DEVELOPING PRESERVICE TEACHERS’ CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES AND PRACTICES

TEACHING MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE

by

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Developing Preservice Teachers’ Critical Perspectives and Practices Teaching Multicultural Literature

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Abstract

Despite the widespread commitment of many colleges of education to advance equity and social justice using critical theories, many students exit teacher preparation programs without a tangible idea of how to enact critical theories within their classrooms. The dominant approach to fostering critical practices among preservice teachers – Multiculturalism – is limited by focusing on cosmetic shifts that maintain the status quo. As demands for social justice increase alongside shifts in the demographic composition of schools, there is an urgent need for more transformative theoretical lenses and models for teacher training that address the chasm between the ideals of critical theory and teaching practice.

Multicultural literature is viewed as a potentially powerful lever for critical teaching, but a similar gap exists between preservice teachers’ understanding and practice. The goal of this study is to develop preservice teachers’ critical perspectives and practices to empower transformative teaching in their future classrooms. The research questions explored are:

RQ 1: How do preservice teachers participating in a “Reading for Social Justice Project” in their Children’s Literature course understand, value, and apply a Critical Multicultural perspective to expose and critique social issues and themes in multicultural children’s literature that address issues of race, gender, and/or socioeconomic status?

RQ2: How do these preservice teachers critically design, enact, and reflect on a multicultural literature-based lesson plan project?

This qualitative study presents two case studies and results from analysis of 23 preservice teachers’ reflections on the multi-week unit reading and teaching with resistance literature. These
future teachers use Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) Critical Analytical lens as a tool to unpack power, deconstruct dominant ideologies, investigate intersectionality, interrogate story closure, and aim for intersectional, agential instruction. They grappled with ways to move from examination to disruption. They expressed willingness, responsibility, and commitment to using the critical lens in their future classroom and rated the project as useful in their teacher preparation. Findings suggest this kind of project supports the use of the critical lens as a tool for interrogation, offers possibilities for using literature for social transformation, and has implications for theory, research, and practice in preservice teacher education.

**Keywords:** Preservice Teacher Education, Children’s Literature, Critical Theories, Multicultural Education, Critical Multicultural Education
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Study Rationale, Background, and Problem Statement

The quest to ensure that the U.S. school system is culturally responsive to the growing shift in the country’s demographic patterns has become one of the most urgent challenges in the country’s education system. As many scholars note, the demographic profile of the student body in the K-12 system is becoming increasingly diverse, whereas the school system remains dominated by White cultural values and practices (Bang, 2017; Banks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1992). Facilitated by a long history of systemic racism and inequality (Burke, 2018; Du Bois, 1903; hooks, 1992; Lareau, 2011; Welton et al., 2018), a relatively unchanging teacher profile that is mainly composed of White, middle-class, female teachers (Glenn, 2015; Howard, 2016; Ladson- Billings, 1995; NCES, 2018a; Sleeter, 2008) and a lack of investment in educational resources that challenge the hegemony of White values (Bell, 2004; Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Charbeneau, 2009; hooks, 1992; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995), the asymmetry between the profile of the student body and the cultural practices and values of the school system has become a contemporary symbol of the widespread White ethnocentrism in schools.

Given the hegemony of White culture in the school system, curriculum has been characterized by Eurocentricity (Aldridge, 2006; Desai, 2014; Kohl, 1995; Mendoza & Reese, 2001; Morrow, 2003; Piper 2015; Souto-Manning & Emdin, 2020). This has been particularly evident in the texts that we ask children to read. Nancy Larrick’s seminal 1965 study, “The All-White World of Children’s Books” put it into numbers. Out of more than 5,000 picture books, less than one percent reflected any contemporary images of African Americans. The Cooperative Children’s Book Center (CCBC) in the School of Education at the University of
Wisconsin-Madison has been systematically computing diversity statistics in children’s books published annually. In 1998, only six percent of children’s books were written or illustrated by a person of color and/or had themes representing minority cultures. At the time, 30 percent of the U.S. population was non-white. In 2004, multicultural titles had increased to 11 percent of the books published. The Cooperative Children’s Book Center in School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison surveyed the 3,134 books published in 2018, creating the infographic in Figure 1.1, capturing the lack of multicultural texts published. Their 2019 analysis shows that publication rates of the books depicting characters from diverse background remain imbalanced (CCBC, October 27, 2020).

The CCBC’s 2021 analysis of Children’s books published by and/or about BIPOC and P.O.C. in the U.S. since reports trends of positive change since 2014, which reflect varying, inching increase in diversity of publications, but warn that overwhelmingly publishing trends remain scare (CCBC, 2021). Echoing these statistics, Mendoza (2001) declares that “Although demographics of U.S. classrooms are becoming more diverse, the curriculum remains heavily defined by European and European American authors, characters, images, experiences and cultural norms” (p. 6). These demographic realities have been named a cultural and racial mismatch (Harper, 2018; Larson & Irvine, 1999) and still exist today.

As a response there has been a paradigm shift in the United States in a call for curriculum to better reflect students within our classrooms through the incorporation of multicultural literature and an increase in attention to the preparation of literacy teachers using multicultural perspectives (Xu, 2000). Texts from diverse sources of knowledge encourages a multiplicity of perspectives in line with the realities of a pluralistic society (Botelho & Rudman, 2009; Dávila, 2015). While the incorporation of more diverse literature in classrooms, and therefore teacher preparation programs, is intended to better reflect the lives of our students, merely promoting representation in literature without adequate teacher training has led to implementation challenges (Glenn, 2015; Hendrix-Soto & Mosley-Wetzel, 2019; Ukpokodu, 2003; Wetzel et al., 2019). The challenge is that teachers tend to integrate multicultural literature in uncritical and even harmful ways. Scholars such as Ladson-Billings (1992; 1995a), Banks (2003), Gay (2010), and Sleeter (2012) assert that teachers are not equipped with the cultural repertoires to enact culturally relevant or culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014).

Potential dangers of these uncritical presentations of diverse literature in elementary classrooms/teacher preparation include racial stereotyping (Sleeter, 2012; Solórzano & Yosso,
2001), color blindness (Bonilla-Silva, 2006; Sims, 1983), essentialist views (May, 1999), “othering” (Nieto, 1994; Rogoff, 2003; Said, 1995; Ukpokodu, 2003) and deficit thinking (Nieto & Bode, 2008; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). Among others, Osorio (2018) argues for multicultural literature to be used as a classroom tool more than just a prop, stating, “It is more important what you do with the literature than just having it in the classroom” (p. 47). That is, many teachers tend to a) merely add on texts that feature characters of, or are authored by, under-represented groups, based on the need to tick checkboxes, rather than deeply engaging with the narratives they advance and b) fail to sufficiently interrogate issues of power within texts in ways that reproduce social asymmetries and inequalities (Banks, 1994; Nieto, 1992; Sleeter & Grant, 1987; Ukpokodu, 2003).

One solution to this challenge is to better equip teachers with theoretical and methodological training in critical theories and pedagogies within teacher education. Empirical research in preservice teacher suggests that adopting a critical stance in teacher training better equips teachers to teach a diverse pool of students in ways that recognize and value their cultural contributions as knowledge producers (Banks & Banks, 1995) and to cultivate critical consciousness when attending to the constructions and implications of texts (Botelho & Rudman, 2009; Freire, 1970; Ladson-Billings, 1995). In a review of the past decade of literacy teacher preparation, Wetzel et al. (2019) found that “while there has been an uptake of frameworks of multicultural education, culturally responsive pedagogies, critical literacy, and others into literacy teacher preparation” (p. 138) there is limited research on how teacher preparation can foster desired outcomes.

Despite the widespread commitment of many colleges of education to adopting the principles of equity and social justice using critical theories, many pre-service teachers exit
teacher preparation programs without a tangible idea of how to enact critical theories within their classrooms (Brindley & Laframboise, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; May & Sleeter, 2010). Preservice teachers are more likely to have taken literacy methods classes that center reading methods on improving student’s decoding and comprehension of texts, rather than equipping preservice teachers with the critical thinking skills to deeply analyze and interrogate them (May & Sleeter, 2010). An uncritical approach creates classroom environments that often foster the passive consumption of texts through the provision of scripted and standardized instruction (Flores et al. 2019; Milner, 2013; Sleeter & Carmona, 2016; Yoon, 2013). This leaves graduates more prepared to read the word rather than read the world (Freire, 1970; 2000; Freire & Macedo, 1987). The purpose of the study is to prepare preservice teachers to understand and apply a Critical Multicultural perspective to the selection, analysis, and teaching of multicultural children’s literature as a tool to enact principles and practices of critical, equity-oriented instruction. To begin, I locate myself in this work, and share my own story of how as a young teacher committed to social justice, I became aware of the gap between my intentions and my ability to teach multicultural literature in my Chicago public school classroom.

**Situating Myself in the Study**

My intersecting identities as a White female from a middle-class family mirror those of the majority of the elementary educator workforce, and my experience teaching public school on the south side of Chicago to children from primarily African American families adds to the statistic of teachers who are culturally mismatched with their children. My freshly printed certificate from my teacher education program left me equipped with good intentions to diversify the curriculum for my thirty-four fifth graders. The reality of what that meant became apparent one morning during our English Language Arts block. While students surrounded me in my
rocking chair on the rug, I read *Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down* (2010) by award winning African American author Andrea Davis Pinkney, and illustrator Brian Pinkney. I had selected this text for its poetic prose, vivid images, and its positive message about the fight for civil rights and integration. I was developing a passion for literature that showcased resistance movements, and this one, set in the South during the height of the civil rights movements of the 1960’s, mirrored my students’ African American identities, and was ripe with a happy ending. On the final page of the book, it reads: “After years of praying for laws to change, when they were so hungry for equality, the young people finally got what they ordered” (p. 32). I looked around me and saw a sea of Black, only sometimes smiling, faces and down at my own, well-intentioned, White hands holding the book. It was then I knew it was not enough to stop there. I recall asking myself, “How can I sit here in one of the most segregated and unequal public-school systems in the country and celebrate integration as if it has been achieved? I could not let my students, or myself, smile at the happy ending of this story and move on. How could I, like the characters, take action? It had to get critical. It had to be with my students. So how?”.

This story is one of many anecdotes of my attempts at teaching a more critical multicultural education. I saw that texts could be a route for acts of resistance to showcase injustices and inequities, but I knew showcasing them and then closing the book was not enough. I felt that as a teacher, it was my responsibility to enable students to act upon the unveiled injustices. However, the challenge was that like many other White female teachers, I lacked the critical approach to foster opportunities for agency. What I was trying to design, as a well-intentioned White woman from high income suburbs teaching in an urban, low income, African American classroom, was culturally relevant curriculum. I reflected that
while my teacher preparation program motivated me to enact critical curriculum, the program had not provided me with the tools of critical pedagogy.

I made it my quest to become a more critical teacher educator who did more than tout the importance of diverse representation in literature and offer vague biddings for more critical work. I became a curriculum developer, seeing books as sites for social justice. I believed in and sought to train teachers to see the power of purposeful text selection and teaching with multicultural literature. Through supporting my in-service teachers doing justice work through the literacy curriculum I crafted, I saw teachers as agents with the potential to transform the lives of students, and therefore our future. To lead this work, I craved the acquisition of more training, rather than just trial and error. I began my Ph.D. program studying Literacy, Curriculum, and Instruction. In my first literacy seminar with Dr. Silvia Noguerón-Liu, I was introduced to Sims-Bishop (1990) whose wise words captured the opportunity I knew books to be:

Books are sometimes windows, offering views of worlds that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange. These windows are also sliding glass doors, and readers have only to walk through in imagination to become part of whatever world has been created or recreated by the author. When lighting conditions are just right, however, a window can also be a mirror. Literature transforms human experience and reflects it back to us, and in that reflection, we can see our own lives and experiences as part of a larger human experience. (p. xi)

Rudine Sims-Bishop captured what I was trying to do in my fifth-grade urban classroom with *Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down* (2010). I was offering this text to my students as a mirror to their own lives and history reflected in the curriculum. This text also
served as a window into another world, the past, for us all, and for me, an unjust history my ancestors had not lived. What I had intuitively done was select this text as a sliding glass door, to inspire agency and activism. What I had not done, was use the words and illustrations on the pages to read the world and activate my students and myself to become agents of change.

My experience resonates with that of many other teachers and has been the impetus for this research project, which seeks to develop preservice teachers’ critical perspectives and practices teaching multicultural literature. As a preservice teacher educator and instructor of Children’s Literature and Reading Methods courses at a western university, I offer this anecdote to my university students in an attempt to show how the realities of the cultural mismatch crisis facing our country (NCES, 2018b; Nieto, 2002), paired with uncritical multicultural instruction, and has the potential to reproduce hegemonic practices (Wetzel et al., 2019).

The questions I asked myself silently as I sat in the rocking chair in room 303 have evolved as I teach university students in literacy teacher education. In this study, we read this same book about a lunch counter sit-in, still riddled with sticky notes from my past attempts, and use critical theories to ask: How do I critique the fairy-tale ending and instead interrogate the issues of power, examining inequity and injustice? How can I use this moment in history and connect it to the current sociopolitical context? How can I use a more intersectional approach to tie racial segregation to class, gender, and other marginalized identities? What can I do when teaching to use this book as a vehicle to resist and refashion the status quo?

For this study, I include this book with other selected pieces of multicultural “resistance literature” featuring social movements of the past and current times in a “Reading for Social Justice Project” unit embedded in a children’s literature elementary education course. This project evolved out of my collaboration with the other children’s literature
instructors, Dr. Bridget Dalton, Dr. Francisco Torres, and Erica Caasi. As a teacher educator, I continue to name my position as a White ally actively “reading against the grain” (Cochran-Smith, 1991; Simon, 1992), working against the reproduction of inequity and injustice, modeling reflexivity, and joining students in the pursuit of critical theories that can actually translate into practice. I utilize Critical Multiculturalism and Critical Pedagogies as theories informing the preparation of teachers, specifically in the context of teaching multicultural literature, to center justice and agency for more equitable classrooms, schools, and society.

