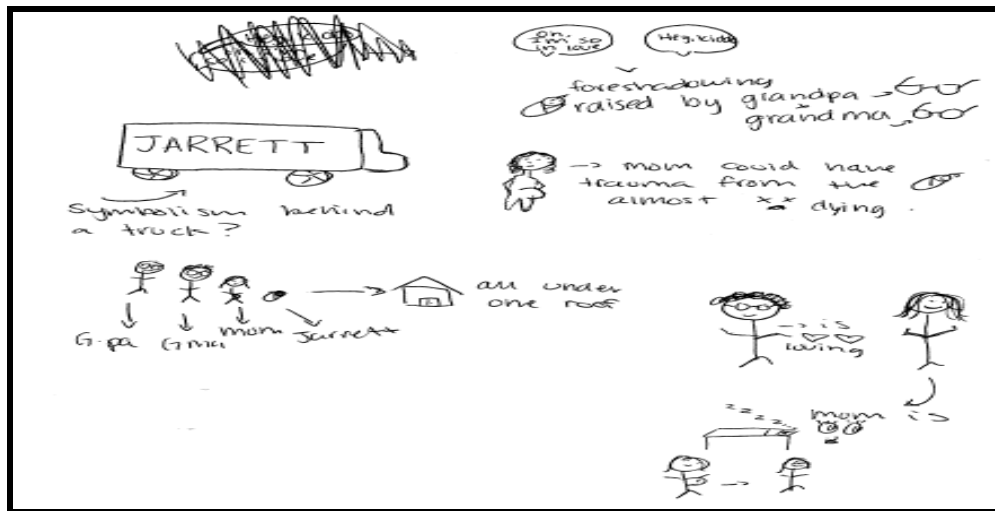
to doodle what they found interesting, what they questioned, what they learned or to what they connected with most.

Piper

When chatting with Piper, she explained that she is historically a doodler. She enjoys it when she is bored or as an outlet when she is upset. However, she also stated that doodling helped her with coming to an understanding of things that at times might cause her confusion. Piper chose the book *Hey Kiddo* to read, where the protagonist, Jarrett, was sent to live with his grandparents because of his mother's inability to care for him. She questioned the events happening in the book during her doodle practice. She often showed a strong ability to find and come to a deeper meaning of the implicit intentions of the words and images. In her doodles she searched for symbolism behind images and looked for clarification. In addition she picked up on the foreshadowing of events as she worked through her doodles. In week one, Piper doodled a picture of a truck and the words, *It could be symbolic*. When questioned about the assertion, she explained that the truck could be symbolic of the fact that Jarrett moved on in life with his grandparents. She also drew images of the family and labeled it foreshadowing. She explained it was foreshadowing of the fact that Jarrett's grandmother would have a lot of love for him regardless of the tension and dislike between them and his mother. Although her symbolism and foreshadowing may not have been precise, it showed she was working toward a deeper understanding of the visuals in the book with the visuals from her doodle annotations.

Image 5.1

Piper's Doodle Annotations



Raphael

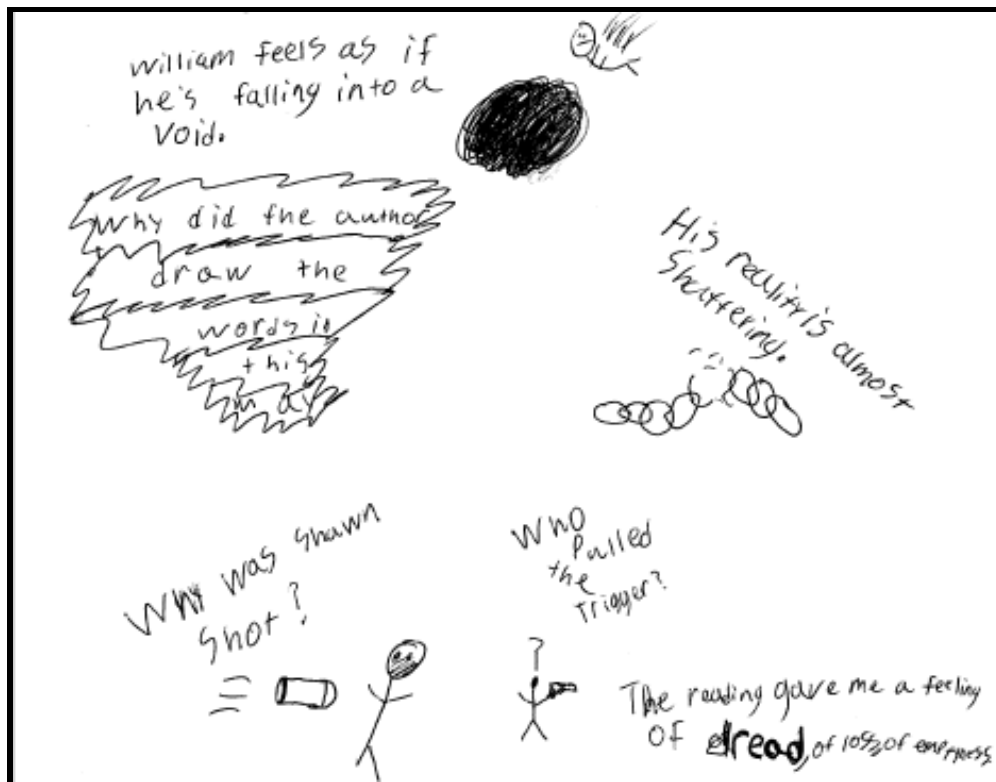
For Raphael, doodling was at first a real challenge. He is a self-proclaimed “not creative person.” However, through his doodling he was able to answer a lot of questions brought up after reading the book *Long Way Down* with doodling. Through a mixture of words and images he was asking questions of the book and of what the images he was seeing meant to the overall meaning of the book. He felt more connected to the story of a young man who witnessed his brother being murdered and his quest for revenge. He explained that over time doodling became his favorite part of reading the book. We can see in the example below how he is asking them questions and then answering them on the same page with doodles.

He expounded during his one-to-one interview that although challenging, it was very helpful for him to come to an understanding and get to a “deeper meaning of the pictures in the book.” The images he chose added purpose to what he was trying to

explain. Working through this progression while participating in the book club reading unit helped him come to a deeper understanding of what he was reading in his book. In the doodle below it exhibits how Raphael replicated images from the book to ask the question of the author's choice of the visual. He comes to the realization that Will, the main character, is falling into a void. He also writes his reality is shattering. When I asked Raphael what he was trying to express through these doodles he explained he wasn't sure why the author used this image and thought at first it was a void that Will was falling into, but in reality he realized that it was Will's reality shattering.

Image 5.2

Raphael's Doodle Annotations



When working through their doodle annotations both Piper and Raphael were able to unfold, reveal and come to a deeper understanding of their YA graphic

novel/memoir. This was the case for most of the participants in the case study, they realized the doodling helped in understanding the visual aspect of the story through explaining it visually and coming to a deeper meaning and understanding of the visuals, through visuals.

Doodle Summaries

The most common thread among all of the participants when it comes to doodle annotation was their ability to summarize with doodles to come to an understanding of the words and images on the page. The ability to summarize with images is a marker of participants being visually literate. The summaries really started from the students' visual analysis. From the first question to the last they came to a deeper understanding of what they were seeing on the page of their YA graphic novel/memoir. After completing the visual analysis, the next step was to complete a doodle annotation. It was here that I found that all of the participants' doodle annotations were a summary of the understanding they came to through the visual analysis. This is interesting because they were not necessarily asked to summarize, however they were asked to doodle what they learned.





Jordan

The consistency of the doodle summaries piqued my interest so I asked Jordan, a reluctant doodler, if she intentionally chose to summarize with the doodles. Jordan divulged that she didn't even realize that she was summarizing and that it just really helped in her making sense of everything, the book, the visual analysis and the doodles. She was on her path to becoming visually literate. Jordan read the YA graphic novel/memoir *Speak*, a novel about a young girl, Melinda, who was raped and is hiding

her secret from everyone she knows. Jordan selected page 181 to complete the doodle annotations. The page she chose had no images, just words. To give the page context, it is important to explain that in this section of the book, Melinda, the main character, was working on an art project that was assigned to her for class. The art teacher challenged her to think outside the box. She struggled. In Melinda's words, she was "stunted." This scene set up the page that Jordan was focusing upon a conversation between Melinda and her art teacher. When summarizing this page, Jordan brought in the pages prior to help her come to an understanding of what the message the author is trying to convey. She created her summary with four separate doodles. First, she explained the meaning of a painting on the page prior. Second is the explanation of the painting by her teacher. Third is a peace sign that indicates that Melinda finds peace in art class. The last is the painting being completely black which makes her confused. The visual analysis is helping her work through the page and the doodle annotation and visually summarizes what she wrote. Although she didn't completely come to a conclusion of the purpose of the black page, she was able to combine how she worked through this in words and as a doodle summary. With her ability to doodle her understanding she was revealing that she was approaching visual literacy. It is here that it can be seen that the multiliteracies approach is having an impact on the ability for Jordan to learn from multiple modes of making meaning. She is coming to a deeper understanding of what she is reading. With this re-envisioned practice, it makes space for ever-evolving literacy forms including new media and YA graphic novels/memoirs.

Figure 5.1

Jordan's Doodle Annotation Summary

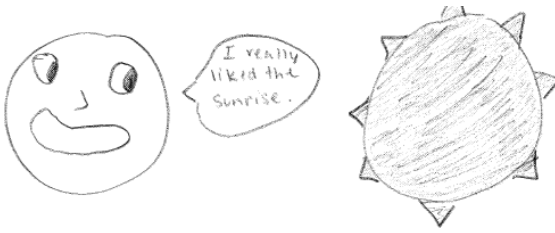
Visual Analysis Questions	Doodle Annotation Summary
<p>Describe the image on the page. <i>There are no panels or borders on the page, everything is all together. There is little to nothing going on.</i></p> <p>When you first looked at this image, what was your reaction? <i>I felt a little confused. I felt this way because there was absolutely nothing going on in the page except words.</i></p> <p>What were you drawn to most? <i>The black background caught my eye. I think it did because it is the first page with no picture on it.</i></p> <p>What else did you notice about the image? <i>I noticed that there is absolutely nothing on the page. There are no frames, The background is just a black page.</i></p> <p>What are the images and the words on the page trying to convey to the reader? <i>Melinda describes her teacher as the saddest person she knows. People in her class think Mr. Freeman has a mental breakdown. I think the author is trying to convey the fact that Melinda finds peace in his class because she is having a mental breakdown.</i></p>	 <p>The painting is supposed to represent smoker's lungs.</p>  <p>He also said that the painting is supposed to represent despair or a heart of a school board director.</p>  <p>Melinda finds peace in her art class but she is starting to lose it because her teacher gave up on her.</p>  <p>The painting is completely blacked out with no pictures or anything else on it. It made me confused.</p>

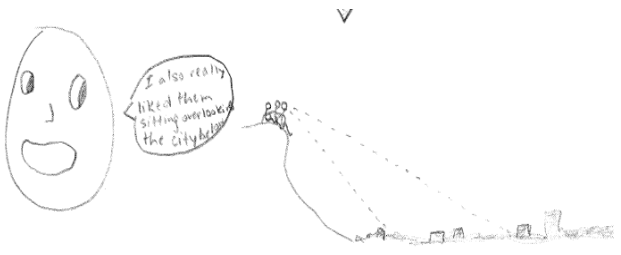
Oliver

Oliver also was unaware of his summarizing through doodles. He chose to evaluate page 186 in *You Brought Me the Ocean*. It shows the main character and friends watching the sunset. This page was at the end of the book when the characters are coming to resolution and moving forward with their lives. The page shows these characters watching the sunset with the city sprawling below them. Oliver writes about this in his visual analysis. He then summarizes this into a doodle annotation summary. In his doodles he tells the story of the sunset and how the characters are feeling at this moment. He goes on to describe the sunset and ends with how the characters talk about happy futures and how the world ahead of them is waiting to be conquered. Although small in size he visually explains and summarizes his interpretation of the scene on the page. By engaging in this practice he is showing an emerging ability to become visually literate through multimodal spaces and it also provides a place for students to place an emphasis on the visual image and its value and relationship to print-text literacies.

Figure 5.2

Oliver's Doodle Annotation Summary

Visual Analysis Questions	Doodle Annotation Summary
<p>Describe the image on the page. <i>There are 2 panels on this page, the smaller panel is bordering with a black edge while the main panel is not bordered.</i></p> <p>When you first looked at this image, what was your reaction? <i>My first reaction was that I was surprised at how beautiful the colors on the main panel were.</i></p> <p>What were you drawn to most? <i>I am drawn to the beautiful colors and landscapes on the panel, the art is very beautiful</i></p>	

<p>What else did you notice about the image? <i>In the foreground, the 3 main characters are sitting together on the hillside. In the background the wide valley and city are sprawled out beneath them. The main panel has no frame.</i></p> <p>What are the images and the words on the page trying to convey to the reader? <i>The main thing that I noticed was a peaceful sunset, meaning that the story was drawing to a close. The second thing I noticed was the city below, representing the open world ahead of them waiting to be conquered.</i></p>	
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Piper

This trend continued and was shown in Piper's doodle annotation summary of page 180-183 from the book *Hey Kiddo*. On these pages the main character, Jarrett, can be seen playing games outside with his friends. Piper explained that the mood and tone of the page is happy and fun. It shows Jarrett and his friends really enjoying themselves. In Piper's visual analysis, she walked through the progression of images on the page and discussed how she had a sense of nostalgia for the characters playing ding-dong ditch. In her doodle annotation summary, she clearly depicts this scene. She reflects her assertion that Jarrett's adrenaline was high as he played with his friends. She shows him moving from middle school to high school where he became a track star. Piper explained to me that she believed he was always a runner and became a track star because of all the fun and running around he did as a kid. By comparing the visual analysis response and doodle annotations side by side it shows clearly that Piper is visually summarizing what she has inferred from the images and words from her book.

Figure 5.3

Piper's Doodle Annotation Summary

Visual Analysis Questions	Doodle Annotation Summary
<p>Describe the image on the page: <i>It is a small text box with darker colors. There are little boys running away from a house. They were ding dong ditching. They seem to be having fun</i></p> <p>When you first looked at this image, what was your reaction? <i>I felt nostalgic because it reminds me of when me and my cousins would ding dong ditch when we were younger.</i></p> <p>What were you drawn to most? <i>I was drawn to the colors. They separated the caption and text bubble by color. The caption is beige while the text bubble is white.</i></p> <p>What else did you notice about the image? <i>You can tell Jarrett is having fun and letting loose a little bit. He's found a good group of friends.</i></p> <p>What are the images and the words on the page trying to convey to the reader? <i>They are trying to show a rebellious side of Jarrett and showing the fun times he is having as a teenager.</i></p>	<p>The doodle annotations consist of several hand-drawn elements and notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Top Left: A circular scribble representing a crossed-out image. Top Right: Two speech bubbles. The first says "Oh, I'm so in love" and the second says "Hey, kids". Below them is the note "foreboding raised by grandpa -> G, grandma -> G". Middle: A drawing of a truck with "JARRETT" written on its side. Below it is the note "Symbolism behind a truck?". To the right is a drawing of a person with the note "mum could have trauma from the almost x x dying". Bottom Left: A family tree diagram showing "G. pa (mum)" and "Jarrett" connected to a house icon. The note "all under one roof" is written next to the house. Bottom Right: A drawing of two people, one with glasses, with the note "mum is" and "is loving" written nearby.

Although the act of creating doodle annotations for the participants was challenging, they did find a way to make them work. By pairing visual tasks with a visual book, students came to a deeper understanding of the visuals in the YA graphic novels/memoirs. They were successful in using doodle annotations to visually summarize conclusions they had made on their visual analysis. Through these multimodal spaces students were able to make meaning of what they read in their YA

graphic novels/memoirs. They encountered and worked with practices that would traditionally denote the ability to be visually literate such as summarizing and did this successfully with images and words.

Reflection through Graphic Narratives

In my analysis of the graphic narratives, I learned that participants came to the conclusion that there is a unique way of reading graphic novels and that the process of creating one is important to overall understanding of the books they read. As well as that the genre was more difficult to read and recreate than first expected. Although students were challenged with this part of the study, it is shown that through the creation of graphic narrative the participants understood the distinguishing feature of the genre such as panels, gutters and word balloons and that they were able to describe their own experience of reading a YA graphic novel/memoir through the use of pictures and words. In their narrative they disclosed their feelings, questions and insecurities while reading their books. Some of the common experiences included that the participants revealed that through creating a graphic narrative they demonstrated personal growth and understanding by learning how to read a YA graphic novel/memoir. Additionally, participants were at first reluctant and did not take this genre seriously. However, through the creation of the graphic narrative participants exhibited a newfound appreciation and better understanding of the genre. Having students come to these conclusions in the study is particularly important because first it is remarkably important to understand that to properly understand a YA graphic novel/memoir that you must first understand how to read the genre. The findings in this section show this process. Also, there is an underlying bias attached to the genre of YA graphic novels and with these

practices is what shows that the bias was easily overcome. This bias is shown through the apathy participants first faced when introduced to the genre. These findings also revealed that by creating graphic narratives the case study participants were supported in their reading ability to understand and make sense of the reading of a YA graphic novel/memoir through telling their own personal experiences in words and images.

Personal Growth and New Understandings

The graphic narrative allowed students to retell their experiences while reading their YA graphic novel/memoir. They were instructed to create a minimum of six panels to tell their story and use all that they had come to know about graphic novels. Students were asked to use panels, color, gutters, captions, thought and word bubbles. They were to emulate the practices of a YA graphic novel/memoir author in their own personal graphic narratives. All of the participants had great success in the ability to reflect upon their personal growth and personal experiences in a graphic narrative format.

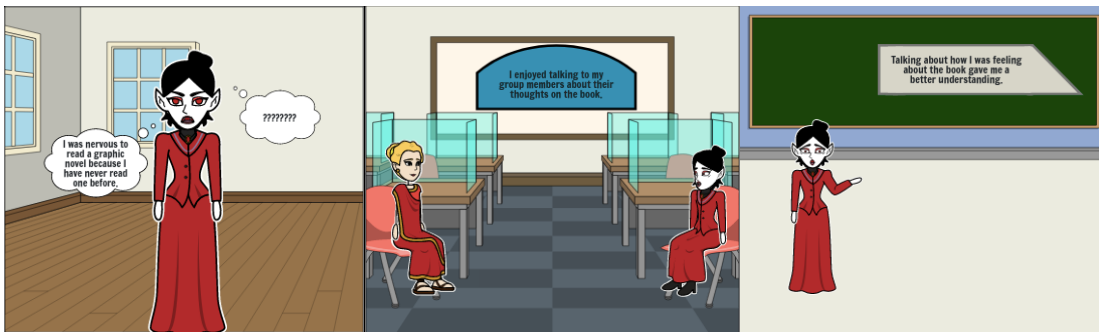
Jordan

I recall the day I introduced the assignment of the graphic narrative. Jordan was extremely concerned in her ability to complete the task at hand. She exclaimed “I am not artistic, so this is hard.” She had tremendous self doubt. During her interview she divulged that the graphic narrative was a lot harder than she initially thought it would be. She underestimated the challenges that she herself would face when creating a story of her own in words and images. She added that without explicit instruction and being taught how to read this genre that she would not have had any success. In the end Jordan was able to create a 12-panel narrative that explained her relationship with the book and her encounters with our daily activities. The first panel showed concern and apathy in the

faces of her group. In the third panel she described how nervous she was about something very new to her. In a mixed sequence of other panels she recaptured her personal relationship and thoughts on *Speak*. She reflected on aspects of daily routine such as visual analysis and group discussions. As she finished her story, she shared how much she loved the book and how she had successfully learned how to read a graphic novel. The panels of the graphic narrative in image 5.3 are Jordan's. The first panel shows her questioning and second guesses the genre. The second panel shows how she is coming to a deeper understanding while talking to classmates and the last panel shows her new found confidence in her ability to read and recreate a YA graphic novel/memoir.