**Theoretical Approaches**

This study is broadly situated in Critical Multiculturalism theory, which arose as a direct challenge to liberal or benevolent forms of multicultural education’s response to ethnocentrism in the curriculum. It seeks to move education beyond the mere incorporation of diverse texts to see and interrogate issues of power and sociopolitical relations in embedded in language and literature. The revival of Critical Multiculturalism in teacher education explicitly names the shortcomings and dangers of Multiculturalism and uncritical curriculum. Critical Multiculturalism calls for more than reading diverse texts, but seeing that embedded in texts are power relations, in order to craft a pathway that creates the classroom as a space that allows for broader, more equitable discourse and actions that challenge existing power structures. Critical Multiculturalism in teacher education pushes teachers beyond surface level adoption and blind, uncritical incorporation of diverse texts, in efforts towards solidarity and critique (Nieto & Bode, 2008), resistant reading practices (Botelho & Rudman, 2009), and self-reflexivity to interrupt the reproduction of systems of dominance to reinvent of social rules to restructure social order (Banks, 1995).
More specifically, I apply Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) Critical Multicultural theory and analytic framework to the design and enactment of the RSJ Project. It centers justice by supporting the development of a consciousness of the power of texts by calling into question the systems of power and inequity and train teachers to be empowered agents of change. I draw on these theories and a body of work in education to develop and teach the “Reading for Social Justice Project” to offer preservice teachers opportunities for theoretical training in critical text analysis partnered with a cycle of collaborative lesson planning, feedback and conferring, lesson enactment, and group and individual reflections to allow insights into how preservice teachers understand, value, and use a critical multicultural approach to teach multicultural children’s literature. This study aims to provide opportunities for preservice teachers to develop the perspective and tools to take a critical approach to children’s literature that empowers transformative teaching to engender social justice in their future classrooms.

Overview of Research Design

This qualitative study presents two case studies and the results from analysis of 23 preservice teachers’ “Reading for Social Justice Project” reflections while enrolled in a Children’s Literature course. I employ Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) Critical Multicultural perspective as an analytic tool while working collaboratively on a multicultural children’s literature unit. The experiences in the multi-week unit center around Critical Multicultural Analysis of their chosen picture book from an instructor curated list reflecting the theme of “resistance literature.” The purpose of the study is to provide opportunities for preservice teachers to develop perspectives and tools to take a critical approach to children’s literature that empowers transformative teaching to engender social justice in their future classrooms. The project offers undergraduate students’ opportunities to apply Critical Multicultural theory to
expose and critique social issues and themes in Children’s Literature that address issues of race, gender, and/or socioeconomic status. Through a paper and a lesson plan project that includes a small group teaching demonstration and oral reflective debrief session and an individual written reflection, the research questions that I seek to better understand are:

RQ 1: How do preservice teachers participating in a “Reading for Social Justice Project” in their Children’s Literature course understand, value, and apply a Critical Multicultural perspective to expose and critique social issues and themes in multicultural children’s literature that address issues of race, gender, and/or socioeconomic status?

RQ2: How do these preservice teachers critically design, enact, and reflect on a multicultural literature-based lesson plan project?

To construct the case studies, I critically analyze multiple data sources, drawing heavily on Botelho & Rudman’s (2009) multi-layered lens of Critical Multicultural Analysis as an analytic tool to help understand how preservice teachers can begin to understand their own roles and power in order to disrupt and transform it. In the remainder of this dissertation, I present my conceptual framework and literature review, methods, findings, discussion, and conclusion.
CHAPTER II

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Drawing on broader critical theory and pedagogy traditions, I situate my study primarily in Critical Multiculturalism, applying Botello and Rudman’s (2009) theory and analytical framework to the design and enactment of a Reading for Social Justice unit in an undergraduate Children’s Literature course. I also use this framework as an analytic tool to critically examine students’ perspectives and products (critical paper, lesson plan). A secondary focus is the translation of that theory into critical pedagogies. Together, these theories cast light on power relations and interactions between people and institutions, open a discursive space, and promote an active stance; the lens aims to empower teachers and students as both participants and producers to engender transformative action (Freire, 1970).

In my study, I explore the role of diverse children’s literature as a vehicle for developing preservice teachers’ knowledge, values, and practices teaching diverse literature. The following sections, I explain the conceptual underpinnings that informed study design and analysis and introduce the conceptual framework informed by critical theories. I review teacher education literature that seeks to cultivating critical educators, foster critical classroom environments, and preparing preservice teachers using literature as a site for transformation. I conclude the chapter by recognizing teacher education programs have the opportunity and responsibility to prepare our future teachers with a critical lens to towards a more equitable and just education.

Conceptual Framework

The Power of Schools, Curriculum, and Teachers as Transformative Agents

In this study, I situate schools as powerful and repressive institutions of Western society (as described by Foucault, 1980), and the mechanism of power within schools “reaches into the
very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives” (p. 39). Said (1993) and others (e.g., Apple, 1979; Ball & Cohen, 1996; Bourassa, 2011; McLaren & Jaramillo, 2007) have conceptualized the curriculum as a form of empire wherein texts function as sites of social control that constrains and controls both knowledge and teaching. Perceived this way, curricula functions as a transmission of norms, values, and beliefs that are quietly conveyed through curriculum (Giroux & Penna, 1979). Curriculum is conceptualized as a form of social inheritance, where knowledge is passed down from holders of power through socialization (Martin 2002; Sims-Bishop, 1990).

Because the institution of school acts as a socialization mechanism, it is important for teachers to understand that texts and language position and construct individuals in institutions, and impact how people make sense of the world (Luke, 1997). Said’s (1993) apt conception of the double-edged character of texts sees texts as both mechanisms of dominance and as an opportunity for resistance, poses fundamental implications to the training of teachers, who by virtue of being key mediators in the (re)production of texts within schools, have a unique position to advance social justice (Bakhtin, 1981; Foucault, 1980).

**Critical Theories in Education**

Critical theorists see teachers as key agents in the resistance of the (re)production of unjust hegemonic dominations by (re)configuring the ways in which students encounter, internalize, and reflect on texts. Critical theories inform an approach to education that prepares teachers to see themselves as actors shaping the mechanisms of power. Critical approaches to education encourage teachers and teacher educators to see their role, responsibility, and their
positions as moral leaders (Martin, 2002) who have power over what is constituted as
knowledge.

Transformational approaches to education offer teachers a route to challenge the
tendency to act as unwitting transmitters of forms of domination in the school system (Bakhtin,
1981). When educators recognize that language is neither neutral nor value-free, and that reason
can never be separated from power, we can more readily see the reality that education and the act
of teaching is political and that curriculum is not neutral and, therefore, requires power analysis
(Apple, 1992; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1998; Foucault, 1982; Freire, 1972; Giroux & McLaren,
1986; Kincheloe, 2005; Nias, 1996; Nieto, 2008). In order to be equipped to transfer critical
theories into practice, educators need more training on power analysis and preparation to enact a
resistance to textual ideology (Braden & Rodriguez, 2016; Lewis, 2000) and better training to
bring critical theories into pedagogy, to create a more liberating and emancipatory space through
literacy.

Critical theories help frame literacy instruction as an opportunity to enact social justice to
resist oppression, challenge injustices, and engage in social action to change the status quo
(Christensen, 2000; Fetterley, 1978; Freire, 1970; Janks, 2000; Lewison et al., 2002; Luke, 2012;
Shor, 2012). In the context of literacy teacher education, critical theories can help students and
teachers develop a consciousness of the power of texts by calling into question the inequity of
the systems of power, and the structures that institutionalize and transmit ideology. To
reconstruct texts is to take social action (Vasquez, 2014). Critical theories recognize the power of
and within text and exercises the power of language uses to question, deconstruct, and
reconstruct (Comber, 2001; Janks, 2010; Lewison et al.; 2002; Luke & Freebody, 1997; Shor
2012). Through critical analysis, future teachers and teacher educators see that curricula
constantly positions people and groups, either encouraging or discouraging students from questioning the status quo (Cummins, 1989; Shor & Freire, 1987) and therefore literacy instruction can be an opportunity to resist. Critical Multiculturalism is centered as an approach to equip teachers with theoretical and analytical approach to resistance and reconstruction.

**Critical Multiculturalism.** Critical Multiculturalism is a radical framework used in literacy to confront inequities with the goal of social justice (May & Sleeter, 2010; Nieto & Bode, 2010). Critical Multiculturalism not only values diversity as a resource that enriches U.S. society and its schools (Banks, 1995); the theories call to increase teachers’ exposure to diverse texts (Ladson-Billings, 2004) and to bridge knowledge gaps (Contreras & Wilhelm, 2011), as they translate such theories to a broadened curriculum that can prevent the further alienation and exclusion of minoritized people in curriculum (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Nieto, 1994). The framework responds to the issues in uncritical Multicultural Education by offering an anti-ethnocentric approach (Sims-Bishop, 1990), valuing the individual (Nieto, 1994), increasing exposure (Ladson-Billings, 2004), avoiding essentialism (May, 1999), and addressing deficit perspectives (Nieto & Bode, 2008). Acuff (2018) calls Critical Multiculturalism “a power-focused upgrade of multiculturalism that calls for a critique of power and demands recognition that racism and other discriminations are enmeshed in the fabric of our social order” (p. 35). Through diversification, the critical part of the theory aims to go beyond inclusion of diverse curriculum and uncritical additions, beyond Multiculturalism’s “superficial studies of cultural artifacts and inauthentic ethnic additives” (May & Sleeter, 2010, p. 232) to open a discursive space for the interrogation inequitable systems (Botelho & Rudman, 2009).

Essential to Critical Multiculturalism is a critical examination of relationships of how knowledge is produced the connections between power and privilege and analyses of the
functions of texts as systems that construct meaning (Banks & Banks, 1995). Critical Multiculturalism argues that educators must read more than just the words, and critically read hegemony and issues of social power in the texts to expose the constant construction of difference that positions readers and perpetuate social inequalities (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). Engaging Critical Multiculturalism is recognizing “that culture reproduces power relations and constructs experiences that preserve the privilege of white supremacy, patriarchy, class elitism, and other oppressive forces” (Brown-Manning, 2020, p. 7). To enact Critical Multiculturalism is to critically analyze the power in and of text to expose how power constructs difference to position readers and perpetuate social inequalities (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). Teachers equipped with a Critical Multicultural perspective recognize that both schooling and texts contain social constructions of individuals within a historical and sociopolitical context (Botelho & Rudman, 2009).

**Critical Multiculturalism and Intersectionality.** Critical Multiculturalism is a framework that intentionally names and attends to multiple positions of power simultaneously. Critical Multiculturalism is informed by broader intersectional theories that seek to address inequities across multiple dimensions. Kimberlé Crenshaw, a scholar of law, critical race theory, and Black feminist legal theory, coined the term intersectionality (1989), a lens that illuminates the interlocking forms of power and marginalization. For example, race and gender intersect for Black women and to consider race or gender alone, would result in partial representations and understandings. The purpose of Critical Multicultural Analysis is to improve reader’s “ability to recognize, confront, and dismantle oppression at the intersections of multiple identities” (Sloan et al., 2018, p. 1) to unveil of how oppression manifests in different groups to see marginalization in multiple, interconnected ways (Brown-Manning, 2020). This lens draws out
the intersections among these structures and identities and “contextualizes culture and reveals its fluidity” (Acuff, 2018, p. 35). This intersectionality brings nuance to the conceptualization of multiculturalism (Clark, 2015). By utilizing the Critical Multicultural lens, teachers can no longer adopt a singular, colorblind, decontextualized, neutral, passive approach to education, and must instead explicitly state the historical and contemporary mechanisms of oppression and the institutionalization of unequal power relations (May & Sleeter, 2010).

**Critical Multiculturalism and Agency.** Critical Multiculturalism arises as a challenge to liberal ideals in multiculturalism that does little to actually change the status quo. It demands that readers, especially teachers, cease to be passive consumers of texts and interrogate the power dynamics within and beyond the text. In this regard, it opens avenues of agency by enabling teachers to critique and potentially counter hegemonic structures that are reified by texts. Educators drawing on Critical Multiculturalism are no longer passive consumers of texts and reproducers of hegemonic structures, rather they see avenues of agency which enable them to take more informed action on social issues (Banks 2002; Banks & Banks, 1995; Botelho & Rudman, 2009). Critical Multiculturalism charges teachers to act as “a reform movement aimed at changing the content and processes within schools” (Sleeter & Grant, 1985, p. 421). The theory promotes teacher agency in that it “helps teachers dismantle Western, normalized narratives and produce counter-hegemonic curriculum” (Acuff, 2018, p. 35). Ultimately, the theory seeks to transform structures (May & Sleeter, 2010). The transformation of structures through curriculum and practice necessitates the integration of Critical Pedagogies to create classrooms as spaces that allow for critical discourse and actions. In this study, social-justice themed picture books are resources to create a site for engaging in Critical Multicultural work.

**Critical Pedagogies in Literacy Teacher Education.** Critical pedagogy stems from
Paulo Freire’s (1970) philosophy of critical education; critical pedagogy argues that mainstream education privileges cultural and political ideologies and practices of the dominant culture. Drawing on foundational contributors such as W.E.B. Du Bois (1903), Frantz Fannon (1963), Gloria Anzaldua (1987), Antonio Gramsci (1988), among others, critical pedagogy questions power structures that maintain hierarchal positioning. Critical pedagogies provide the map to enact critique of the current mechanisms that maintain the status quo in actionable ways, empowering teachers and teacher educators alike to be active agents as transformative intellectuals.