Image 5.3

Jordan's Graphic Narrative Excerpt



At the conclusion of the assignment, Jordan showed she found confidence in her ability to read the genre and shared that she will “definitely read another.” As Jordan has shown, she had the ability all along to share the experiences of her encounter with YA graphic novels/memoirs through her own graphic narrative. She shows a journey of personal growth and understanding that could only happen through reading a YA graphic novel/memoir.

Perception vs. Reality

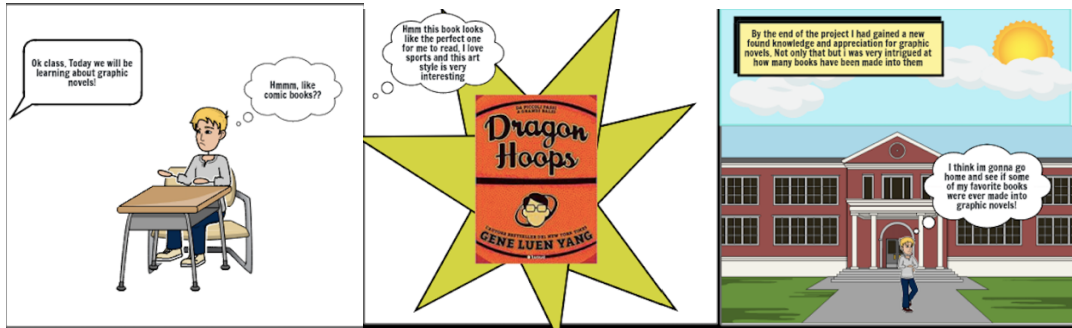
Alex

During the book study unit, Alex was always quiet and reserved. I rarely could read what he was thinking or feeling on any given day. He did his work, participated in group discussions and flew below the radar as he worked each day. When he created his graphic narrative, I was able to clearly see his thoughts of his daily experiences. In his six-panel narrative he used images, panels, gutters, captions and thought bubbles to express his experience during the five week unit.

Alex revealed in his first panel what many other participants thought when these books were first introduced. They immediately thought of comic books. This is a common fallacy with the genre and one that took time for the students of my case study to understand. As he moved into his second panel he portrayed a scene of his realization that graphic novels/memoirs were not comic books at all and many of traditional texts that have been turned into graphic novels. In this third panel he addressed the book that he chose and explained that it was the perfect book for him, “I love sports,” he wrote and “This art style is very interesting.” His insight about the images and words in the next panels expressed how “simple, but effective the elements on the page” were and how as he worked through the visual analysis he could clearly understand what the author was trying to portray.

Image 5.4

Alex's Graphic Narrative Excerpts



To conclude his narrative, Alex shared that by the end of the project he had gained a newfound appreciation and understanding of the YA graphic novels/memoirs. Through words and pictures, Alex did a great job at recreating and explaining his own personal experiences with the genre and the book study, but he mostly revealed his initial perception and reluctance to the genre at first. As time progressed these perceptions changed to a new found appreciation for not only the genre, but the serious and relatable topics they depict. Alex pushed back on the implicit bias of YA graphic novels/memoirs not being a serious genre and showed that he understands that they are a complex genre that is much more difficult to read than first thought.

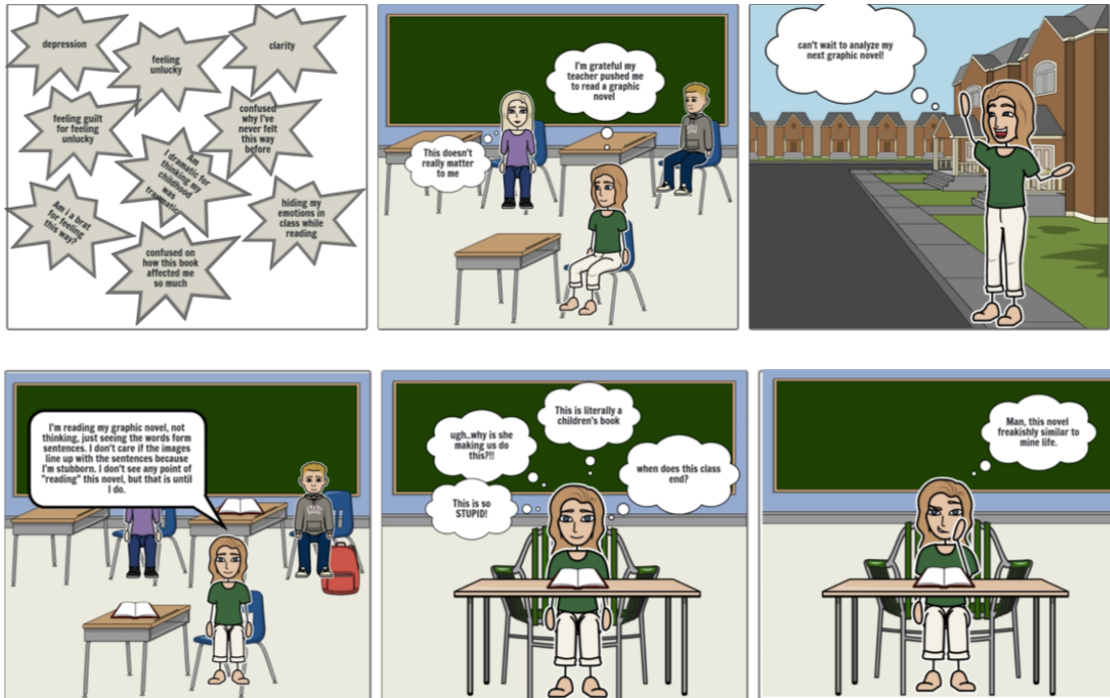
Piper

Of all the graphic narratives I found Piper's to be the most intriguing due to the strong personal bond she shared with the main character. She not only explained her experiences with words and images, but she revealed her deep connection to the book *Hey Kiddo* and the similarities between herself and the protagonist, Jarrett. However, Piper did not at first embrace the idea of reading a YA graphic novel/memoir. She

exhibited a pattern of disinterest and apathy. She would often share that they were “silly.” During week two of the study Piper and her group were constantly off task, goofing around and making a mockery of what they were asked to do. This is seen in the first two panels where she describes her feelings about the book club unit in which she was asked to read a YA graphic novel/memoir. Like the other participants, she portrayed a scene in which she is sitting at her desk with a sneering look on her face. The thought bubbles describing that “This is stupid” and “This is literally a children’s book,” Piper definitely revealed that she had zero interest in reading the book. However, as her graphic narrative evolved she shared in the third panel that she is starting to show her connection to the book as “freakishly familiar.” In her narrative she makes the connection between her newfound engagement which is due to her realization of her connection to the life experiences of the main character. This awareness was depicted over the next several panels. Piper shared her deep emotional connection and how it made her feel as she read. The panel that stood out most was the one where she used shattered dialogue balloons to show lightbulb moments throughout her journey. Words like clarity, confusion and guilt were terms she included to show how she felt.

Image 5.5

Piper's Graphic Narrative Excerpt



In the closing panels Piper shared that she was grateful for being pushed into reading a YA graphic novel/memoir and she is looking forward to reading more of them in the future.

All of this emotion, realization and clarity was demonstrated successfully through words and images in the form of a graphic narrative. Piper worked through her initial apathy, pushed her bias aside and grew to love and understand that YA graphic novels/memoirs are a great genre to read.

Literature Circles: A Place to Make Sense of Multimodal Spaces

Of all the parts of this multiliteracies book study, the literature circle component was the most complex. The process really began from the participants' visual analysis

and doodles annotations and extended from that point. There were several more elements that supported the literature circles. First, the individual literature circle assigned roles of the Image Mage, Text Maven, Palette Cleanser and Gutter Dweller (Low and Jacobs, 2018). Second, The Synergizer was where participants came together and discussed how they were to make sense of all of their roles combined as a whole. Third, The Flipgrid video presentation brought together what they learned from the visual analysis, doodle notes, discussion roles and the synergizer. All of these components working together had a tremendous impact on students learning and understanding YA graphic novels/memoirs, but it showed that all the parts of this multimodal studies were working together to support the reading and understanding of YA graphic novels/memoir. The analysis of the data and personal observation on this aspect of the study revealed that this was the space in which participants advanced their understanding of YA graphic novels and memoirs through using the modes (visual analysis, doodle notes, literature circles) of making meaning as building blocks. This paired with collaboration, discussion and acceptance of other personal points of view resulted in an evolution of participants' understanding of YA graphic novels/memoirs.