Critical Pedagogies acknowledge that language and knowledge are fundamentally mediated by power relations that are socially and historically constituted; facts can never be free from ideological inscription; language formulates subjectivity and is constantly positioning and unevenly privileging (Darder, 2003; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005). Critical Pedagogy uses critical literacy practices in the classroom to critique ideology (Luke, 2012; Shor & Freire, 1987). Critical pedagogies are agential, with goals to transform society toward equity by recognizing ideological hegemony in anti-hegemonic processes to include different forms of knowledge (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005; Darder, 2003). Critical pedagogies in literacy teacher education question the relationship between hegemony, power, and literacy. Critical pedagogies translate critical theories into praxis by offering a tangible way to enact transformative teaching. Critical Pedagogy educators understand pedagogical practices as a form of ideological production with the goals to enable teachers and students to challenge, resist, and transform oppressive educational conditions for methods to enact social justice in teacher education (Kincheloe, 2005).
**Conceptual Framework for this Study**

While critical theories seek to cultivate teacher agency and nurture criticality, most teacher preparation programs remain ill-equipped to achieve these goals. To address this challenge, this study combines Critical Multiculturalism and Critical Pedagogies to center social justice in a children’s literature course in the movement for transformational teaching. Our work as teacher educators is to train teachers to resist passive consumption and regurgitation; instead, critical reading and teaching attends to both textual elements and non-textual forces that shape educational spaces to develop an awareness of the structures and systems that produce and maintain meaning. Figure 2.1 demonstrates how I see the relationship between theories in my conceptual framework, centering Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) Critical Multicultural Analysis as an approach to teacher education and as an analytic tool.

*Figure 2.1. Conceptual Framework*
Critical theories and Critical Multicultural Analyses require resistant readers to put a spotlight on power. The perspectives equip readers with the lens to view texts in the broader historical and socio-political context, focusing on race, class, and gender (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). Locating the text as central, I have placed an icon of a book at the center of the graphic. The spectacles are viewing the processes that allow readers to see “Race, gender, and class are social constructions that establish sociopolitical and economic hierarchies or power relations among people. Children's literature is a microcosm of these ideologies” (p. 116). The magnifying glass hovering over three overlapping silhouettes symbolize the essential part Botelho and Rudman’s Critical Multicultural lens: to recognize the intersectionality of race, class, and gender. Reading these on their own, decontextualized from the historical and sociopolitical context, would not reveal fully how power is exercised and generated. The lens requires that analysts layer the complexities and construction of power relations with intersecting identities (Botelho & Rudman, 2009).

Botelho and Rudman (2009) trace their inspiration from Foucault (1984), maintaining that the question of "who exercises power?" is “not resolved unless the other question 'how does it happen?' is resolved at the same time” (p. 112). The central arrows that are circulating in the diagram are inspired by Botelho and Rudman’s spiral shell shape in their conceptual framework (p. 327) which symbolizes the cyclical process of “reading power and exposing how power is exercised, circulated, negotiated, and reconstructed” (Botelho & Rudman, 2009, p.117). Children's books, centered in the process, are windows and mirrors into society (Sims-Bishop, 1990); Critical Multicultural Analysis is enacted by unveiling how power is exercised in the micro interactions of characters and macro forces in the historical and sociopolitical space.
In this study, I draw on Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) framework to address the gap between the goals of Critical Multicultural theories and teacher education. Given that Botelho and Rudman’s approach is characterized by a multi-layered lens and the keen attention to power relations, it has the potential to promote criticality and teacher agency. The framework attends to power relations through a recursive process of text analysis examining “1. focalization of story, 2. examining social processes, and 3. attending to story closure” (p. 120). I have outlined below how these key components of their framework influence the analysis and its application to preservice teachers’ artifacts and events in the methods chapter. This process aims to equip teacher educators, teachers, and readers to consider the construction of power and potential transmissions of ideology to students, knowing that language is discourse and carries Discourses.

The purpose of this lens is to read between the lines (Ladson-Billings, 1992) to bring the dominant discourses into consciousness (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). In my conceptual framework graphic, I use multidirectional arrows to highlight to pathways; symbolize constant negotiation and reconstruction, shifting who has the capacity to construct knowledge (Nieto & Bode, 2010). Teachers have the opportunity to use texts as a site for reproduction or interruption. Route one, with icons representing closed eyes and ears that are not ready to hear, represents resistance and avoidance in teacher disposition, leading to reproduction and recirculation of power. Route two, the alternative route, is teachers developing a Critical Multicultural lens to attend to the systems that structure society, encouraging the unveiling dominance of coercive power relations. As readers make sense of texts and begin to unveil inequities in power, the critical perspective creates space for agency: “this space is where social constructions are challenged, and new ways of being and organizing society are actively constructed and reconstructed. Our challenge as readers is not to reproduce dominant readings but to interrupt
them” (Botelho & Rudman, 2009, p.118). By engaging in this process of analysis, teachers can translate Critical Multiculturalism into Critical Pedagogies, which aims to open a space to resist. These critical pedagogies are the most crucial, agential footsteps on the pathway to engagement and action through the sliding glass door (Sims-Bishop, 1990).

It is with these frameworks that I have designed a study not to evaluate outcomes, but to have insight into how preservice teachers participating in a “Reading for Social Justice Project” understand, value, and apply a Critical Multicultural perspective to expose and critique social issues and themes as they critically design, enact, and reflect on a multicultural literature-based lesson plan. This study explores how preservice teachers use the CM lens to shine a light on the injustices within resistance literature, and the world and see a path for resistant reading, a route for agential, transformative teaching.

**Literature Review**

In the following review of the literature, I first outline themes of creating critical educators by rethinking Multicultural Education, highlighting the role of the “critical” in Critical Multicultural Education in cultivating critical educators. I follow by examining the role of literature in preparing preservice teachers for transformational teaching by reviewing empirical research in preservice teacher education, with a focus on the role of literature as a site for transformation. Throughout, I call out gaps and future directions for research and consider the implications of this work by discussing the potential for Critical Multiculturalism in *Children’s Literature* courses, and more broadly, in teacher preparation. Finally, I outline how the literature informs the design of this study and offer the subgenre of “resistance literature” as an opportunity to enact transformative pedagogies.
**Cultivating Critical Educators: Preservice Teacher Education for Transformation**

As Nieto and Bode (2010) state, “It is no longer simply a question of transmitting important knowledge to students, but rather of working with them so that they can reflect, theorize, and create knowledge” (p. 36-37). To create critical educators is to impart teachers with the perspectives and tools to understand social structures in an ongoing process of identifying, interrogating, negotiating, and (re)configuring for agency.

**Identify Structures that Shape Texts.** It is the quest of critical educators to uncover the legacy of language and power that shapes text (Christensen, 2009), to formulate habits of recognizing embedded ideology, to make visible the constant reproduction of the dominant structures and ideologies (Giroux & McLaren, 1986) that work as forces to maintain and sustain dominance (Comber & Nixon, 1999). Critical attention to text guides readers to go beyond reading, beyond decoding and comprehension, to attend to non-textual elements that force and shape the text, which requires developing an awareness of the structures and systems that produce and maintain meaning. In this information-gathering stage (Harste, 2014), critical educators must come to acknowledge that we are living in a culture of domination (hooks, 2014) through the examination of the institution and functions of schooling (Foss & Carpenter, 2002) to identify texts as mechanisms of maintaining power and by reinforcing rules in the “the culture of power” (Delpit, 1988) revealing the hidden curriculum (Anyon, 1980; 1983; Apple, 1979; Giroux & Penna, 1979) in the sociohistorical and political context.

**Identifying Sociohistorical and Political Context.** Preparing critical educators to identify power structures shaping texts necessitates the explicit study of hegemonic structures (Delpit & Dowdy, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Lazar & Lazar, 2004; Nieto, 1999) to draw attention to historic and contemporary forces shaping education that (Lee, 2002; Paris & Alim,
unevenly privileges some and marginalize others (Apple, 1992; Giroux & McLaren, 1986; Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994; Leland et al., 2005). To identify the socio-historical and political context within which texts and readers exist is to examine the relationship between literature and the larger world of culture and ideology as constant forces. It is to make visible and dismantle the forces outside and inside of the text. Critical educators must admit that education, and the act of teaching is political (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1998; Freire, 1972; Giroux, 1986; Hess, 2004; Kincheloe, 2005; Nias, 1996; Nieto, 2006), teaching in a manner that attempts to decontextualize from the historical and sociopolitical context would not fully reveal how power is exercised and generated. After they have seen that curriculum is not neutral (Apple, 1992; Cochran-Smith, 2004), critical educators engage in power analysis (Kincheloe, 2005), identifying issues in text, connecting to broader social structures, unveiling of systems and power and dominance (Janks, 2000), and naming hegemonic representations in order to deconstruct them (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). Once the relationship between power and structures within the text is exposed, this relationship cannot be unseen, and teachers can use this enlightenment to attend to text content to identify issues within texts and within multicultural approaches to the teaching of these texts.

**Identifying Issues that Plague Multicultural Education.** Research has documented the failure of multicultural education in preservice preparation programs as they fail to address systemic inequities (Grant, 1993; Vavrus & Ozcan, 1996) and graduate a workforce who enter the teaching profession with minimal understanding of the issues that affect the lives of their future students, and maintain the same biased view of marginalized communities that they held before entering their teacher preparation program (Achinstein & Barrett, 2004; Cooper & Nesmith, 2013; Sleeter, 2008). Uttech (2002) voices the concern:
I truly believe that teachers in general entered the profession because they want to make the world a better place. They are interested in social service. They possess a compassion for human life and a concern for social injustice, and I don't believe they want to contribute to the problems - though some teachers inadvertently do. (p. 178)

As a response to the inadequacy of teacher preparation programs in meeting the needs of our culturally and linguistically diverse students (Landa & Stephens, 2017; Latham & Voht, 2007; Levine, 2006), the following section presents issues that plague multiculturalism, in order to respond with a call to rethink multicultural education (Au, 2009). By preparing teachers to identify and name the following issues in Multicultural Education, only then can we create the critical space to interrogate texts and negotiate with aims to interrupt and reconstruct society through text and teaching.

**Colorblindness.** Colorblindness is a state of mind that blinds the beholder to the systematic injustices of the system and institutions within it (Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Sims, 1983). Race being reduced to culture is one example of colorblindness that disconnects identities and power. Rudine Sims (1983) categorizes colorblind texts and teaching as turning a blind eye to the structural causes of hierarchical privileging in children’s literature or books that present a post-racial, melting pot view of the world that portrays people as equal, and we are all one. These books typically suggest that White middle-class values and life experiences are the norm. Often, the only indication of race or ethnicity is the skin tone displayed in the illustrations. “The fact that the melting pot books insist on American cultural homogeneity means they also ignore important aspects of Afro-American life experiences” (Sims-Bishop, 1990, p. 652).

Colorblindness and whitewashing are again seen in Van Belle’s (2010) analysis of basal readers, which feature photos of people of color without much explicit mention of race and the inequities
that persist in our society. They argue that the omission of mentioning race creates the illusion that race no longer alters people’s experiences.

Unfortunate effects of colorblindness in literature exempts those in power from responsibility and therefore maintains and recirculates injustice, which then determines how children see themselves, the world, and how history is understood (Apol, 1998). Omi and Winant (1994) argue that race remains a central element of the American imperial regime to “prevent economic, epistemological and political crises from achieving revolutions that could redistribute social power and materials relations” (p. 6). Ferguson (2012) holds that the state strategically claims colorblindness but weaves racism into state activity, especially education. Therefore, colorblind reading and teaching harmfully presents society as post-racial and recirculates hegemonic regimes. Teachers’ denial, ignorance, oversight, or active resistance to addressing issues of racism, regardless of their motivation or intent, reproduce racialized patterns of inequity and injustice (Philip, 2011).

White teachers’ “persistent hesitation” (Glenn, 2015, p. 23) or avoidance of addressing race in the classroom is especially apparent in the teacher education literature (Beach, 1997; Dasenbrock, 1987; Sharpe et al., 1990). It is found that White teachers often resist and subvert attempts to address racism in classrooms through both active and passive strategies (Haviland, 2008; Leonardo, 2004; Mueller & O’Connor, 2007; Picower, 2012). White teachers, especially, often hold “naive, idealistic beliefs and have not explored their identities as members of a privileged White race, which leads them to adopt a colorblind perspective, ignoring or denying the fact that ethnic or racial differences can have pedagogical implications” (Meyer & Rhodes, 2006, p. 83). Cultivating critical educators requires bringing attention to issues of Whitewashing in texts and the harm caused by colorblindness in books (Winograd, 2011). “The adoption of
colorblind ideologies, orientations, approaches, and behaviors in teachers’ work can make it difficult for them to recognize broader systemic disparities, patterns, and dilemmas in education” (Milner, 2013, p. 868). Critical educators notice and name the marginalization, prejudice, and racism in texts, teaching, and the world to refute the mirage of a post-racial society and challenge the naive notion of our society as colorblind.

**Misrepresentation and Stereotyping.** Mere surface-level representation of characters of color or other marginalized identities present in multicultural literature is not enough. In preparing critical teachers, it is important to challenge the assumption that a multicultural book is a worthwhile inclusion into the curriculum simply because of diverse representation. Culturally diverse content too often has a “distorted and inaccurate view” (Taxel, 1986, p. 245). Through a critical content analysis of children’s literature, Cobb (1995) concluded that implicit, subtle stereotyping was the most common; specifically, reoccurring images of peoples of color positioned as lower social class and/or financially insecure, thus reinforcing longstanding stereotypes (Reese & Caldwell-Wood, 1997). This distortion can also occur when particular groups are represented as monolithic entities (e.g., all Asian students are good at math and science). Adichie (2009) speaks of the danger of a single story, another documented consequence of uncritical education (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Nieto & Bode, 2007).

Solórzano and Yosso (2001) and Sleeter (2012) document issues of racial stereotyping in both texts and teaching of multicultural literature. Too often, these negative stereotypes are a result of outsider authorship. Subtle inaccuracies, when not attended to with a critical lens, contributes to cultural misunderstanding, discomfort, and damage to the children whose cultures are inaccurately portrayed, leading to “distortion” (Mendoza & Reese, 2001, p. 9). All these
messages distort both the window and the mirror (Sims-Bishop, 1990). The dangers of stereotypical language and images contribute to marginalization and oppression.