An Evolution of Understanding

Jordan

Of all the participants in the case study, Jordan was the one participant who most shared her challenges both verbally and through reflection. However, while scrutinizing her literature circle preparation, discussion transcriptions and her Flipgrid presentation, it revealed that she really built upon her learning and understanding of her book *Speak* through each of these steps of the literature circle discussion. Her struggles were

apparent in her visual analysis, but she used the perspective of others and talked through her own reasoning to realize the implications of the images and words on the page. In her one-to-one interview Jordan shared that she found herself getting confused and lost while reading, but she found that when she worked together with her group on the synergizer summary that “everything came together.” Her understanding furthered by participating in and completing the Flipgrid’s with her group. Talking with everyone brought new insight and perspective from others. This can be seen best during week one. Starting with her visual analysis it was obvious that Jordan really struggled with understanding page 70 of the book *Speak*. The page shows the main character Melinda crying and looking in the mirror. As she sees her reflection she starts wiping the tears on her face away with a towel. As the panels continue, the images are of Melinda without eyes or a mouth, just as if she wiped them away with her tears. While answering her questions on the visual analysis I could see that Jordan was unable to articulate what the words and images on the page were portraying. She writes about the mirror and that Melinda is upset, but she cannot connect to why she has no eyes or mouth. Melinda questioned, “Why doesn’t Melinda have a face?” In her response to question two on the visual analysis which was “When you first looked at the image, what was your reaction?” Jordan started to talk of color and the saturation of the blackness on the page. She didn’t respond with emotion or feelings at this time. However, in her Text Maven Literature Circle preparation she started to discern the importance of the placement and use of words within the page. She explained:

The words on page 70 are important to the story because they describe exactly what Melinda is feeling and what she is going through in her head. It would be confusing if there were no words we wouldn’t know why she was missing facial features. The text describes how distraught she was.

She then went on to surmise that maybe the author wrote “no mouth” because she felt like Melinda had no voice.

The next step in the literature circle process was actually to engage in a discussion with other group members. Each of these discussions were recorded with an audio device so that I could use the transcriptions in my analysis. As I reviewed the audio, it was obvious that Jordan was grasping and evolving her understanding of what she was seeing on page 70. She was also acknowledging other group members' perspective and point of view. In the discussion, Jordan dabbled in understanding color and color saturation. In the discussion it was brought up by a peer that Melinda, the main character, hates herself and that the drawings of her are covered in black ink. After considering this, Jordan came to the conclusion at this time that the images and black ink are movements in a sequence of Melinda wiping herself away. “It is a sequence of her wiping her face off because she doesn’t like herself.” She reaffirms her summation that Melinda has no mouth because she has no voice and explains that other group members came to the same conclusions. To end the week's literature circle conversation, Jordan shared with her group that “the background of the room is black, because it’s dark, so it appears the lights are off.” Once again, it is shown that Jordan is using her group to come to an advanced understanding of her YA graphic novels and memoirs through using the modes of making meaning as building blocks. This, paired with collaborations and acceptance of personal points of view, show how the visual and the textual elements of the YA graphic novel/memoirs are dynamically related in the sense that when they are all used together it influences how Jordan interprets the meaning of her book from others.

The next part of Jordan's evolution of understanding came from the synergizer or group summary portion of the assignment. Again, Jordan added new meaning to what she was reading in the book *Speak*. It was here that Jordan helped group members in summarizing what they learned from each other in preparation for their digital presentations. Jordan began to question if Melinda was suicidal due to the tone brought on by the darkness in the pages and that the words on the page helped in determining mood. All of the assertions that she had been making throughout the process culminated in the Flipgrid presentation in which the group shared what they learned. The conversation grew from not articulating what Jordan was seeing on the page to introducing symbolism of color. She shared how the white dialogue bubbles are less dramatic and the brighter words are more dramatic. Jordan described that Melinda wiping her mouth was symbolic of her wiping herself away or the past events that have caused her to be so sad. Through the project Jordan revealed that she used each part of the literature circle activities as building blocks and connected each space to make new meaning. The multimodal components of the multiliteracies approach allowed her to come to new conclusions and deeper understandings of what she was experiencing with the images and words on the page.

Raphael

The same process of using the literature circles to advance understanding of their YA graphic novel/memoir was seen in the work of Raphael. He was able to use his literature circle preparation, discussion, synergizer worksheet and his Flipgrid presentation, to build upon his learning and understanding of his book *Long Way Down*. Unlike Jordan, Raphael had a much easier time understanding the words and

images on the page. For him, it was a matter of coming to a deeper and more complex understanding through the multimodal building blocks used in the literature circle discussions. In a conversation, Raphael shared that he found that the literature circle discussions allowed him to “bounce ideas off his group” and come to a “combined understanding of the book itself.” He realized that reading a YA graphic novel/memoir was a much more complex task than he first thought. Raphael loved analyzing the use of color. I saw this first when he was tasked with the role of Palette Cleanser in his week 1 discussion preparation. For the discussion he picked page 14 in the book *Long Way Down*. The pages panel takes the form of a funnel: the top panel is wider at the top and shrinks in size as the panels layer down to the bottom of the page. There is a gray, white, and black image of a person falling within the layered panels. The gutters accentuate the funnel panels with the use of the saturation of the color black. In response to this page, Raphael wrote in the discussion preparation worksheet:

The white represents the ground breathing beneath William's feet. The black then represents the void, unknown and loss and grief. The light gray areas represent the last specks of twilight before falling into the abyss.

In his work, Raphael made surface interpretations of the use of color. He explained the images as William “falling into a void which was a loss,” but he did not make a connection to William, the colors and the loss.

Raphael was making great strides in his evaluation of page 14 of the book *Long Way Down*; however, he was not synthesizing all aspects of his assertions in regard to the page. This started to change as he discussed his page with his literature circle group. In the review of the audio recording I noted that Raphael started to connect that the images on the page were there to help evoke emotion. He explained that “It is showing

William's state of mental instability, he is unfocused, shocked and confused." Raphael then extended his interpretation of the images on the page as the black was the outside of the dark void with a white inside. He wrote, "It shows William's entire world being turned upside down." In the discussion, Raphael was building off his meaning from the prior exercise and added new meaning to what he was seeing on the page.

In the Synergizer portion of the literature circles, Raphael continued to compound the modes of making meaning to come to a deeper understanding of the YA graphic novel/memoir. He and his group members expounded that the realization of the main character's reality was shattering and that the panel placement allowed them to see that the world was opening up under his feet and he was swallowed by the confusion and shock of the moment. The text on the page was choppy and broken, just like Will's mental state. Raphael was coming to the conclusion that "the color shows the contrast of what Will thought he knew to be the depth of reality." These assertions continued to evolve within the final part of the literature circle discussion which was the Flipgrid. Raphael asserts in the presentation that in the book *Long Way Down*, "The author poses a question of mortality. What we think we should do in any given situation is what we actually do based upon societal norms." He realizes that the placement of the words not only show his mental state, but adds a new insight to the words, that had spacing. For example, in the book the words appeared as "Defi nitely" and "o pened up" and showed that he was not thinking clearly. He was pausing in hesitation within this moment of time. Raphael concluded his presentation with literature circles by stating that the images create powerful emotions and overall the images show

clearly what Will is feeling as he comes to understand the reality of what has just happened in the book.

Both Raphael and Jordan used each part of the literature circle activities to learn from others as well as themselves. They used the multimodal components of the activity as building blocks as steps to an evolution of new understanding of each space they encountered by reading their YA graphic novel/memoir.

The interactivity with the data I collected in my YA graphic novel/memoir book club that used a case study methodology has allowed me to learn and share the experiences of my participants, Alex, Jordan, Oliver, Piper, Raphael and Veronica. My findings allowed me to discover the benefits of teaching a book study unit using a multiliteracies approach with YA graphic novels/memoirs. I also learned that by using multimodal spaces such as visual analysis, doodle annotations, graphic narratives and literature circles that studies were supported in their reading and came to a much deeper understanding of the books that they read.

CHAPTER 6

IMPLICATIONS & CONCLUSION

I embarked on this research journey to better understand how the use of multiliteracies approaches to teaching reading supports 12th grade students in reading and understanding YA graphic novels/memoirs within a high school language arts literature circle book study unit. I wanted to examine the classroom experiences in which students engaged in reading a YA graphic novel/memoir of their choice. My four broad findings of the study include: 1) The Implications of a Multiliteracies Approach Through Visual Analysis, 2) The Implications of Doodling, 3) Personal Growth and New Understandings for the Craft in Creating of a YA Graphic Novels/Memoirs, and 4) Literature Circles: A Place to Make Sense of Multimodal Spaces.

The findings revealed to me the answers to my research questions. I discovered that through engaging in visual analysis while reading a YA graphic novel/memoir, participants were supported in reading and coming to a deeper understanding. I learned that participants were closely related to what was happening in their books. As they evaluated the combination of words and images in the book they were able to connect what they were reading to what was happening in the world around as well as connecting personally.

My participants were supported in their reading of YA graphic novel/memoir by engaging in doodle annotations as a visual literacy practice. First, it allowed students to decipher what they were seeing in their books and come to a deeper understanding of the story through explaining visually. Second, it gave students a way to summarize through doodles the information readers took away from their books and built upon what they had

written in their visual analysis. Doodle annotations took traditional classroom practice of annotating and summarizing and converting it to a visual literacy practice.

The findings supported that through completing graphic narratives that students were supported in their reading of YA graphic novels/memoirs in two areas. Some of the common experiences students shared were that through creating a graphic narrative they demonstrated personal growth and understanding by learning how to read a YA graphic novel/memoir. Additionally, participants were at first reluctant and did not take this genre seriously. However, through the creation of the graphic narrative participants exhibited a new found appreciation and better understanding of the genre.

The research concluded that by participating in literature circles, students were supported in reading their YA graphic novels/memoir and had the ability to understand the words and images found in their books. All of these components working together had a tremendous impact on students learning and understanding YA graphic novels/memoirs, but it showed that all the parts of this multimodal studies were working together to support the reading and understanding of YA graphic novels/memoir. The analysis of the data and personal observation on this aspect of the study revealed that this was the space in which participants advanced their understanding of YA graphic novels and memoirs through using the modes (visual analysis, doodle notes, literature circles) of making meaning as building blocks. This paired with collaboration, discussion and acceptance of other personal points of view resulted in an evolution of participants' understanding of YA graphic novels/memoirs.

Connections to Theory

The findings of this study directly connect to multiliteracies theory (Cope and Kalantzis 2000; Jewitt, 2007; Kress, 2010; Leander and Bolt 2013; New London Group, 1996) through participants' reading YA graphic novels/memoirs. They were able to fulfill the demand that the New London Group put forth that there is a need for diversity in approaches to studying and understanding literacy practices and inclusion of diverse cultures, languages, practices, and methods (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000; Jewitt, 2007; Kress, 2010; Leander and Bolt 2013; New London Group, 1996). The foundation of Multiliteracy Theory is the inclusion of the reader or writer's language, culture, and identity as part of meaning making and as part of multimodal ways of learning (Alvermann, Moon, and Hagood; 1999; Cope and Kalantzis; 2000; Frey and Fisher, 2011; Kress, 2010; Jewitt, 2009; Luke, 1995; New London Group, 1996). These findings share the experiences of secondary students in an English language arts class reading and exploring YA graphic novels/memoirs. Through the findings in this study, I make the following claims:

1. This study confirms past research on teaching YA literature and Graphic Novels and YA graphic novels/memoirs with multiliteracies while making a case for inclusion of YA graphic novels/memoirs in secondary English language arts classrooms, pre-service teacher training and curriculum development.
2. This research finds that when secondary English language arts students read YA graphic novels/memoirs that there is a direct correlation to visual

literacy, personal growth and the ability to read and understand YA graphic novels/memoirs.

3. This research makes a case for the inclusion of the use of YA graphic novels/memoirs in pre-service teacher reading methods courses and educator training programs.
4. This research provides a pedagogical model for educators, education leaders and curriculum developers to replicate.

Connections to Research

To date, the existing literature explores teaching using a multiliteracy approach, teaching graphic novels and teaching YA graphic novels and memoirs with secondary students. To date, existing literature on the topic explores several facets of the multiliteracy approach and teaching graphic novels and memoirs with secondary students. In this study of a YA graphic novel/memoir book club, I have confirmed the following findings: 1) That a multiliteracies approach used in secondary English language arts classrooms has a positive impact on today's adolescents. It has shown that by addressing the needs of 21st century learners through the use of multimodal platforms will allow them to engage in real world literacies that they participate in everyday (Bowmer & Scott- Curwood's, 2016; Guthrie and Wigfield, 2000 ; Harvey, 2019 ; Lewis,2012; Scott- Curwood & Cowell's , 2010; White & Hungerford-Kresser, 2014); 2) graphic novels are used to update canonical texts, update approaches to character analysis and understanding themes in these texts. It confirms prior research that shows that graphic novels allow an opportunity for adolescents to find a place that explores

identity, racism and sexuality and that by pairing graphic novels with the writing of narrative and multimodal composition that it reflects the lives and experiences of today's adolescents (Carter, 2008; Chinn, 2004; Connors, 2013; Cook, 2017; Dallacqua, 2018; Danzak, 2011; Faughey, 2020; Fisher & Frey, 2008; Gorlewski & Schmidt, 2011; Gorman, 2008; Hansen, 2012; Moeller, 2010; Monin, 2010); and 3) YA graphic novels/memoirs allows adolescents to think critically and evaluate topics such as identity, racism and stereotypes. In addition, it gives them the space to negate the bias and stigmas that are attached to YA graphic novels/memoirs and find value in reading this genre (Cook 2017; J. Griffith 2019; P. Griffith 2010; Meyer & Jimenez 2017; Moller, 2011; Monin 2010; Rice, 2012; Schieble, 2014; Schmidt, 2011; Spiering, 2017; Soter and Connors, 2009).

Collectively, this research has demonstrated the value and place of the YA graphic novel/memoir book club study. By asking students to read a YA graphic novel/memoir and systematically examining this process and their responses, I extended the field of research by providing findings that substantiate the need for pairing a multiliteracies approach to teaching YA graphic novels/memoirs in secondary English language arts classrooms. In addition, this study extends the current research by showing a tremendous need for the inclusion of YA graphic novels/memoirs in secondary English language arts classrooms.

Instructional Model for University ELA Teacher Education Program

This research provides a model for university ELA teacher education programs because many pre-service teachers arrive in secondary classrooms armed with classic literature and traditional ways of engaging with texts which limits the ability to reach

those students with diverse needs. University reading methods courses should include targeted training on the teaching of YA graphic novels/memoirs. By incorporating these texts in reading methods courses new educators enter the classroom with updated ways of teaching reading. The YA graphic novel/memoir book club that was examined here presents a replicable pedagogical framework for instructors of reading methods courses or for teachers in education programs.

In addition, university teacher education and English courses should consider adding YA graphic novels/memoirs to their YA literature courses. Due to the newness and lack of pedagogical research, YA graphic novels/memoirs have yet to make their way into formal college curriculums. YA literature courses pay limited attention to this new and evolving genre. This research provides a clear argument as to the value of YA graphic novels/memoirs.

It should also be noted that Secondary English language arts teacher education programs should include ways to teach using a multiliteracies approach with varied multimodal ways to learn and understand. This YA graphic novel/memoir book study research with a multiliteracies approach examined how effective using a multimodal approach could be paired with classroom reading practices.

Discussion

The YA graphic novel/memoir book club study is a valuable and replicable pedagogical approach for educational leaders, classroom educators, teacher educators, pre-service teachers and curriculum developers. There are clear benefits to the use of traditional texts in secondary English language arts classrooms, but the benefits of using YA graphic novels/memoirs for all parties are quite obvious. The inclusion of YA

graphic novels/memoirs in a book club setting allowed students to walk into the world of literature that used images and words to tell the story as well as engage in practices in which they looked at reading differently with this new and innovative genre. With reading YA graphic novels/memoirs participants engaged in visual literacy practices that brought reading and reading practices into the 21st century.

This study would not have been nearly as successful without several key factors that happened prior to designing the study. Like my YA graphic novel/memoir book club study, I had to embark on a multimodal and multiliteracies journey of my own. If it was not for my own questioning of texts and book choice, inclusion and multicultural classrooms that I encountered during my early years of teaching I would not have found my way into the field of English Education research. If it was not for my taking the Post Colonial Theory in YA Literature course I would not have been led to a world of diverse books that open the doors to many readers I had not been reaching. This class allowed me to see my own white privilege and see the world from a perspective that I had not seen before. If it was not for postcolonial YA Literature class and my reading methods course I would not have read my first graphic novel. By reading the graphic novel I realized that this genre was difficult to read and I was challenged with understanding the text. It was in these multimodal spaces that I learned that there was a need for more research on YA graphic novels/memoirs.

In this study I also took a great deal of time exploring and reading the YA graphic novels/memoirs that the participants read. It was my prior spaces of making meaning that allowed me to choose books that my students could relate to and see themselves. I learned that even though I was challenged by restrictions from my district and the current

state of politics I was able to work around the barriers put in place and include the amazing books that participants read during the study.

This study would also not have been possible if not for my training and ability to, as a practice, include multimodal spaces of learning in my classroom. When designing this study, it came naturally to me to include all of these spaces of multimodal meaning making because I had embedded this into my teaching practice. My daily lessons are inclusive of digital spaces, discussions and multimodal cumulative assignments. I have always found ways for my students to come to understanding in multiple ways. The results of this study would not have been as productive without several ways of making meaningful connections to participants YA graphic novels/memoirs.

In addition, the YA graphic novel/memoir book club offers an innovative contribution to the field of English education. First, it reveals that by assigning a visual analysis as part of the book study unit, participants were supported in their reading and understanding of YA graphic novels/memoirs. Through the visual analysis the books participants read was supported by allowing students to make personal and real-world connections to their books and its characters. In addition, students used their visual analysis assignments to examine the author's purpose and reasoning behind the existence or absence of color, color saturation, images, images placement and text on page through multimodal learning.

The findings reiterate what has been said about YA Literature in past and current research that readers connect to and engage on a deeper level due to real world and personal connections. What is different here is that readers were able to do this with words and images. It is more remarkable that the participants were able to have empathy

and see themselves in the characters and story in YA graphic novels/memoirs. If it wasn't for the ability to make inferences of the meaning of the images and connect those inferences to the text itself, students were better able to connect what they were reading to what is happening in the world today.

In addition it is important to note that in today's politically charged climate in places like Mid-City High School where conversations of what is really happening in the world are discouraged, it is critical that we provide our students with the diverse books such as those in the study, which would allow students to broach difficult topics while engaging in a book they want to read. In addition, by providing these diverse books in the form of YA graphic/novels memoirs we are updating curriculum and providing readers with an opportunity to become visually literate.

Second, because English educators strive to have their students become literate beings. They gauge how well readers comprehend texts and relay the information in different forms. English teachers around the world have students complete annotations in response to text and summarize the information that they read. It is these practices that are indicators of literacy, so when an educator approaches a visual text they must ask themselves how to gauge student literacies. One way is through the use of Doodle annotations. They are incredibly important because they serve as a path to being visually literate. Primarily it allows readers to decipher what they were seeing within the visual text and come to a deeper understanding of the story through explaining visually. In addition, it gives students a way to summarize through doodles the information that was taken away from their books.

Third, the graphic narratives were a great way for students to practice the craft of creating a graphic novel and proved to show that by creating them it supported readers in their understanding of YA graphic novels/memoirs. Some of the common experiences that participants shared were that through creating a graphic narrative they demonstrated personal growth and understanding by learning how to read a YA graphic novel/memoir. Additionally, participants were at first reluctant and did not take this genre seriously. However, through the creation of the graphic narrative participants exhibited a newfound appreciation and better understanding of the genre. Having students come to these conclusions in the study is particularly important because it is important to understand that to properly comprehend a YA graphic novel/memoir that they must first understand how to read the genre. In addition, these findings once again restate the bias of the genre that has been shown in past research. This bias has been known to bleed out to educators and education leaders. The perception that YA graphic novels/memoirs are not serious literature needs to be overcome. Through my research and the findings in this study, it is shown that with the use of a multiliteracies approach and the right books, this bias is possible to overcome.