To critically attend to texts is to consider the author’s background and perspective, asking who wrote the book, interrogating author authenticity, consistency, and considering insider versus outsider perspectives (Louie, 2006) in order to uncover the embedded assumptions and ideologies. Inauthentic additions with characteristics not representative of minority groups (Botelho & Rudman, 2009; Clark & Flores, 2016; Harris, 1990; Morgan, 2011) are more likely to occur with outsider authorship. In Contreras & Wilhelm’s (2011) preservice teacher course, students explore institutionalized prejudices and stereotypes in curriculum and uncover curricular silences. In efforts to fill the cultural knowledge gap, Contreras and Wilhelm (2011) engage students “in intellectual and emotional cultural border crossing of their own to hear the experiences of marginalized groups” (p. 192) to authentically hear social conflicts through the voices of those marginalized most. A critical educator asks: “Who wrote the text?” (Sims-Bishop, 1990; Nieto, 2005; Cowhey, 2007). Outsider authorship unfortunately contributes to issues of “Other-ing”, essentialist views harmful to students and society.

“Other-ing”. With roots from Foucault’s (1978) theorization of the utilization of minority difference, “Other-ing” is magnifying minority difference (Brown-Manning, 2020; Nieto, 1994; Rogoff, 2003; Said, 1995; Ukpokodu, 2003), pointing fingers and frowning at the strange “other”. Other-ing pits groups against one another in the idea of “us” vs. “them,” the “normal” vs. “abnormal.” Other-ing contributes to deficit positioning through the formulation and exclusivity in the category of excellence, positioning groups as “civilized” versus “barbaric,” or “strong” vs. “weak”.
Other-ing is a technique strategically used to maintain order (Ferguson, 2012). To critically examine Other-ing is to expose the subordination of people and the recirculation of power that results from it. In David and Ayoub’s (2005) study of the inclusion of the “exotic other” in Arab American multicultural literature, they found that representations of Arab Americans were conflated, essentialized, and harmfully normalized. Hammett and Bainbridge’s (2009) study with preservice teachers exploring cultural identity and ideology in multicultural literature draws out the issues of Other-ing in the preservice teachers’ covert devaluing of people of color and the recirculation of power in picture books. Cross’ (2005) critiques of teacher education programs that tout uncritical multicultural “rhetoric about diversity and multiculturalism is often couched in how we are alike or how white teacher educators and students can explore others as cultural exotics, the racial other, or the object of study for their benefit” (p. 265) which consequently reinscribes White privilege, racism, and deficit positioning.

**Deficit Positioning.** Nieto and Bode (2007), Solórzano and Yosso (2001), and Monroe and Ruan (2018), among others, highlight the issue of “deficit positioning” that exists within the teaching of literature. Dutro and Bien (2014) warn us to be critical of “deficit positioning in texts that designates some students as victims in ways that allow more privileged students to be positioned as vital and successful in contrast to those who ‘struggle’ and ‘fail’” (p. 27). In Xu’s (2000) case study of three White middle-class female preservice teachers in their culturally diverse practicum-based literacy methods course, they found that teachers held deficit perceptions of students’ cultural identities, values, and literacy. As texts and curriculum serve as sorting mechanisms, deficit positioning in texts and teaching highlights the need for critical attention when using multicultural texts.
Ignoring Intersectionality. Another mistake in teaching with multicultural literature is ignoring issues of intersectionality, or the interaction between one or more of the systems of oppression (Horning, 2014). Multiple ongoing systems of oppression lead people who hold multiple marginalized identities to experience oppression differently. Ignoring intersectionality is another blindness critical approaches hopes to expose. Intersections of diversity in identities are still underrepresented and over stereotyped, even in racially diverse text. In Cobb’s (1995) study of stereotyping in children’s literature and images, “forty-five percent of Hispanic characters were depicted as poor, thirty percent as adequate status economically, twenty percent as comfortable, and zero percent as wealthy or affluent (five percent undetermined)” (p. 19). Through these representations, children internalize views that Latinx people are more likely to be poor. While it is not useful to argue about a hierarchy of oppression (Lorde, 1983), “it is important to identify ways in which these power relations are similar to or different from each other, and how they work together” (Botelho & Rudman, 2009, p. 116). Paying careful attention to representations and depictions of race and the intersections of race and class, gender, and sexuality, while selecting and introducing books to children can help decrease the negative ramifications of stereotypes and racist discourses and doing so may even help “mitigate the effects of white privilege” (van Belle, 2010, p. iv).

The Myth of the Happy Ending. Picture books published in the US reflect a cultural tendency toward “the happy ending”. This problematic presentation of progress, liberty, and a post-racialized world is seen reflected in children’s literature. In the text I read with my students in homeroom 301, author Andrea Davis Pinkney concludes Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down (2010), with the words: “After years of praying for laws to change. When they were so hungry for equality. The young people finally got what they ordered. It was worth the
wait. It was served to them exactly how they wanted it—well done” (p. 24). While celebrating a step towards progress in the civil rights era, these words hide the reality of the continued racial inequities and injustices that define our country. Even the timeline in the book’s index abruptly ends in 1964, with no mention of inequities we still witness in the 21st century. Texts like these may result in readers constructing reality as a fairy tale; that all is well now, so our children can fall asleep peacefully. A happy ending is the appearance of the resolution to the systemic inequities, when the reality we live in is not so perfect and is all too common in children’s books (even ones that do present a realistic picture of structural issues).

Critical educators take another look at the happy ending, challenge simple solutions, and reject the presentation of a post-racial era. Drawing from Omi and Winant’s (1994) policies of absorption, a critical educator resists accepting more moderate terms to pacify revolutionary efforts through the outward appearance of a solution. Critical educators see a mirage of progress is a hindrance to oppositional threats of reorganization with the purpose of maintaining dominance. Ferguson (2012) urges us to critique the enthusiasm for what is presented as “progress” as it is another strategy in disguise to maintain unequal structures of order. Critical attention to texts is exposing systemic issues, even in books for the very young. Critical educators do not have to conclude a lesson with a resolution; Rather, they can use the lesson to be a call to action. Leaving endings ideologically open welcomes children into critique and connection to the current state to inspire them to become agents of change.

All of the above challenges create the conditions of the recirculation of power and inequity. While no perfect multicultural books exist, nor are there any books or teaching practices fully free from ideology, the purpose of drawing out the critiques of multicultural literature and multicultural education is to “help illuminate the places that bias, stereotypes, and
misinformation might be hidden” (Mendoza, 2001, p. 20) to serve warnings of what not to do in preventative measures against harm. Prospective teacher education must explicitly name the misuse of texts and be prepared with the tools to evaluate and select high-quality children’s literature (Anderson, 2013; Galda, et. al, 2016; Russell & Anderson, 2015; Short et al., 2016) to meet the challenge of curriculum they may meet when teaching.

If we equip educators with the kinds of critical theories, pedagogies, and practice to critically attend to the literature they teach, we can begin to consider different pedagogical approaches in a pedagogy of possibility (Freire, 1968) to “read between the lines” (Leland et al., 2005, p. 259), to read against the grain (Cochran-Smith, 1991; Cowhey, 2007; Simon, 1992).

Against this background, I review the literature in teacher education centered on creating classroom environments that address the inadequacy of current practices using multicultural literature. I outline themes in the literature that seek to foster critical classroom environments through democratizing classroom space, creating communities of critical inquiry, embracing discomfort in a caring community, and nurturing self-reflexivity to offer a future direction of transformational teacher education spaces.

**Fostering Critical Classroom Environments**

**Democratizing Classroom Space.** Democratizing classroom spaces for shared participation requires (re)positioning the teacher as learner and students as teachers (Christensen, 2009; Cowhey, 2007; Freire; 1970; Lee et al., 1997) in a reciprocal relationship, to share power (Souto-Manning, 2009; Tschida et al., 2014). To democratize the classroom is to create a space recognizing the value within each individual voice (hooks, 1994; Nieto, 2015), drawing from students’ “funds of knowledge” (Moll et al., 1992).
Teachers create a more democratic curriculum by incorporating counter-narratives, positioning students as powerful actors and as co-creators of alternative texts to interrupt the monopoly of the production of knowledge. Teachers who democratize classroom spaces include a multiplicity of voices and elicit different perspectives in the space and curriculum. Teachers’ awareness of the now unveiled stereotyping, marginalization, and erasure in texts encourages a critical educator towards inclusivity and diversification of texts in the curriculum (Braden & Rodriguez, 2016; Harste, 2014). Democracy thrives within a diversified community of critical inquiries.

**Creating a Community of Critical Inquiry for Critical Consciousness.** The recipe for a critical community includes fostering curiosity, offering opportunities for collaboration, and seeing learning as an ongoing cycle. Learning environments that foster critical inquiry see education as a site of contestation. Torres (1998) proposed critical pedagogy based on Freire’s (1985) “epistemology of curiosity” (p. 102–103), positioning educators as ‘pensadores’ or ‘thinkers’ who find everything can be questioned.

Critical educators see moments of conflict and tension as productive spaces for potential learning (Engeström & Sannino, 2010). Building on Engeström’s (2001) conception of *expansive learning*, critical learning environments involve a “multi-voiced process of debate, negotiation and orchestration” (Engeström & Sanino, 2010, p. 5) where knowledge is produced through open dialogue questioning, and conflict. Several conditions that foster this productive tension include collaborative interactivity in cooperative groups working towards a shared goal, encouraging sensitivity and openness to other points of view, and fostering friendship and sense of solidarity, especially as learners enter into risky territory (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004; Fiske, 2004). Teemant (2015) outlines standards for effective pedagogy within communities of critical inquiry and
highlights the importance of a collaborative space where “teaching should ideally make the interactive space between the teacher and learners active with dialogue and various forms of assistance to learn (e.g., questioning, rephrasing, modeling, etc.) and that learning opportunities should be paired with “joint productive activity” where students collaborate to create a shared product” (p. 5). Hill’s (2012/2017) studies with preservice teachers confronting issues of race also highlight the “value of consistent mentoring, reflection, and feedback” (p. 225).

Becoming culturally responsive is an ongoing process of critical inquiry (Banks & Banks, 2001). Short and Kauffman’s (2008) study of learning between a university educator and an elementary school teacher uses Short and Harste’s (1996) “Inquiry Cycle” (Figure 2.2) as a curricular framework: the inquiry cycle is an ongoing process of “connection, invitation, tension, investigation, demonstration, revision, representation, valuation, and action” (p. 55).

![Figure 2.2. Short & Harste’s (1996) “Inquiry Cycle”](image-url)
This model offers a range of invitations to foster dialogue crucial to critical work.

Short and Kauffman offer this process as a way to slow down, cultivate constructive tension, act, and reflect on the consequences of the action, with a variety of opportunities for interruption to “encourage a critical re-theorization of the possible” (p. 55). Clark et al. (2014) also use a circular model, a snail shell, to visualize this ongoing process of deepening knowledge.

In critical education spaces, teachers and teacher educators are simultaneously learners and producers of knowledge, maintaining the status of eternal students (Freire, 2000; Lee, Menkart & Okazawa-Rey, 1997). Kelly and Brandes (2010) make recommendations for anti-oppressive teacher education programs to “make the role of the teacher educator more explicit in the inquiry process” (p. 27). This stance of ongoing learning “avoids positioning the teacher as one who has ‘arrived’ in critical consciousness” (Vossoughi & Gutiérrez, 2016, p. 144) and instead invites all to develop along the continuum of critical consciousness in the community of critical inquirers.

**Embracing Discomfort in a Caring Community.** Research on preservice teacher preparation shows the presence of uncomfortable moments in critical education (Cowhey, 2007; Grant & Sleeter, 1985; Kumashiro, 2001; Lazar & Offenburg, 2011). It is also evident in research that teachers avoid discussing uncomfortable issues, which leads to a failure to address pertinent themes in children’s literature, such as race (Rhodes et al., 2008; Ladson-Billings, 2004) and therefore leave silences. Nieto and Bode (2007) and Cochran-Smith (2004) call out the necessity of discussing uncomfortable topics, especially when teachers and students have different cultural backgrounds.

Often students, mainly White middle-class students not accustomed to learning about racism and poverty, take a defensive attitude when discussing multiculturalism (Nieto, 1999).
For instance, as Erickson (2008) explains: “Discussions involving words such as racism, oppression, dominance, or privilege often evoke defensive reactions based on guilt, embarrassment, and resentment” (p. 46). Various forms of student resistance have been documented in preservice teacher education, such as in Carpenter-LaGattuta’s (2002) study, which reports (a) avoidance of discussion of multiculturalism; (b) dismissing the content as irrelevant, too baffling, or too biased; (c) exhibiting discomfort; (d) being silent; (e) absence from class; and even (f) hostile verbal challenges.

Critical interrogation of self and systems inevitably comes with risk and requires learners to demonstrate courage to leave their comfort zones (Gannon, 1999). Critical education spaces that foster transformational teaching recognize and name both the discomfort and risk in teaching these topics in critical multicultural education. Creating a safe classroom environment has the potential to “promote more in-depth and honest discussions of taboo topics” (Carpenter-LaGattuta, 2002, p. 27). Doing so means cultivating a classroom within a caring, nurturing environment to build trust with students (Christensen, 2009; Cowhey, 2007; Noddings, 2005; Torres 1998). Freire (2006) advocated for teaching with an ethic of love.

Embracing discomfort is a crucial, healthy, and productive step to critical self-reflection (Cowhey, 2007; Grant & Sleeter, 2003; Lazar & Offenburg, 2011). Blackmon (2018) views this discomfort as productive:

Teachers must engage in learning experiences, paths of inquiry, reflective thinking, and classroom experiences that challenge their thinking and assumptions, a process that is often uncomfortable (Derman-Sparks & Ramsey, 2011; North, 2009; Sleeter, 2005). Believing that this discomfort is a pathway to growth and opening oneself up to learning
from the communities and classrooms in which one is teaching are key parts of teaching for social justice. (p. 37)

Our role as critical teacher educators is not to create spaces free of discomfort, but to foster classroom spaces that recognize and embrace that discomfort in productive ways.

Important in embracing discomfort is understanding when that discomfort or defensiveness arrives and impedes learning and making sense of where such defensiveness is coming from. Education spaces that inspire transformative teaching critically interrogate participants’ attitudes and consider if their discomfort might come from actually being too comfortable existing within the systems of dominance. Critical education spaces can confront discomfort by naming that the enemy is not whiteness itself, but the dominance of it (Jay & Jones, 2005). When the problem is rooted in the system and paired with a personal location of self in the system, self-reflexivity supports teachers seeing themselves in the solution.