Fourth, the literature circles involved several components that supported readers in understanding their YA graphic novels/memoir. All of these components worked together to have a tremendous impact on students learning and understanding YA graphic novels/memoirs, but most importantly it showed that all the parts of this multimodal study were working together. The analysis of the data and personal observation on this aspect of the study revealed that this was the space in which participants advanced their understanding of YA graphic novels and memoirs through using the modes (visual

analysis, doodle notes, literature circles) of making meaning as building blocks. This paired with collaboration, discussion and acceptance of other personal points of view resulted in an evolution of participants' understanding of YA graphic novels/memoirs. These findings are important to English Education on varying levels. Primarily it is shown that by using a multiliteracies approach to teaching YA graphic novels/memoirs that readers were able to partake in an evolution of understanding as they encountered each step with the study. These findings also prove that a layered approach should be considered when implementing this genre into English language arts classrooms.

To conclude my findings, I believe it important to address what was brought up earlier in the findings chapter. I discussed the apathy and lack of seriousness with which the students in the case study approached this book study. It was apparent from day one that my students were not interested in learning about this new genre. However, through time, all of them found respectful appreciation and a new found love for YA graphic novels/memoirs. The time when this was apparent was when I observed the initial Flipgrid presentations. As a class, we went outside in the school's courtyard so we could have space to make these video presentations. As I walked around the area, the sound of laughter and enjoyment was everywhere. This moment personally sticks with me because it is something I had not heard in a very long time. Due to the events of the pandemic over the past two years, laughter and even students talking among each other was absent. However on this day, the quiet subsided and it was replaced with laughter and conversations about what participants learned. It was without a doubt that students were excited, talking to each other and just having pure fun while doing schoolwork.

During interviews, the case study participants unanimously shared that the literature circles were the best part of the entire book study unit. All participants at one time or another have said this was the most interesting and enjoyable reading unit that they had ever done in school. In addition, there were many disclaimers in their Flipgrids that reflected their enjoyment. Jordan, in her week three Flipgrid presentation, stated that “This has been the best part of English class and the funniest assignment I have ever had.” Oliver shared that meeting in the literature circles was “cool and interesting.” He just recently asked for suggestions of other YA graphic novels/memoirs. Piper, Raphael, Veronica and Alex all shared that although at the start of the unit they thought this was silly and childish, through the literature circle assignments they came to a newly found appreciation for the genre of YA graphic novels/memoirs. They all really went from a place of loathing to loving their books and it all was due to their sharing and participating in the multimodal literature practices each week.

Implications for English Education

English educators have a responsibility to provide quality instruction that meets the needs of today's diverse learners and ways in which they access and disseminate information. They need to challenge themselves to evaluate and meet the needs of learners today. It is easier for educators to teach what they know or love, but this isn't always what our students need or are even interested in learning. English educators need to step out of their comfort zones and branch out in the following ways: 1) Provide adolescents with ways to decipher and understand information that allows them to become visually literate; 2) Give adolescent readers the ability to read diverse texts that teach them about their world and the world beyond school walls; and 3) Update

traditional reading curricula with the inclusion of YA graphic novels/memoirs paired with a multiliteracies approach.

First, English educators, pre-service teachers and curriculum designers should use this multiliteracies instructional approach to teaching YA graphic novel/memoir as a model for diverse texts. In an age where classrooms are becoming pluralistic and diverse, this genre allows young readers a place to meet and learn from characters that may very well see themselves. They have an opportunity to explore storylines that address race, sexuality, police brutality and oppression through a new and innovative way to read books. YA graphic novels/memoirs have been a way to navigate oppression brought about in the classroom by politically charged climates and district mandates on what teachers can and cannot discuss. This can be done by providing a diverse library of books that allows choice for students while giving them the ability to see themselves in the stories of the characters that they are reading about on the page. The YA graphic novel/memoir books gave students the ability to explore topics that are not easily addressed in classrooms. They are given a safe place to explore, question and understand.

Second, the YA graphic novel/memoir book study unit serves as a path for pre-service educators to understand how to choose and understand diverse texts that they can use in secondary education. Universities should use this study as an example of what pre-service teachers of English language arts must have to address the needs of the pluralistic classrooms in which they teach. All university English education programs should include a class offering that evaluates YA Literature and YA graphic novels/memoirs through a postcolonial lens. This class would allow pre-service teachers

the opportunity to understand the blight of the underrepresented, issues of racism, colonization, marginalization and othering.

Third, this study also shows that there is a lack of training with English educators, pre-service teachers and curriculum designers on how to use critical lenses, like a feminist lens, youth lens, and Marxist lens paired with YA Literature and YA graphic novels/memoirs. By including and using these lenses, adolescent readers will have another opportunity to find books to which they can relate. Although the use of critical lens and theory are a crime in some states, there are still ways, primarily through well-worded discussion questions, that these conversations can take place. Adolescents need a space to observe and engage with the realization of today's world and a YA graphic novel/memoir is a safe place to do so.

Fourth, the research done in my English language arts classrooms provides a way in which all educators can work around parental discourse, district mandates and teaching within a politically charged educational environment. It provides insight and avenues where educators can feel safe selecting and providing books that may raise questions from those outside of the classroom walls. It is a starting point for educators to think first about addressing the needs of their students in such a simple way as providing a good selection of books from which they are given the choice to read.

Last, my findings help inform the field of English education by demonstrating that there are ways to update traditional reading curricula with the inclusion of YA graphic novels/memoirs paired with a multiliteracies approach. This starts with the use of a YA graphic novel/memoir and includes but is not limited to the use of digital platforms as part of learning, summarizing with doodles and engaging in

the act of annotation through doodling. This genre can also update writing practices through the use of graphic novel components as a way to brainstorm and write narratives with a mixture of words and images. Graphic novel techniques can be used to portray a scene from the classics of Shakespeare or as a way to update traditional book projects. The uses are limitless and can bring English language arts classrooms in today's world.

It is my hope that this updated classroom practice will start to close the gap in current English Education research. In addition, it is my hope that English educators start to see the value of YA graphic novels/memoirs and realize the complexity it takes to understand. They are not just children's books or comic strips, YA graphic novels/memoirs are award winning literary works that allow readers to engage in reading practices that allow them to be competitive in the 21st century.

Limitations

As I evaluate my research project, I realize that there are a number of limitations within the study. First is that the study only took place in one English language arts class. The size and focus of the study had limitations in terms of the generalizations and the span of the research. Since the data collected only came from a single class may have led to my sharing more of one case study participant in comparison to another. In future studies it may be recommended that the study takes place in several different English language arts classrooms.

Another limitation was that I had a small sample size of students due to several factors. First, the study took place during the Coronavirus pandemic. It has been well documented that the disruption in learning has had a major impact on students' ability to

learn. From personal observations I found that with the 12th grade classes that I taught that the absence of being at school in person impacted them more socially than academically. Prior to the pandemic these students had a good foundation of learning which was sustained while learning at home. A few things that did impact the study that were directly from the impact of the pandemic were 1) an instability of attendance of the participants led to my only being able to choose from a small pool of participants. On any given day there would be multiple students absent due to the virus or them being in close proximity to the virus, which in turn had them out of school; 2) the students lost the ability to be social and carry on everyday conversations with people; and 3) students were used to engaging solely on computers and digitally so the transition to paper and paper texts led to challenges. I believe these factors may have made it difficult to collect consistent data from more than six participants which were included in the case study. For instance, I can correlate that if there wasn't a pandemic, fewer students would be absent and there would have been a larger pool of participants that have completed all the work. If students were not isolated, they would not have had a disruption in social interaction and only learned through a computer which may have led to the literature circles not being as rich and robust as if the study happened outside of the pandemic.

The final limitation was the availability of books to use within the study and district demands placed within the selection. I spent many hours looking through and reading YA graphic novels/memoirs prior to coming to my final selection. I initially wanted to use the books *Phoolan Devi*, *Rebel Queen* by Claire Fauvel (a book about Phoolan being sold as a sex slave and her ability to escape), *The Times I Knew I Was Gay* by Eleanor Crewes (a story of coming of age and sexual exploration), *Go With the Flow* by

Karen Schneemann (a book about the “tampon revolution”) for the book club study. However, after meeting with the Superintendent of Curriculum and the school's principal it was decided that these books may be “a problem.” Due to the politically charged climate within the school district the impact became a major influence on the teaching curriculum at the school. Student choice was no longer an option within the English language arts classroom and parent permission was not only needed to participate in the study, but the parents also needed to approve the book that the participant chose to read for book club. There were many other books that I would have chosen to include in the study, however due to these restrictions I limited it to the final choices used within the study.

Future Research

This study informs me of my future research through evaluating the current state of English education in regard to reading in writing in secondary classrooms. I have discovered that there is a great need for the use of multimodal learning paired with texts, in this case, YA graphic novels/memoirs needed to update current classroom practices. Our students live in a multimodal, multicultural society and the way they are being taught in school should reflect just that. This research used case study methodology with a secondary English language arts classroom. However, it shows a need for further research using a combination of Multiliteracies theory and YA graphic novels/ memoirs. In evaluation of the current literature I found that there are limited studies that use a multiliteracies approach paired with reading activities and that there are limited studies 1) use a multiliteracies approach paired with reading activities; 2) there is a lack of pedagogical classroom studies using YA graphic novels/memoirs; and 3) there

is a serious deficiency in the research of literature on using a multiliteracies approach while teaching YA graphic novels/memoirs. The hope is that my study will soon be one of many that will provide the field of education with a stronger and fortified wall of research using YA graphic novels/memoirs.

Based on my own experiences of conducting this study, collecting pedagogical research and implementing a classroom research project, I have uncovered several areas in which future research can be explored. Future research should be explored in the relation to YA graphic novels/memoirs in the following areas: 1) Within the English language arts profession, there should be a focus on training teachers, teacher leaders, pre-service teachers, and district leaders, giving them tools to implement the genre within district curriculums; 2) within writing communities such as The National Writing Project and project sites across the country; and 3) focusing on the impact of educators being subjective to working in an oppressive and politically charged environment.