**Nurturing Self-reflexivity.** Self-reflexivity is defined by Botelho and Rudman (2009) as “when readers become aware of their constituted subjectivities and the subject positions offered by texts. This kind of reflexivity challenges discursive practices responsible for maintaining and perpetuating the power relations of class, race, and gender.” (2009, p. 119). Sonia Nieto (1992; 1994; 1999), whose work in Critical Multicultural education is strongly influenced by Paulo Freire (1987), holds that promoting social justice with teaching begins with teachers’ own personal transformation, which only then can later branch out to transforming the institutions and communities in which they teach. The literature is rich with examples of the importance of critical self-analysis and identity work in teacher education for concientización (Escamilla & Nathenson-Mejía, 2003; Flores et al., 2007; Flores et al., 2019), which encourages teachers to see themselves as inevitably and inextricably part of the system. Gay (1993) develops preservice
teachers’ skills for both critical self-analysis and self-reflection. Self-reflection is to view how personal values and educational beliefs can and do shape instructional practices (hooks, 2014; Pujares, 1992; Richardson, 1996). Personal reflections on teaching may reveal that while well-intentioned, “the sincerity of their intentions does not guarantee the purity of their practice” (Brookfield, 1995, p. 1) and therefore requires constant consciousness of one’s own role, prejudices, and power (Solnit, 2019) embedded in one’s own perspectives and practices. The process of turning inward and reflecting on oneself becomes less frightening the more it is practiced (Erikson, 1958; 1963). Supportive teacher educators challenge preservice teachers to critically examine “their own biases and assumptions in relation to their sociocultural backgrounds to understand the influence this may have on their teaching” (Flores et al., 2019, p. 223). These critical education spaces encourage self-introspection and prompt educators to ask: How have my own beliefs been shaped by structural and systemic forces? What positionality and power do I carry? What messages and ideologies are embedded in my practice? What messages am I transmitting? These strategies of the interrogation of the text and self within systems equip educators to see texts as more than just stories transmitting knowledge, but themselves in the space.

Empirical studies in teacher education offer examples of self-reflexivity in practice. Lea and Sims (2008) developed an undergraduate Social Foundations course to deepen students’ critical consciousness of deep-seeded social and cultural assumptions, expose inequalities, and interrupt hegemonic constructions in self, even potentially their unconscious minds. Kelly & Brandes’ (2010) study with preservice teachers, engaging in personal reflection shows how they learn to “[take] into account how positions of privilege and oppression shape pedagogical decisions” (p. 27). Whiting and Cutri’s (2015) conducted a study of a 14-week multicultural
course that guided preservice teachers in critical reflections of their own assumptions, cultural identities, unearned privileges, and their location in a system of inequity. They found that “when opportunities are created for students to grapple with complex, personal, emotional concepts, the vast majority of students are willing and able to perform this type of reflection and analysis” (p.13). Szeci et al.’s (2010) study of a preservice teacher multicultural literature project suggested that critical analysis, guidance that fostered examination of self, and journal keeping contributed to their shifting understandings and developed transformative thinking. Vossoughi and Gutiérrez (2016) name “the generative relationship between reflection and action” (p. 142) as praxis; it is through this practice of reflection that teachers can take action for transformation (Clark et al., 2016).

**Preparing Preservice Teachers to Interrupt and Reconstruct**

Critical educators are not complicit actors and instead challenge and disrupt the status quo to (re)configure institutions. Research in teacher education shows that students want to engage in social action based upon their readings of texts (Morrell & Morrell, as cited in Botelho & Rudman, 2009). In fact, teacher research has documented issues of inaction, where discussions of social justice issues without moving to the action steps leave a hanging, unresolved feeling of guilt, anger, and disempowerment (Banks, 2003; Christensen, 2000). In order to do so, critical teacher education must connect theory to practice, prepare educators with the relevant pedagogical skills, and provide opportunities for authentic practice to empower teachers as active agents who can use instruction as the site of disruption.

**The Disconnect between Theory and Practice.** Most teachers come out of teacher education programs with very few instructional techniques that accompany the teaching of multicultural literature (Escamilla & Nathenson-Mejía, 2003; Garcia & Pugh, 1992; Villegas,
Escamilla and Nathenson-Mejía and other scholars, such as Clark and Smith (2018) and Flores et al. (2014), argue it is imperative to equip teachers with critical culturally responsive pedagogy to ensure equitable education practices and center social justice. While teacher preparation programs do offer both theory-rich foundational courses and pedagogically focused methods courses, the separation of such work falls short of translating theory into practice (Escamilla & Nathenson-Mejía, 2003; Ketter, & Stoffel, 2008).

To enable transformational education is not just asking preservice teachers to imagine it or watch it, but also to do it (Kelly & Brandes, 2010). However, there is a well-documented disconnect between university teacher preparation and the structures that enable opportunities for practice (Ball et al., 2009; Grossman et al., 2009; Janssen et al., 2015; Lampert et al., 2013; Knight et al., 2014; Windschitl et al., 2012), such as the scarcity of practice-based practicum partnerships (Dutro & Cartun, 2016; Landa & Stephens, 2017). While “most instructional design theories advocate for the application of knowledge and skill as a necessary condition for effective learning” (Merrill, 2002, p. 6), survey results from practicing teachers find that “schools of education do not prepare their graduates to cope with the realities of today's classrooms” (Levine, 2006) and instead leave a gap between ivory tower over-idealized theory and real-world, in the trenches of practice (Ketter & Stoffel, 2008). Rather than dismissing the sorts of challenges teachers face in schools (Ketter & Stoffel) or disregarding the evident disconnection between the realities in schools, researchers have been exploring ways to address the ongoing challenges amidst the current structures of university-based teacher preparation programs.

**Developing Relevant Pedagogical Skills and Opportunities for Practice.** Teachers need the basic principles of critical theories tied to pedagogies and authentic opportunities for
practice within the current coursework structure. Teacher education programs should provide opportunities to practice “through discussing, modeling, and engaging in text selection and instructional practices for reading and writing” (Flores, et al., 2019, p. 223). Because “teachers benefit from opportunities to reflect on teaching with authentic representations of practice” (Sherin & van Es, 2009, p. 21), watching and reflecting on model teaching and enactments is valued as opportunity for teacher learning. Carpenter-LaGattuta’s (2002) ethnographic study with preservice teachers in a multicultural education course includes preparing teachers to engage in critical conversations about race “for actual teaching situations by learning about teaching dilemmas and receiving methodological guidance.” They offer the idea of “guest speakers who are currently teaching and administering in urban schools to serve as models” (p. 27) and thought partners. Clark and Smith (2018) suggest that courses not tied to practicum teaching experiences can use role-play as a tool to augment the literary experience. Branscombe and Schneider’s (2018) use drama in preservice teachers’ education, using embodied arts, such as tableaux, “as communal vessels through which the candidates could closely and publicly examine their own teaching” (p. 19). Through these practices, researchers documented preservice teachers’ pedagogical intentions. Preservice teachers themselves gained opportunities to practice, access to their own thinking, and a glimpse into their future teaching.

In this study, I draw on the broader research base of teacher learning and literature in preservice teacher education to inform the design of the learning environment and instructional activities in a project that aims to develop critical perspectives and practices. I now turn to specific examples of preservice teacher education in the context of a children’s literature course.
The Role of Literature in Preservice Teacher Education

Literature is used as a primary tool in literacy methods courses to prepare active, critical citizens (Mosenthal, 1994) to enact culturally responsive pedagogies (Brooks, 2006; Flores, et al., 2019; Haddix & Price-Dennis, 2013). A wide range of high-quality multicultural literature presents the opportunity to promote tolerance and acceptance and challenges stereotypes and essentializing. High-quality multicultural literature can serve this purpose, to not only help in the teaching of reading but to develop students’ understanding of social community action and their role as active and informed citizens.” (Morrell & Morrell, as cited in Botelho & Rudman, 2009). In the following section, I offer several examples of empirical works that appear in the literature that illustrate empowering practices of critical teacher education using young adult and children’s literature.

Young Adult Literature as a Transformative Tool. In Glenn’s (2012; 2015) research using counter-narratives with secondary preservice teachers in a university context, she documents the struggles and opportunities of using literature to connect across cultures and reconsider assumptions. The studies seek to address the persistent issues of White-preservice teachers who have little cultural knowledge or experience with culturally/linguistically diverse populations and have limited experience examining the benefits from White privilege that impact their teaching (Glenn, 2015; Gomez, 2007; Sleeter, 2008). Glenn holds that important in the preparation of preservice teachers is the examination of structures, such as how knowledge and power intersect, and the examination of self through the interrogation of one’s own identities, subject positions, and assumptions. These studies draw explicit attention to Whiteness to examine how race privileges some and limits others. Using narratives as the space to challenge hegemony, preservice teachers began turning inwards to challenge their own biases, recognize
flaws in their perceptions, reconsider their own assumptions, and recognize and question the stereotypes within the texts and self.

In Glenn’s (2015) secondary methods course, preservice English teachers engaged in a literature study examining ethnic literary aesthetics, designed a three-day lesson plan, and wrote a reflection. Findings suggest that this practice with literature promotes “interest in and willingness to engage with race in multicultural literature,” “willingness to reconsider learned assumptions,” and “willingness to question normative depictions of others,” (p. 31-32) as well as dispositions to extend this new learning to teaching and challenging texts. Research has also outlined the challenges in this work, including preservice teachers’ hesitation to “transition from theory to practice”, “let go of lingering fears” and hesitation to explicitly “identify and embrace racial differences” (p. 37-38). Through the practice of examining oppressive structures not experienced personally, these studies offer multicultural literature as support in grappling with diversity and Whiteness and name the challenges that require more research in using literature as a transformative tool in teacher education.

Children’s Literature as a Transformative Tool. Flores et al.’s (2019) review of the literature offers children’s literature as a tool to cultivate preservice teachers as transformative intellectuals. Their research highlights the importance of using children’s literature with future literacy educators to build sociocultural knowledge, broaden understandings of their future students’ lives, and to learn instructional practices to encourage culturally relevant pedagogies for transformational teaching. I next detail how the following empirical studies in university settings outline both the promises and the challenges of using children’s literature as a transformative tool in preservice teacher education.
Preservice teachers in their methods courses in Lohfink’s (2014) study enact a multicultural picture book read aloud assignment in a school-based practicum and reflect on the impact of the lesson and its effectiveness. The process involved studying and enacting Banks & Banks’s (1995) equity pedagogy, observing the context of the classroom environment, reflecting upon effective read-alouds in their cooperating teachers’ classrooms, text selection, and lesson planning. The analysis of this process revealed impacts on culturally responsive practices and on the preservice teachers’ responses to multicultural literature. These practices and responses served as a tool to increase personal cultural knowledge for more effective teaching of multicultural literature. This study names the challenges of preparing novice teachers and measuring development through only one semester; Lohfink emphasizes that transformation “will require more than one assignment in literacy methods courses to reflect effective implementation” (p. 45). Lohfink concludes by calling for sustained training throughout preservice teacher preparation programs for transformative teaching to truly stick.

Escamilla and Nathenson-Mejía’s (2003) study uses Latinx children's literature in preservice teacher education classes and their accompanying field experiences, in efforts to prepare more culturally responsive teachers. Over the span of three years, the predominantly White group of preservice teachers used multicultural literature as a tool to increase knowledge of students’ backgrounds, therefore increasing their capacity to connect with their students and demonstrate compassion. Preservice teachers reflected on their experiences and expressed their intentions to construct a more diverse selection of children’s literature for students in their future classrooms. While students demonstrated progress in these ways, the authors questioned how deep the teachers’ understandings and commitments actually were. They call for and commit to further research that measures how and if teachers continue to implement their learning in their
classrooms and call on teacher education programs to better incorporate multicultural literature throughout coursework.

Howrey and Whelan-Kim’s (2009) study examines a multicultural children’s literature project with preservice early childhood teachers in rural settings seeking to build culturally responsive teaching. They used surveys and reflection papers as a means to measure the development of culturally responsive teaching practices. They found that students’ written responses fell into six categories:

- awareness of teaching materials and culturally specific learning differences, an increase in their own personal cultural knowledge, and a commitment to foster cultural competence in children, build a classroom community and teach for social justice,
- develop knowledge, empathy, and commitment to improving the well-being of their future students. (p. 123)

Howrey and Whelan-Kim document the challenge in preparing preservice teachers, such as the limited time available in programs for specific multicultural education classes, teachers’ limited contact with diverse populations outside the study, and even within the study, both the placement schools and teacher preparation program itself were predominantly White.

Landa and Stephens (2017) use children’s literature in a preservice teacher education Language Arts methods course to promote cultural competence. Their course activities included written course work assignments—such a picture book analysis of four pieces of award-winning children’s literature—the enactment of a book discussion with students in their practicum course, and a post-teaching reflection. The reflections in the teachers’ journal revealed themes of “anger and frustration about the social and cultural marginalization of children and families,” “awareness of the historical foundation followed by empathy,” and “recognition of the
importance of including multicultural authors in the classroom” (p. 62). After reflecting on the coursework and teaching experiences, teacher development revealed not only a more empathetic view of students, but also the development of an activist stance as a social advocate on behalf of students. Furthermore, the teacher voiced how the project impacted her future careers as classroom teachers, voicing intentions to adapt curriculum to fit students’ cultural identities. The authors document challenges of time constraints that create tensions between the teaching of theory and application to practice. Therefore, Landa and Stephens call on teacher preparation programs to center training in the development of cultural competence throughout the duration of teacher training.

In their work using multicultural literature with preservice teachers, Christ and Sharma’s (2018) study uses reading responses, lesson plans and reflections to reveal teachers’ resistance to sensitive topics, limited view of culture, lack of knowledge about students’ cultures and identities, and lack of opportunities for students to develop critical consciousness as challenges of implementing culturally relevant pedagogy. They also point to three criteria for success: “knowledge about the students’ culture and identity, attention to multiple dimensions of text selection, and use of culturally relevant text selection and pedagogy in combination” (p. 55) as they look towards preparing preservice teachers to provide culturally relevant instruction.

Through these empirical studies, it is clear that diverse literature can play a key role in preparing teachers to center justice work, while there remain challenges in enacting this work. These studies use fictional texts for transformational teaching, a practice that is consistent with Flores et al.’s (2019) finding in their review of research, noting that informational texts “were rarely mentioned in the literature” (p. 221). In the following section, I describe the subgenre of
resistance literature as more than just a strategy to address the gap in the literature. I then offer resistance literature as a site for transformational teaching.

**Resistance Literature as a Site for Transformation**

As Flores et al. (2019) call on teacher educators to “select books that challenge assumptions and speak of possibilities for change” (p. 228), my study uses multicultural literature that reflects the theme of resistance movements. I define the subcategory of resistance literature as texts surrounding socio-political activity in a struggle against dominant ideologies and oppression, showcased through the strength of everyday heroes and social movements to empower and inspire readers (Harlow, 1987). Lenski’s (2008) work using picture books to explore cultural messages aims to promote social justice moving readers from Contemplation to Action. Lenski’s (2008) study built on Leland & Harste’s (2000) suggestions to:

- use books that explore differences among people, give voice to those who have been silenced or marginalized, show characters who engage in social action, and/or have non-traditional endings that illustrate the complexity of social problems rather than ending ‘happily ever after’ are especially appropriate (p. 117).

In this study, I offer resistance literature as a resource that can provide unique opportunities for preservice teachers to enact critical pedagogy to interrogate truth and evaluate representations, preserve and affirm subjugated histories, talk about the “tough” stuff, connect historical issues to contemporary injustices, and open a space for agency.

**Interrogate Truth and Evaluate Representations.** As “there is no such thing as impartial history” (Bigelow & Zinn, 2008, p. 2), critical education with resistance literature offers a space to interrogate the relationship between truth, power, and authorship. As critical pedagogues Kincheloe and McLaren (1994) emphasize, facts cannot be isolated from ideological
inscription; it is necessary to ask who writes history, to call attention to how history is interpretive (Barton & Levstik, 2011) and to illustrate how the telling of history is influenced by personal perspective. Like Barton and Levstik, Bigelow’s work centers around the critical reading of history, he cations: “Anyone reading history should understand from the start that there is no such thing as impartial history...that is a limitation that can never be overcome...it inevitably takes sides...it may do this deceptively, consciously, or subconsciously” (p. 2). Critical attention to history invites readers to interrogate author bias (Bickford & Rich, 2015; Barton Levstik, 2011; Winograd, 2011) and consider positioning and representation. This approach is crucial since informational history texts are archiving mechanisms (Ferguson, 2012), and texts with historical content provide an important opportunity to attend to the presentation of truth.

**Preserves and Affirms Subjugated Histories.** In an education policy era that is characterized by accountability, mechanisms such as NCLB have led to a disproportionate emphasis on reading and mathematics and a near extinction of social studies in elementary schools (Barton & Levstik, 2011; Leming et al., 2006; NCES, 2006). The neglect of social studies is a trend that is intensifying (Fitchett & Heafner, 2010), especially in low-income and culturally and racially diverse areas (Pace, 2008;2011; Segall, 2006). Research has documented the consequences of eliminating or limiting social studies instruction. It deprives students of meaningful opportunities to learn about their own histories and to challenge Eurocentric curriculum. Because already marginalized students, such as racial minorities and colonized peoples, and currently displaced peoples, such as recent immigrants, “often confront alienation by mainstream educational institutions that invalidate and ignore the knowledge base of their heritage culture and communities and reinforce colonizing, patriarchal, and neoliberal ideologies” (Cervantes-Soon & Carillo, 2016, p. 282). Because current curriculum essentializes,
stereotypes, silences and/or further subjugates the experiences of marginalized or displaced people (Bigelow, 1998; Lowen, 1998; Peterson, 1998), teachers have “daily opportunities to affirm that our students’ lives and languages are unique and important…in the selections of literature we read, in the history we choose to teach, and we do it by giving legitimacy to our students lives” (Christensen, 2002, p. 102). Resistance literature, embedded within the literacy curriculum, can be one effective strategy for reclaiming and affirming subjugated histories.

**Talk about the “Tough Stuff”**. Parents and teachers alike shelter students from the harsh realities of life, especially in school curricula (Wollman-Bonilla, 1998). The texts used in schools often have happy endings (Boutte, 2002) and use “protectionism” (Hubbard & Swain, 2017), relegating tough topics to the margins, dismissing social issues, disconnecting curriculum from real life and “throwing away the opportunity to engage in anything real or important” (Lewison, et al., 2002, p. 14). Resistance literature brings tough topics from the margins of the curriculum to the center (Flores et al., 2019) and pushes to move “beyond food, festival, folklore, and fashion” (Meyer & Rhodes, 2006, p. 82). The latter practice offers essentialized, stereotypical, and superficial and decontextualized notions of culture that fail to address issues of power and hegemony. Instead, resistance literature serves to open the space to attend to serious issues in society, such as social inequities.

**Connect Historical Issues to Contemporary Injustices**. Historical texts featuring social movements often reveal harsh realities, explicitly within the past. Critical attention to reading resistance literature includes deliberate conversations about how dominant structures have maintained control over time (Giroux et al., 1999). Critical educators can use these texts to trace how historical issues of injustice are linked to the present problems we are facing. Hubbard and
Swain’s (2017) work with preservice teachers using picture books about the U.S. Civil Rights Movement is in response to their critiques of current classroom practices:

Typically, elementary students are only taught the Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks narrative, which serves as ‘character education’. This limits what we teach students about possible political actions because it mutes the event’s pluralist and participatory elements and denies the everyday reality that injustices still exist. (p. 27)

A teacher who connects historical issues to current events can unveil a path to act on inequities today, and resistance literature can be a site to initiate that conversation for transformation.

**Opens a Space for Agency.** Using critical approaches to incorporating multicultural literature that addresses the theme of resistance movements creates space for students to see their potential for social action to fight oppression and enact change (Leland et al., 2005). For instance, Ferguson (2012) describes how “A book, an artwork, a report, an organizational plan, a protest—such are the little things that we can deploy in order to imagine the critical forms of community, forms in which minoritized subjects become the agents rather than the silent objects.” (p. 232) In this lesson, this piece of resistance literature can open spaces for teachers to refashion curriculum and institutional practices as sites for enlightenment, resistance, and transformation.

**Empirical Studies using Literature about Social Movements**

Empirical studies in which preservice teachers use multicultural children’s literature with themes of resistance for social justice include Hubbard and Swain’s (2017) study of K-6 preservice teachers using picture books about the U.S. Civil Rights Movement in their social studies methods’ courses. The study included critical inquiry followed by teachers creating and teaching lessons, sandwiched between pre- and post-study surveys and focus group interviews.
The education researchers found that as preservice teachers reflected on their pedagogical choices, they held a protectionist view about teaching; while pre-service teachers gained some content knowledge and social issues awareness…pre-service teachers’ protectionist conceptions play into the erasure of complex Civil Rights Movements human rights issues and other topical interpretations contrary to celebratory, nationalistic history. (p. 230)

This study points to the need for teacher education programs to strengthen critical theory and practices applied to the reading and teaching of literature so that teachers are better prepared to confront and address structural racism (Haddix & Price-Dennis, 2013). Lazar and Offenburg’s (2011) study of preservice teachers’ use of historical African American picture books in a summer reading practicum found that students demonstrated a similar avoidance to taking a critical stance. They call for more collaborative involvement between teacher educators and teachers to support the use of literature in truly transformational ways.

The research summarized above demonstrates the importance and complexity of preparing novice teachers who understand historical and contemporary issues. The text selection, theoretical approaches, and critical pedagogies offered by teacher education programs can center justice in their literacy classroom by using resistance literature. I offer this specific focus to multicultural children’s literature and teacher education research to utilize children’s literature in teacher education, where reading is a site for social, cultural, and political criticism. My study offers a direction for engaging preservice teachers in critical interrogation of historical informational texts as a strategy to resist the reproduction of hegemonic structures and to generate teacher agency for transformative, action-oriented, social justice empowered curriculum.
Summary

Literacy education programs, and specifically, children’s literature courses, have the opportunity to prepare our future teachers with a critical lens to understand social structures that shape educational systems and spaces. Just as texts are shaping powers that reinforce and maintain power and oppression, forces which shape the lives of our students, ourselves, and our world, teachers have the opportunity, if equipped with critical theories, pedagogical tools, and instructional experiences, to teach resistance literature in ways to alter power relations, to interrogate, negotiate, and interrupt through curriculum, instructional practices, and to take collective action to (re)configure classroom spaces as active agents of change for a more equitable and just education.
CHAPTER III

METHODS

In this chapter, I detail the methods for my qualitative research study, which focuses on two case studies, as well as the results of my analysis of selected items from a written reflection survey items administered to all 23 students in the class. I begin with an overview and present the context and setting, participants, researcher-participant role and informed consent procedure. I then describe data sources and collection methods, instructional experience, and approach to data analysis.

Overview of Research Design

This qualitative study was conducted with undergraduate students enrolled in a Children’s Literature undergraduate course. This course is housed in the School of Education at a western mountain university and is a core course required for students enrolled in the Education major, minor, and licensure program. The design of this “Reading for Social Justice Project” unit offers a series of classes to develop preservice teachers’ understanding and application of the Critical Multicultural perspective when writing a critical analysis paper of a selected book, and analyzing, planning, enacting lessons and reflecting on a multicultural literature-based lesson plan project. Halfway through time in the study, COVID-19 emerged as a global pandemic and the university decided to switch from in-person to remote instructions beginning. The research questions are:

RQ 1: How do preservice teachers participating in a “Reading for Social Justice Project” in their Children’s Literature course understand, value, and apply a critical multicultural perspective to expose and critique social issues and themes in multicultural children’s literature that address issues of race, gender, and/or socioeconomic status?

RQ 2: How do these preservice teachers critically design, enact, and reflect on a multicultural literature-based lesson plan project?
Context and Setting

This study takes place in the Spring 2020 semester of a Children’s Literature course, a lower division education class in the School of Education. The university is a Predominately White Institution that enrolls approximately 27,000 undergraduate students (University website, 2020). The course is a one-semester, three credit-hour education course, and is a required course for students in the Elementary Education major, minor, and teaching licensure program.

All the course readings, activities, and assignments were part of the usual course requirements. Children’s Literature courses are common in university teacher preparation programs, as they provide an opportunity for preservice teachers to become familiar with curriculum and instruction. While this course is not a teaching methods course, the syllabus highlights the purpose of the course is to provide students with an introduction to “(a) theoretical and developmental processes associated with literary learning, (b) methods for teaching literature in a diverse society, and (c) the integration of classroom instruction” (Dalton, 2020, p. 1). Additionally, this course calendar devotes a generous amount of time to support students’ abilities to interpret and attend to multicultural children’s literature critically. As this course is a requirement nested in the School of Education, it aligns to the school’s broader mission and therefore is grounded in commitments to “democracy, diversity, equity and justice” (School of Education website, 2020), issues at the forefront of this course. The “Reading for Social Justice Project” is a major part of the course and is described in detail below in the instructional experience section.

Students

Participants in this study are undergraduate students enrolled in the Children’s Literature course in School of Education at the university. All enrolled students were invited to participate
in this research, and 23 of 25 students consented to participate. Students are fluent English
speakers, readers, and writers, including some bilingual students, and include sophomores
through fifth-year students (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1
Children’s Literature Students’ Self-Reported Grade Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>n=23</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior/Senior</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th year Senior</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All 23 students participating in the study are either Elementary Education majors, minors,
or enrolled in the School of Education’s teaching licensure program and are subsequently
referred to as preservice teachers to distinguish between college-level students and their intended
elementary student audience. Eight (35%) of these participants were education majors, ten (43%)
of the participants were education minors, and five (22%) participants were taking coursework to
complete the Elementary Education License. A wide variety of dual majors is represented. Of the
participants enrolled in majors or minors outside of the School of Education, 11 students were in
the College of Arts in Sciences, whose majors including History, Ethnic Studies, Political
Science and Psychology. There was also one student majoring in business, two in media, and one
in cinema studies and moving image arts.

The majority of students presented or self-identified as White females, and two students
self-identified as people of color during classroom interactions. The gender diversity of courses
in the School of Education tends to be less diverse than the population of the university as a
whole. While Spring 2020 Campus-wide Census Data reports a population of 44.5% Female and
55.5% Male, School of Education Data reports a gender makeup of 81% Female and 18.7% Male
(University Spring Census, 2020). This lack of gender diversity reflects persistent, national
trends in both preservice teacher education and national data revealing a workforce of
elementary educators that are predominantly female (NCES, 2018a).

Case Study Students

I purposefully selected three students for two cases: Leah & Sophia, who read *Hidden
Figures* (2018) and Riley, who read *Malala’s Magic Pencil* (2017). To select these students, I
reviewed all of the artifacts (critical paper, lesson plan and reflection surveys) across all 23
students to get a sense of the range of students’ experiences and views. The qualitative responses
to the survey reflection prompts, as well as their overall ratings, were especially helpful in
understanding students’ perspectives. These case study students were not unusual, in that all of
the students’ reported a positive experience and were able to describe how they were taking up a
critical perspective through the RSJ project. They were selected, however, because they were
strong examples of students who fully engaged in the project and produced artifacts where they
explicitly expressed a critical perspective using the CMA framework.