My next project in the use of YA graphic novels/memoirs would be to develop a program to teach educators, pre-services teachers and educational leaders on how to implement these texts into secondary English language arts classrooms. The use of YA graphic novels/memoirs is a relatively new genre and one that does not currently have a welcoming space in English language arts classrooms. This is primarily because of the lack of training on the genre. Research is needed to explore the perception of current educators both prior to training on the genre and after, as well as the implications of implementing these texts into a school's curriculum. Another aspect of educator exploration would be within the pre-service teacher training in reading methods courses.

The question of what happens when ELA educators, leaders and pre-service teachers are given the tools to teach YA graphic novel/memoir needs to be answered.

Another area that needs attention and that I would like to research is pairing writing with YA graphic novels/memoirs. In future studies I would like to work with the local National Writing Project site on how this genre could be paired with classroom writing practices. My goal would be to work with site leaders on how to pair these texts to update writing practices in secondary English language arts classrooms. How can educators use YA graphic novels/memoir to teach the writing of arguments? How can they use them in writing to inform? Currently I have only used graphic narratives as culminating events, but researching how to use them to formulate arguments, as informative pieces or other types of academic writing is something that needs more focus.

There are several considerable ways in which I would like to inform the English Education communities of my work. First, I will share and disseminate information through state and national conferences where I can share firsthand what I have learned from my study. Second, from this dissertation I would like to write a series of articles for publication based within the field of English Education and the teaching of YA literature. Last, my future hopes are to include in my work, books that inform future educators how to teach YA graphic novels/memoirs to any reading methods or YA literature course. These publications will also inform current classroom educators and give them the tools they need to successfully implement and teach YA graphic novels/memoirs.

Last is evaluating the circumstance in which YA graphic novel/memoirs are taught. This research would be reflective of the experiences that I encountered before and during my study. I am unsure how the oppressive political environment in which I work impacted my study, but I do know that it limited my book choice. In addition, I would believe that my study may have had other results if the entire world of YA graphic novels/memoirs was available to participants. I can only imagine how different the outcomes would have been if the students in my study had been able to read more books that they truly felt a connection to and found themselves in the characters or have conversations about oppression and politics without the fear of getting in trouble. The implications of these circumstances deserve future consideration.

This dissertation serves as a framework for my future research, but also it serves as a valuable contribution to the field of English Education. I hope that through this study, educators find a place to feel comfortable with learning about YA graphic novels/memoirs, but also a place where they can learn that using this genre is important to the future of the way students need to learn.

Conclusion

This qualitative classroom-based study on how to teach YA graphic novels/memoirs in a secondary English language arts classroom through a multiliteracies lens that supports the reading and understanding of YA graphic novels/memoirs provides a replicable instructional approach for secondary English language arts teachers. This project serves as a valuable pedagogical outline to guide educators in implementing literature circles using YA graphic novels and memoirs using a multiliteracies approach to instruction. This curricular and instructional approach guides students through multiple

spaces such as digital platforms and discussion groups in which students can make meaning and fully understand this genre. The benefits of this multimodal genre and a multiliteracies approach to reading offers a way for English language arts teachers to bring in diverse and innovative texts for their students at a time when book choice and texts are being scrutinized at the school, district, and national levels. A multiliteracies approach to teaching YA graphic novels shows how the instructional approach to teaching reading can include diverse forms of what counts as literacy that engage students in multiple modes of learning to support unique learning styles, lived experiences, and reading interests.

This project has come out of my own personal experiences as teacher, student and mother. After my own personal realization of the needs for my students in my secondary English language arts classroom, I found that I personally needed to grow as an educator and not be afraid to face the new and unfamiliar. If not for these experiences, I would not have discovered a newfound love for the genre of YA graphic novels/memoirs. By creating, implementing, and evaluating the findings of this study, I have learned that doing this as a teacher and doctoral student is met with many challenges. First is the balance of time and dedication to both. However, as I went through this experience, I found that I used it as teaching moments for my students. I shared my self-doubt, frustrations and my successes. In the end I shared my work in the form of the YA graphic novel/memoir book study unit so my students could benefit from the experience just as much as I did. As for the future, I will continue to build my YA graphic novel/memoir library. I will make time to explicitly teach students how to properly read graphic novels so they can get out of them the same experience as my case study

participants. Finally, I will continue to learn and grow and find new ways to use this genre to help in giving my students the tools it takes to be visually literate in the world today. I hope that this study serves as a way for other not only educators, but adolescent readers to learn to love this genre as much as I have.

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APPENDIX A
PARENTAL CONSENT LETTER

**A Multiliteracies Approach to Teaching YA Graphic Novels
in a Secondary English Language Arts Classroom**

PARENTAL LETTER OF PERMISSION

Dear Parent/Guardian:

I am a graduate student under the direction of Professor Dr. Jessica Early in the English Education Department in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Arizona State University. I am conducting a research study to examine what happens when high school students use multiliteracies to support their understanding of YA literature graphics novels in a high school language arts literature circle book study unit. Specifically, I will explore how the use of visual texts, Socratic discussion, and the use of digital platforms that allows students to make connections to the reading of YA literature graphic novels.

We are inviting your child's participation in a five-week classroom-based study which will involve participating in a multimodal book unit study using YA graphic novels and memoirs. Your child's participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to have your child participate or to withdraw your child from the study at any time, there will be no penalty (it will not affect your child's grade, treatment/care, etc.). Likewise, if your child chooses not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. The study will take place during regularly scheduled class time over a 5-week span. There will be no expected participation outside of the regular school day.

We are asking permission to access students' assignments for research purposes which will include the following:

- Student journals
- Student visual analysis worksheets and annotations
- Student preparation for classroom discussion
- Student Flipgrid video presentations
- Student Padlet (digital) posts
- Student graphic narrative

In addition, students will complete 1 demographic survey, 2 reading habits questionnaires and participate in a 20-minute interview. We are also asking permission to audio record the interviews. Only the research team will have access to these recordings.

Although there may be no direct benefit to your child, the possible benefit of your child's participation is being exposed to new literary studies that have real world implications and applications. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your child's participation. The results of the research study may be published, but your child's name will not be used. All student responses will be anonymous. Their names and information will be removed, and pseudonyms will be associated with their work. This master list is created to link participant identity to the research responses. At no time will the students name, or personal information be used in the study. The de-identified data will be shared with my dissertation committee for the purpose of preparing my dissertation. The results of this study will only be shared in aggregate form and may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your child's name will not be known or used.

If you have any questions concerning the research study or your child's participation in this study, please call me or Dr. Jessica Early at (480) 965-0742

Sincerely,
Heather O'Loughlin

By signing below, you are giving consent for your child _____ (Child's name) to participate in the above study.

Signature

Printed Name

Date

If you have any questions about you or your child's rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you or your child have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788.

APPENDIX B
IRB APPROVAL



EXEMPTION GRANTED

[Jessica Early](#)
[CLAS-H: English](#)
 480/965-0742
Jessica.Early@asu.edu

Dear [Jessica Early](#):

On 11/8/2021 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	A Multiliteracies Approach to Teaching YA Graphic Novels & Memoirs in a Secondary English Language Arts Classroom
Investigator:	Jessica Early
IRB ID:	STUDY00014889
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citi Training Certificate.pdf, Category: Other; • DEMOGRAPHICS SURVEY 11-7-2021.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • District and School Letter of Permission 10-29-2021.pdf, Category: Off-site authorizations (school permission, other IRB approvals, Tribal permission etc); • How to Take Doodle Notes and Analyze Images 11-7-2021.pdf, Category: Participant materials (specific directions for them); • Interview Protocol 11-7-2021.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • IRB Social Behavioral Submission Heather OLoughlin V4.docx, Category: IRB Protocol; • READING HABITS POST Reading Questionaire

	<p>11-7-2021.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • READING HABITS PRE-Questionnaire 11-7-2021.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Reading Roles for Graphic Novel Book Club 11-7-2021.pdf, Category: Participant materials (specific directions for them); • Recruitment Methods Letter 11-7-2021.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Visual Analysis and Doodle Annotations Worksheet 11-7-2021.pdf, Category: Participant materials (specific directions for them); • WRITTEN CHILD ASSENT FORM AGES 15-17 11-7-2021.pdf, Category: Consent Form;
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The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 (1) Educational settings on 11/5/2021.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

If any changes are made to the study, the IRB must be notified at research.integrity@asu.edu to determine if additional reviews/approvals are required. Changes may include but not limited to revisions to data collection, survey and/or interview questions, and vulnerable populations, etc.

REMINDER - All in-person interactions with human subjects require the completion of the ASU Daily Health Check by the ASU members prior to the interaction and the use of face coverings by researchers, research teams and research participants during the interaction. These requirements will minimize risk, protect health and support a safe research environment. These requirements apply both on- and off-campus.

The above change is effective as of July 29th 2021 until further notice and replaces all previously published guidance. Thank you for your continued commitment to ensuring a healthy and productive ASU community.

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Heather-Ann OLoughlin
Elizabeth Durand

Doris Warriner
Heather-Ann O'Loughlin

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. How did the use of doodling and doodle annotations help you to understand your YA graphic novel/graphic memoir?
2. In what ways did the visual analysis help you to understand your YA graphic novel/graphic memoir?
3. In what ways did the literature circles support your understanding of YA graphic novel/graphic memoir?
4. In what ways did using Flipgrid help in your reading and understanding your YA graphic novel/memoir?
5. In what ways did using Padlet help in your reading and understanding your YA graphic novel/memoir?
6. In what ways did creating a graphic narrative help in understanding YA graphic novel/memoir?
7. What did you learn about yourself while creating your graphic narrative?
8. What did you learn about yourself as a reader during this YA graphic novel/memoir unit?