Case Study One: Leah and Sophia. Leah was a junior double majoring in Psychology
and Elementary Education, and self-identified as a White female. Leah’s partner Sophia, a peer
in the Elementary Education cohort, was a junior, double majoring in English and Elementary
Education and did not self-identify a racial/ethnic identity. Leah and Sophia were selected as a
case study because both were Elementary Education majors (as opposed to students in the
licensure program), and they traveled in a cohort model throughout more extensive coursework;
and unified themes emerged across the analysis of the partners’ teaching and reflections and they
frequently used collaborative phrasing like “(My partner) and I,” “we,” and “our” (Leah,
Individual Written Reflection; Sophia, Individual Written Reflection; Final Lesson Plan.
Case Study Two: Riley. Riley, a senior in the Elementary Teacher Licensure program, was majoring in Sociology, and self-identified as a White female. I focus on Riley's case because she chose to work on this project individually, and it seemed important to learn from her experience, given that teacher educators who choose to teach a project like RSJ are likely to be faced with students who choose to work on their own. I have a rich data corpus of Riley's experiences because I worked closely with her throughout data collection. Riley opted for an individual project because of learning preferences and scheduling challenges. In an effort to maintain the collaborative spirit of the project, we worked closely together in partnership. Uniquely, her final teaching demonstration was the two of us on screen: 20 minutes of a teaching demonstration geared towards a fifth-grade imagined audience, where I acted in the role of a student, followed by a rich one-on-one reflective conversation about the purpose, use, and value of the Critical Multicultural lens.

Instructors

Dr. Bridget Dalton. As Associate Professor in Literacy Studies, Dr. Dalton served as the instructor of record of the course and faculty advisor on the project. Along with former children’s literature instructors, she had previously developed and taught the first component of the RSJ Project (the critical multicultural analysis of a picture book) in previous classes. Dr. Dalton identifies as a White middle-class female. Dr. Dalton co-planned the project, provided preservice teachers feedback on the critical paper draft, and graded the final version; she also participated in some of the zoom lesson plan conferencing and assisted in the class sessions for the project.

Kirsten Tivaringe (instructor and principal investigator). I co-planned the project and took the lead instructor role and was Principal Investigator for this four-session “Reading for
Social Justice Project” that spanned multiple weeks throughout the Spring 2020 semester. I describe my researcher positionality and participant-researcher role as follows:

**Teacher-researcher positionality.** I identify as a White, heterosexual, cis-gender female, in her early 30’s, from a middle-class family; I hold privileges and experience the benefits of an inequitable society. While I do not experience the full extent of oppressive structures, as a wife to a Black African and mother to a biracial child, this work is personal as I train my daughter’s future teachers. As I previously detailed in the introduction, my background influences the design of the project, the teaching of the course, and data analysis. It is important for me, as White person in a Predominantly White Institution, especially as one who holds a position of power, to name my Whiteness and the privileges that come with it. I aim to use my position of power and privilege as a teacher educator who recognizes the connection between historical oppression and injustice and persistent present-day inequities and commit to promote social justice.

Naming my own positionality as a White ally underscores my role as a multicultural educator and models doing the work of recognizing, naming, and remaining constantly cognizant of the presence and potential implications of my positionality and showed preservice teachers “how White privilege continues to function today” (Sams & Allman, 2015, p. 69). I openly talk about how my identities afford me privilege in the course as a way to model the salience of race and as a way to actively work against the temptation for White people to fall back on the comfort of color blindness. By naming my power and positioning explicitly in this course, I support White and White presenting people in doing the work of unpacking privileges that come with Whiteness and provide a space for dialogue about teaching with multicultural literature while White (Nieto, 1997).
The “I” in positionality is not fixed. Throughout this project, my preservice teachers and I are constantly learning and developing together, developing the skills of critically conscious educators. When presenting myself, my identities, and positionality in this course and research project, I attended class for introductory sessions before the “Reading for Social Justice Project” began. My goal was to constantly, consciously balance research and course goals in these roles, important as my presence in the course was both as a guest co-teacher and researcher for this multi-week “Reading for Social Justice Project” unit. I connected with preservice teachers by naming myself also a student learning alongside them, as a current doctoral student whose focus was Literacy Curriculum and Instruction. I offered vignettes from my previous experience as an elementary school teacher to connect their tomorrow to my yesterday. I explicitly named my position as an educational researcher and guest co-instructor in the course, one who does not merely teach or observe, but as an active self within literacy education, one who seeks to interact in the pursuit of knowledge and a more just education system. I named my position as a reflexive researcher seeking critical awareness of myself within the world, who strives to jointly work towards goals of educational equity and justice.

I enacted this positionality throughout designing course work for dialogic interactions, and group collaboration, rather than dialectical lecture. I sat next to preservice teachers in conversation during in-person, small group and partner work, rather than standing over them. When preservice teachers solicited support, we together contemplated instructional decisions when lesson planning; that purposeful pedagogy positioned me as a thinking partner in exploring options rather than offering answers. I took on the role of facilitator rather than evaluator, often referring students back to the theoretical framework and our social justice mission. During the lesson planning process, I enacted a 20-minute teaching demonstration, modeling reflexivity by
concluding the session by giving myself and soliciting critical feedback from the preservice teachers. Conferences were purposefully designed to be student-led, and I sought to position myself as a thought partner, rather than the holder of knowledge. I referred to teaching as interesting and challenging work, as it is it both science and art, often highlighting that there is no one correct answer. Instead of seeking that “answer”, we brainstormed potential interpretations and pathways towards our social justice mission. In the instructional experience section, I further highlight pedagogies and instructional supports that narrate my position as a researcher, co-teacher, and learner alongside my students.

**Informed consent procedure**

When designing this study, we were aware that student participants could perceive a risk to their grade related to participation or non-participation in this classroom-based research project. Therefore, we developed a plan for consent and protection of participants to ensure they feel eliminates any possibility of risk. As Dr. Bridget Dalton was key personnel in this study and the instructor of record in the course, she was not present when the consent forms were read and signed, nor did she have access to the university students’ consent forms until after the Spring 2020 grading period had closed and all course grades had been submitted. This ensured confidentiality and that participation in this study would not influence grading for the course.

As the principal investigator who obtained consent without the course instructor in the room, I read the attached recruitment script (see Appendix N: Recruitment Script) and consent form (see Appendix O: IRB Consent Form) to students at the end of a class session of class two weeks before the data was collected. I advised students on the consent process, emphasizing this is a strictly voluntary study and all participants can opt-out at any point. I ensured students I had no grading role in the course and consent remained confidential until after grades were submitted,
so that participation would not influence grading for the course. After reading aloud the entirety of the consent form, including consent for audio and video recording, as well as consent for the use of class assignment artifacts, I collected signed consent forms and stored them sealed in an envelope in my locked office.

**Data Sources and Collection**

During the multi-week “Reading for Social Justice Project”, I collected a range of data sources to address the research questions including video and audio recording of class sessions, such as conferences and small group teaching demonstration as well as student assignments and artifacts, such as the Critical Multicultural Analysis Paper draft and final, Reading for Social Justice Lesson plan draft and final, and individual written project reflection. There were four collaborative events (two points of written feedback, conference, enactment, small group debrief) between the five artifacts submitted, displayed in Figure 3.1 below, where purple signifies instructor involvement.

**Figure 3.1.** Preservice teacher artifacts and collaborative events throughout the “Reading for Social Justice Project” (where purple indicates instructor involvement).
Class Session Field Notes

During classroom sessions, I recorded handwritten field notes in a small journal to capture students’ participation in classroom discussions and activities, especially attending to students’ interactions with one another and instructors in text analysis and instructional design for social justice. During whole group and small group work, I recorded field notes to describe how the students are taking up the Critical Multicultural perspective and the questions students were asking while analyzing the text. After each classroom observation, I transferred these notes into digital format.

Video and Audio Recording of Class Sessions

Four class sessions for this project were audio and video recorded. Two of these sessions were in-person and two of these sessions were migrated to virtual format due to COVID-19. Both formats of these recordings included class discussions with both large and small groups of students and partner work time between the pair of students who selected the same picture book.

Table 3.2 outlines the four core class sessions for the multi-week “Reading for Social Justice Project” and its modality.

Table 3.2
Overview of Course Sessions in the “Reading for Social Justice Project”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session Number</th>
<th>Topic of Session</th>
<th>Modality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session 1</td>
<td>Student text selection, and instructor introduction to Critical Multicultural perspective and introduction to text analysis.</td>
<td>In person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 2</td>
<td>Instructor model teaching demonstration lesson and student collaborative text analysis</td>
<td>In person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 3</td>
<td>Lesson plan conference with teaching partner pairs and instructor(s)</td>
<td>Remote, Zoom capture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 4</td>
<td>Students’ final teaching demonstration and feedback reflection session</td>
<td>Remote, synchronous Zoom capture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When class sessions were held in person, multiple cameras and audio recording devices were placed throughout the classroom to capture both student and instructor language, positioning, body language, handling of children’s literature, etc. Students sat at tables in small groups of three to five during the first two in-person class sessions to engage in various collaborative analysis activities, discussions, and lesson planning. Audio and video recording devices were placed in two corners and the center of the room in attempts to capture small group conversations using the two in-person course sessions.

When our in-person course switched to a virtual format due to university decisions surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, courses were recorded through the Zoom platform. During the third session, as these conferences were held online on Zoom between either one or both instructors and student teaching partners, I audio and video recorded the entirety of the 13, 10–20-minute conferences after obtaining permission from participants. Recordings from the final workshop, the culminating teaching enactment, includes two 10–15-minute whole group Zoom recordings of the introduction and conclusion of the class, as well as six 1-hour recordings of partner teaching demonstrations and small group debrief sessions. Students were pre-assigned to breakout rooms in Zoom, partnered into thematic teams based on book selection; for example, the two teaching teams that selected texts surrounding women’s rights, made a group of four. During the teaching enactment and debrief session, Dr. Dalton and I divided the 12 presenting groups evenly and dropped into the various breakout rooms for five minutes each, taking written notes, remaining as fly-on-the-wall observers. I transcribed the case study conferences, Zoom teaching demonstrations, and small group lesson debriefs with particular attention to translation of critical text analysis into instructional decisions and teacher reflexivity.
**Researcher Reflective Memos**

I recorded reflective memos about the project, its design, and work with students primarily as a response to the in-class sessions. I typically wrote these memos on the evening following the sessions. I sometimes audio-recorded my comments on my walk after class or drive home, and then later followed up with further reflection by transferring them to digital typewritten form. These course reflections allow both a reflective space, as well as a recording of moments of interest, trends, and emerging themes.

**RSJ Instructional Materials and Artifacts**

Instructional materials for course design, such as the course syllabus (see, Appendix A: Course Syllabus Excerpt) and assignment description sheets (see Appendix C: Assignment Guide- “Reading for Social Justice Project” Overview, Appendix D: Assignment Guide: Critical Multicultural Analysis Paper and Rubric, and Appendix H: Lesson Plan Template), instructors’ lesson plans, and meeting minutes from co-planning sessions serve as secondary sources in this study. Multiple iterations of these sources serve to document adjustments to project design in response to student feedback and need, as well as changes made to adapt to new COVID-19 requirements as we migrated into a virtual class mid-way through the project. PowerPoint slides for class sessions (such as Appendix E: Critical Multicultural Theory PowerPoint) serve as sources detailing the class sessions under study.

**Instructor-Curated Collection of “Resistance Literature”**

The Reading for Social Justice Project Recommended Picture Book List (See Appendix B) was a list of instructor-selected texts curated around the theme of “Resistance Literature”. This list offered preservice teachers a substantive starting point to select a picture book to apply a Critical Multicultural perspective to expose and critique social issues and themes that address
issues of race, gender, and/or socioeconomic status. The book selection criteria were narrowed to picture books for an elementary audience. As detailed in the literature review, the rationale for selecting primarily non-fiction, historical texts showcasing social movements resulted in mostly biographies of change agents. The search and selection process were aligned with our goals to include multicultural voices and texts from authentic, insider authorship.

The search began by perusing critically acclaimed texts, such as award-winning titles, honorable mentions/nominations for the Caldecott Medal, Jane Addams Peace Award, Coretta Scott King Award, Jane Addams Children's Book Award for Younger Children, Pura Belpre Award, and NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work, among others. Reputably reviewed texts were also considered by browsing recommended book lists from organizations such as Teaching Tolerance, the International Literacy Association, the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), and from online sources, such as SocialJusticeBooks.org, and WowLit.org. From there, the search was expanded to recommended titles from multicultural publishing companies, such as Little, Brown Books for Young Readers and Lee and Low Books. Social media was utilized to expand the search for novel texts, including various social media accounts, such as @Hereweeread, @littlefeministbookclub, and @readyourworldmcbd. Hashtag movements for literary diversity and justice, such as #WeNeedDiverseBooks, #DisruptTexts, #OwnVoices, and #1000blackgirlbooks were referenced. We, as instructors, also collaborated with university and local public librarians for recommendations aligned to the course goals and project purpose.

Initial keywords and search parameters included: non-fiction, history, social justice, civic engagements, and civic activists. First pass themes included: resistance, persistence, changemakers, agency, lesser-known heroes, “sheros”, social movements, revolutionaries,
pioneers of change, and liberation struggles. When narrowing the initial extensive list of 41 titles, we eliminated compilations of biographies and board book poetry, even though they matched the theme, intended age of audience, and diversity in authorship. Year published was considered in the narrowing process. We wanted our list to be balanced and to include some classics while offering more current texts, reflecting the surge in availability of multicultural texts with insider authorship. Ultimately, 1/10th (2) of the texts on the list were published in the 1990’s, 1/3rd (7) were published in the early 2000’s, and the remaining (12) were published between 2010 and 2020.

Based on the emerging themes, final categorizations of the texts were: Civil Rights Era of the 50s and 60s, Slavery/Abolitionist, Environmental Justice, Women’s Rights, and an assorted category, that included Native, Chicano/borderlands, and international justice. Texts outside of these themes were eliminated (for full booklist, see Appendix B: “Reading for Social Justice Project” Book Selection List). In total, there were 21 books on the recommended list, with three to five books in each category. There is some repetition in the authorship of renowned authors such as texts by Carole Boston Weatherford (2,) Lesa Cline-Ransome (2) Jeannette Winter (2), Lynn Cherry (2), as well as two texts by Andrea Davis Pinkney and illustrator Brian Pinkney (2).