APPENDIX D
DEMOGRAPHICS SURVEY

DEMOGRAPHICS SURVEY

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Age: _____

Grade: _____

GPA: _____

Email Address: _____

Which Gender Do You Most Identify:

Male Female non-Binary

Race/Ethnicity:

Hispanic

Black

Asian/Pacific Islander

American Indian/Alaskan Native

White

First Language Spoken

- English
- Spanish
- Other _____

What is the highest level of education your parents/guardians have received:

- High School Diploma or GED
- Associates
- Bachelors
- Master

- Doctorate
- Other _____

APPENDIX E
BOOK EXPLORATION

Name: _____

Book Exploration

Most times when we pick our books, we will look at the cover or read the back to see what is about. However, there are other ways in which you can learn more about the books you may want to read and that is on the website Goodreads. Your challenge today is to explore the titles of the books listed below and then narrow them down to three that you may possibly want to read. You will eventually get to choose one of the three books for our book club. Here is what you have to choose from.

Hey Kiddo

A Long Way Down (The Graphic Novel)

Speak (The Graphic Novel)

Dragon Hoops

I am Alfonso Jones (Graphic Novel)

You Brought me the Ocean

Almost an American Girl

I Was Their American Dream

Step 1: Go to Goodreads

Step 2: Look up the books that are listed above. Glance through what they are about, where they take place and who the main characters may be.

Step 3: Narrow your selection down to 3 books that you would like to read and list them below:

Step 4: Fill out the information for the 3 books you chose below

Book 1 Title: _____

Authors name: _____

Explain the reasons why you want to read this book:

Book 2 Title: _____

Authors name: _____

Explain the reasons why you want to read this book:

Book 3 Title: _____

Authors name: _____

Explain the reasons why you want to read this book:

APPENDIX F

HOW TO TAKE DOODLE NOTES AND ANALYZE IMAGES

How to Take Doodle Notes and Analyze Images

As you read through your graphic novels you will analyze visual images and create your own doodle notes.

Part 1- Doodle Annotations (See Example on the Back)

1. Choose a line, passage or quote, image or page that you connected with while you were reading.
2. Record the page and location of the images/words on the Doodle Note Sheet
3. Create a section where you explain how this connects to the Youth Lens and the text. Use doodles and words to get your message across.
4. Next, create a section and doodle about how these images and words connect to you or self.
5. Then doodle how this image/words connect to the focus of the week

Part 2- Visual Analysis

1. Continuing with the image that you used in Part I. Answer the questions on the back of the Doodle Sheet

Part 3- Discussion Preparation

1. Each person in the group will be assigned a role for the discussion for the week.
2. After reading for the week, prepare your part of the discussion- See discussion roles expectations.

Part 3- Book Discussion & Group Graphic Explanation

Name: _____

Visual Analysis

Page # _____

Location of Image _____

1. Describe the image using graphic novel terminology:
 1. When you first looked at this image, what was your reaction? (Choose an emotion)
 1. What is it that you are drawn to most? Why did it catch your eye?
 1. What else did you notice about this image? What is in the foreground? What is in the background? What are the frames around your image?
 1. What are the images and the words on the page trying to convey to the reader?

DO YOUR DOODLE ANNOTATIONS ON THE BACK

DOODLE ANNOTATIONS

Using the image/words that you chose to perform the visual analysis upon, complete using doodle notes/annotations to complete the areas below. Some things to doodle: What you found interesting? What did you question? How did you feel about the reading? What did you learn? Who did you most connect with? What is the Setting? Who are the characters? How has the plot structure changed?

APPENDIX G

LITERATURE CIRCLE ROLES AND PREPARATION

Name: _____ Book: _____

Literature Circle Book Discussion Preparation
Image Mage

The Image Mage is known best for the magic that they perform while paying attention to the **visual aspect** of the book. **They are asked to interpret the importance of the images on a selected page.** As the Image Mage you are responsible for the following during your group book discussion:

1. What page will you be focusing upon in your discussion? _____
2. Write down your interpretation of the images on the page (**Don't share yet! Wait until you have your group members interpret**).

1. Have your group members read and analyze the images on the page
2. Next ask them what how they interpret the images and write their responses in the space provided below (use the back of the page if needed):

Name: _____ Book: _____

Literature Circle Book Discussion Preparation
Gutter Dweller

The Gutter Dwellers role is to live between the panels. They have the job of **analyzing placement and intention of the images of the page**. Why is the page arranged the way that it is arranged? How does this impact the story? As the Gutter Dweller you are responsible for the following during your group book discussion:

1. What page will you be focusing upon in your discussion? _____
2. Write down your analysis of the placement of the images on the page (Don't share yet! Wait until you have your group members interpret).

1. Have your group members read and analyze the image placement on the page.
2. Next ask them their analysis of the placement of the images on the page and write their responses in the space provided below (use the back of the page if needed):

Name: _____ Book: _____

Literature Circle Book Discussion Preparation
Text Maven

The Text Mavens role is to consider why the words are used on the page. They answer the question, **why are these words important to the story and why are they not just using images?** As the Text Maven you are responsible for the following during your group book discussion:

1. What page will you be focusing upon in your discussion? _____
2. Write down your own answer to the question why these words are important to the story and why they are just not using images? (**Don't share yet! Wait until you have your group members interpret**).

1. Have your group members read and analyze the words on the page.
2. Next ask them their answer the question why these words are important to the story and why they are just not using images? And write their responses in the space provided below (use the back of the page if needed):

Name: _____ Book: _____

Literature Circle Book Discussion Preparation
Palette Cleanser

The Palette Cleansers role is much like using an artist's color palette. **They analyze and explain the importance of color and the saturation of color on the page.** As the Palette Cleanser you are responsible for the following during your group book discussion:

1. What page will you be focusing upon in your discussion? _____
2. Write down your own analysis of the importance of color and its use of saturation on the page. **(Don't share yet! Wait until you have your group members interpret).**

1. Have your group members read and analyze the words on the page.
2. Next ask them their own analysis of the importance of color and its use of saturation on the page. and write their responses in the space provided below (use the back of the page if needed):

APPENDIX H
SYNERGIZER INSTRUCTION

Group Members: _____, _____, _____, _____

The Synergizer Group Flip Grid Presentation

In this part of your discussion, you will bring together and discuss all aspects that you talked about in literature circle discussion. How does all this information make sense together? Below you will write an outline of talking points that you will share on a FlipGrid presentation. Be interesting and entertaining while explaining what you learned. The link to FlipGrid can be found on today's slides.

APPENDIX I
GRAPHIC NARRATIVE ASSIGNMENT

Graphic Narrative

You will complete a graphic narrative assignment that has 2 individual components. As you know a narrative is a story about yourself that has a specific focus. This time instead of writing, you will complete a two-page graphic narrative. The topic is about your experience reading your YA Literature Graphic Narrative/Memoir and Doodling. What did you learn about yourself reading your book and doodling? What did you learn about the process of reading a new genre? What are you walking away from this experience with that is either positive or negative?

Step 1: Reading Experience Reflection

- Create a document in Google Documents- Name it Writing Reflection
- Next take a minute to think about the answers to the questions above
- Respond to the questions in multi paragraphs using great grammar, spelling and punctuations
- Respond using the genre specific vocabulary for YA Literature Graphic Narrative/Memoir
- Submit to Google Classroom under the assignment named Reading Experience Reflection

Step 2: Creating a Digital Copy of Your Graphic Narrative in Storyboard That

- Go to <https://sites>.
- Then click on the Clever Icon
- There you should see an Icon for Storyboard That
- Open the Application
- [Watch this tutorial](#)
- Play around with the platform
- Create your story! (Note due to limitations of the platform you may not be able to organize the panels in the way you did on your draft! Do the best that you can with what options you have.
- The assignment automatically turns into me when completed

APPENDIX J
READING HABITS PRE-QUESTIONNAIRE

READING HABITS PRE-QUESTIONNAIRE

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

1. On a scale of 1- 10 identify how much you consider yourself a reader?

1-----5-----10

2. What was the name of the last book you read for Independent Reading?

3. What genre of books do you generally read? Choose all that apply. *

- Non Fiction
- Fiction
- Action & Adventure
- Coming of Age
- Graphic Novels
- Memoir
- Mystery
- Horror
- Science Fiction
- Dystopian
- Fantasy
- Drama
- Crime
- Sports
- Historical Fiction
- Romance

4. Have you ever read a Graphic Novel?

- Yes
- No

5. If you have read a graphic novel, which one did you read?

6. Why did you choose this particular book?

- It was recommended by a friend or teacher
- It looked like fun to read
- It was easier to read than a traditional text
- I was drawn to the pictures
- I just picked it up off the shelf

7. What is your opinion/perception of graphic novels? Who reads them? Why do they read them? What are the topics?

8. Do you read for fun?

- Yes
- No

9. Do you Doodle?

- Yes
- No

10. If you doodle, explain when you do it most and why you doodle.

11. In what ways do you engage in visual literacy?

- Online Videos
- Social Media Platforms
- Blogs
- Online Books, Magazine or Newspapers
- Infographics
- Powerpoint/Slide Shows
- Flip Grid
- Padlet
- Poll Everywhere

12. Do you consider yourself visually literate?

- Yes
- No

13. How would you define being visually literate?

14. Do you like to write:

- Yes
- No

15. What types of writing do you like to do in or out of school?

16. What types of reading do you like to do in or outside of school?

APPENDIX K
POST READING HABITS QUESTIONNAIRE

READING HABITS POST-QUESTIONNAIRE

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

1. On a scale of 1-10 (ten being the highest) rate how much you believe you have become visually literate.

1-----5-----10

2. What helped you most in becoming visually literate? Explain your response using specific names and terms we used in this unit of study?
3. Will you continue to use doodling?
- Yes
 - No
4. Explain your response to question three here. Where and when would you use doodling? If not, explain why you will not use doodling in the future.
5. Would you read a graphic novel again?
- Yes
 - No

6. Explain your response to question 5 here

7. How comfortable were you in analyzing and discussing graphic novels in your group?

1 _____ 5 _____