A note on intersectionality: Selections were narrowed to aligned to research question 1: “How do preservice teachers participating in a “Reading for Social Justice Project” in their Children’s Literature course understand, value, and apply a critical multicultural perspective to expose and critique social issues and themes in multicultural children’s literature that address issues of race, gender, and/or socioeconomic status?” Seemingly absent from our list includes categories of LGBTQIA+, Asian/Pacific Islander, Religion, age, nationality, education, language status, ableism, etc. While these important identities were not central to our study, these themes
are present in some of the texts selected and in our analysis in intersecting ways. For example, *Hidden Figures: The True Story of Four Black Women and the Space Race* (2018), while categorized in the Women’s Rights section, is set during the Civil Rights Era of the 50’s and 60’s and covers themes of racial discrimination, educational inequity, and socioeconomic status.

Another example of intersectionality within the text offerings is with the book, *A River Ran Wild* by Lynn Cherry (1992). While categorized on this list in the Environmental Justice group, this non-fiction text details environmental destruction by White colonizers in the U.S. during the industrial revolution and explicitly portrays forceful, violent removal of Indigenous people for capitalist gain, intersecting race, class, citizenship, and religion. As intersectionality is central to using a Critical Multicultural perspective (Botelho & Rudman, 2009), students are supported to unveil the intersections within their texts and world. Later, I detail how the instructional experiences encouraged the uncovering of these intersectional themes through the use of Critical Multicultural Analysis throughout the project.

**Student Assignments**

**Student Assignment 1: Critical Multicultural Analysis of a Picture Book Paper Draft and Final**

For this assignment, students were tasked to write a four-to-five-page analytic paper individually using their chosen children’s book, focusing on both the written text and the illustrations. Students were provided an Assignment Guide: Critical Multicultural Analysis Paper and Rubric (see Appendix D) and a sample paper (see Appendix F). The purpose of the paper was for students to demonstrate the application of the theory with deep analysis of the picture book and begin to connect to teaching by conceptualizing how this analysis translates to instruction in the classroom. This assignment had two submission deadlines, one draft and one
final paper, to offer students and instructors opportunities to collaborate in ongoing rich discussions with multiple opportunities for feedback (see Appendix G: Instructor Feedback Form: Critical Multicultural Analysis Paper).

The central aim of the assignment was for students to explain Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) Critical Multicultural perspective, its purpose and use, and to describe how it informed their analysis of their chosen picture book using ideas, theories, and perspectives presented in class during collaborative text analysis session and evidence from readings and course materials used to support their arguments. Students were to use two to three concepts found in Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) Critical Multicultural Analysis (i.e., Race, Class, Gender, Environmental Justice, Power, Historical/Social/Political Ideology, Discourse, Intention/Impact, etc.), while demonstrating understanding of the interconnectedness of these concepts. In the second half of the paper, preservice teachers were asked to discuss how this analysis might affect their teaching of this text, to highlight the implications of this kind of analysis for their future students, followed by a discussion of two tangible teaching ideas of how this book might be used in the elementary classroom. This assignment guide included a rubric that centralizes the purpose of the paper and outlines priorities, with much value placed on the explanation of the importance, purpose, and value of teaching with a Critical Multicultural lens, including detailing how this lens impacts their own teaching and participation in a broader society. Preservice teachers received formative, written feedback on their draft papers and were graded on their final version.

**Student Assignment 2: Reading for Social Justice Partner Lesson Plan Draft and Final**

Another key class assignment data source was a partner-developed lesson plan designed for an elementary audience. It extended the critical analysis of their paper to a teaching context. The purpose of the partner lesson plan assignment was to support preservice teachers in the
translation of the Critical Multicultural theoretical framework in a practical, tangible way. By applying the lens to a piece of multicultural children’s literature and writing a lesson plan for a specific audience to be enacted as a rehearsal, preservice teachers were afforded the opportunity to practice how they would and could communicate these complex topics in digestible, actionable ways. Similar to the CMA paper, this lesson plan had two submission deadlines, one draft and one final (see Appendix J: Instructor Feedback Form: Lesson Plan). The purpose of the multiple submissions was to support collaboration and feedback from both instructors and teaching partners and serve as an opportunity to document the ongoing development of a critical perspective. For this assignment, class sessions (later detailed in the instructional experience section) scaffolded preservice teachers to co-design their lesson plan draft, receive feedback, and conference with instructor(s) before submitting a final version and teaching the lesson to a small group of peers.

In addition to class sessions that supported design (later detailed in instructional experience section) students were provided both a Lesson Plan Template (see Appendix H) and this same template filled out as a Model Lesson Plan using our mentor text *When Marian Sang* (2002) by Pamela Munoz Ryan (see Appendix I). The five-page lesson plan template was divided into five sections designed to center students on their social justice goal. The five sections are as follows: Lesson Logistics, Background and Rationale, Before Reading, During Reading, and After Reading.

**Lesson logistics.** In the first section, preservice teachers were asked to report their book title, author, and the age of intended audience for the lesson plan. Next, they were asked to select their social justice goal from the linked “Social Justice Anchor Standards” from TeachingTolerance.org. The United Nations Environmental Rights document was also used by
preservice teachers who selected environmental justice themed books. Finally, preservice teachers were prompted to translate this academic standard to student-friendly language and explicitly connect the standards to the content of their picture book.

**Background and rationale.** Next, preservice teachers were asked to write a rationale for their book selection and standard selection and describe their instructional strategies to engage and prepare children to meet their social justice goal. We asked: “Why did you choose this book? How does it address a social justice theme or goal? Why does this lesson matter? Why do you want students to engage in this experience, with this book as the base?”. By asking these questions, we sought to encourage reflection throughout the lesson plan process. We explicitly invited preservice teachers to revisit their Critical Multicultural Analysis paper, to remind them that the deep analysis they had already done was to be utilized here.

The “before reading”, “during reading”, and “after reading” sections were divided into a table format to support students’ organization of their lesson planning at multiple levels: a. the more abstract, teacher-level conceptual, metacognitive work, b. how that translates into teacher language for the elementary audience (by providing prompts to script their language and actions), and c. ways in which they planned opportunities for their audience to actively engage students in the learning experience (What were students to be doing? Saying?), as shown in Figure 3.2.
**Before reading.** This section provided preservice teachers support in introducing the text to activate background knowledge and offer historical context to support students’ understanding in preparation for reading, set the purpose of the lesson, and hook students to initiate engagement. We asked teachers: “How will you introduce the text, elicit and connect to children’s ideas and knowledge, spark interest and engagement, and set a purpose for reading?”

As this section is introduces the text, the lesson plan provided preservice teachers space to script

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**Figure 3.2.** Reading for Social Justice Lesson Plan Template excerpt (for full template, see Appendix H).
what they were doing or saying with students when offering a historical text in a historical or sociopolitical context that might be unfamiliar to their intended audience of elementary students. Probes included: “Will you offer a picture walk? Will you be pointing to the book/text at certain points? Will you introduce the historical context? Are you using any visuals or other materials or media to introduce the text?”.

**During reading.** In this section, we centered teacher’s planning to their social justice goal and guided them to translate the analysis from their CMA paper into instruction by asking, “What will you do to support children’s understanding and application of a critical perspective in pursuit of your social justice goal during the reading of this book?” We prompted teachers to specifically indicate their stopping points in their picture book and explain their reasoning for selecting that scene or text excerpt as a focus point. This space in the lesson plan prompted preservice teachers to include page numbers, images of the text, and provided space to detail what they would do at this stopping point in the text (e.g., discuss or clarify unfamiliar or particularly important ideas, concepts, or potentially new vocabulary; ask questions or raise an issue for brief discussion). Again, we provided a space for preservice teachers to explain how this instructional decision aligned to their social justice goal.

**After reading.** After completing the read-aloud, the template provided space for preservice teachers to support students in responding to and extend their understanding of the text. The lesson plan template required two post-reading questions and/or an activity to be enacted with elementary students in pursuit of their social justice goals.

**Student Assignment 3: Individual Written Reflection on Reading for Social Justice Project**

In this final student assignment, preservice teachers had the opportunity to reflect on the experiences throughout the multi-week “Reading for Social Justice Project” as a whole.
Preservice teachers were sent a link to a Google form survey (see Appendix M: Project Reflection Form) and were advised that this reflection would take about 30-40 minutes to complete, although they had unlimited time to do so. The survey form included 22 items, including several Likert scale rating items and several open-ended questions. The questions spanned instructional experiences and assignments, addressing the text selection, Critical Multicultural Analysis workshops, paper assignment, and the process of planning, co-teaching, enacting, and reflecting on their lesson plan. They had the opportunity to reflect on the course project design, collaboration, and feedback from instructors and peers throughout the project.

The survey also probed preservice teachers to reflect on how their thinking and practice has changed as they look toward their futures. As the project evolved into a remote format conducted on Zoom, we asked how switching to a remote learning environment impacted their learning, collaboration, and participation.

More specifically, the survey first collected general logistic and demographic information before prompting preservice teachers to provide a rationale for their text selection. Reflective questions were designed to align to course goals and research questions by asking: “What does teaching children’s literature with a Critical Multicultural perspective for social justice mean to you?” and “What is your biggest takeaway after completing your critical paper? After reflecting on your lesson?” With this reflective opportunity, we provided preservice teachers the space to highlight their greatest success and greatest challenge of the project and to pinpoint one “lightbulb moment of teacher learning” in the process. Also in the survey, preservice teachers were probed to identify three of the most important things they learned. We asked preservice teachers to envision how their learning may impact their future by asking: “How might you
apply lessons learned from this project to future teaching? What do you think might be the benefits for your future students?”.

We also used this survey to solicit feedback on the design of the project by asking: “Which experiences were most helpful to you to learn and develop skills as a critical educator with goals for social justice?” Midway through this project, we switched to a synchronous remote course environment due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, which impacted both project design and research collection. Thus, we knew it would be important to ask: “How did this hybrid experience (some in-person sessions followed by online) affect your success in this project?” and “Which of these online experiences were most helpful to you to learn and develop skills as a critical educator with goals for social justice?” Next, I detail the full instructional experiences within which these student assignments are nested.

**Instructional Experience**

In this section, I detail the series of four key instructional experiences offered to preservice teachers throughout the Reading for Social Justice Project as a part of both coursework and the research project. Under each experience, I describe the goals and purposes of each session and reference data sources collected and accompanying appendices. To put the four sessions in the scope of the semester, Table 3.3 serves as a calendar showing the sequence of the key instructional experiences and submission deadlines for assignments throughout the multi-week “Reading for Social Justice Project”.
Table 3.3
“Reading for Social Justice Project” Scope and Sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course design and syllabus finalization</td>
<td>• IRB approval</td>
<td>• <strong>Session 1</strong>: Text Selection, Introduction to Critical Multicultural Perspective and Introduction to Text Analysis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Project overview and preview of Social Justice Project Book Options</td>
<td>• <strong>Session 2</strong>: Model Teaching Demonstration Lesson and Collaborative Text Analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• get-to-know the guest co-teacher, introduction to the research project</td>
<td>• PSTs submit 1st draft of CMA paper * Instructor feedback on CMA paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• invitation to participate in research, IRB consent forms collected</td>
<td>• PSTs submit 1st draft of lesson plan</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Spring Break</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• PSTs submit final CMA paper * Instructor feedback on Partner Lesson plan</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Introductions, Project Overview, and Invitation to Participate in Research

Upon the introduction of this project, I was welcomed into Dr. Dalton’s class to introduce myself as a guest instructor, get to know preservice teachers, and review the “Reading for Social Justice Project” Overview sheet (see Appendix C: Assignment Guide- “Reading for Social Justice Project” Overview). All 21 picture books (see Appendix B: “Reading for Social Justice Project” Book Selection List) were physically present and displayed around the perimeter of the room, grouped by category, with multiple copies for student viewing and handling. During this
session, preservice teachers were welcomed to browse books, page through, and take one home for initial consideration.

A week later, I visited the class for a second time to build relationships and rapport with preservice teachers and offer an invitation to participate in the optional research study. I introduced myself as a former elementary school teacher, instructional coach, and curriculum developer to offer my background and expertise on the subject, while balancing the presentation of my positionality as a Ph.D. student, learning alongside them. I presented slides ripe with photos and shared anecdotes of my previous experiences teaching elementary school, as described in Chapter 1. During this portion of the class period, we spent class time getting to know one another in a short introductory activity where we talked about childhood books that impacted our lives. As I transitioned to introduce the research project and its purpose, I named my previous experience as a former instructor of this course, including the previous year when I ran a pilot study of this “Reading for Social Justice Project” they were invited to participate in. Afterward, I read the attached recruitment script (see Appendix N: IRB Recruitment Script), responded to questions, and collected consent forms (see Appendix O: IRB Consent Form). The consent forms were placed in a secure location, not viewed by Dr. Dalton, the instructor of record, until after the project was completed and grades submitted. The instructional experience was the same for both participants and non-participants in the research study.

**Session 1: Picture Book Selection, Introduction to the Critical Multicultural Perspective and Introduction to Text Analysis.**

**Picture book selection.** This session focused on preservice teachers’ picture book selection and project partner and introduced the Critical Multicultural perspective for text analysis. While preservice teachers were encouraged to select texts from this curated list of 21
options, they did have the option to present a text of interest that aligned to our social justice project goals and present it to the instructor for approval. Two groups presented alternative titles, and one of these partner pairs ultimately opted for a title not on the original list: *The Other Side* (2001) by Jacqueline Woodson, illustrated by E.B. Lewis. This was a story about inter-racial friendship in the segregated South. Table 3.4 below reports preservice teachers’ (PSTs) text selection, organized by theme: Civil Rights Movement (4 PSTs, 2 teams), Slavery/Abolitionist Literature (0 PSTs), Environmental Justice (10 PSTs, 5 teams), Women’s Rights (7 PSTs, 3 partner teams, and 1 individual), Assorted (2 PSTs, 1 team), and Student Selected (2 PSTs, 1 team). It is important to note that with 23 preservice teachers participating in the study, there were 12 pairs and one individual project, who selected *Malala’s Magic Pencil* (2017) in the Women’s Rights category. Most notably, there was heavy interest in Civil Rights Movement, Environmental Justice, and Women’s Rights literature categories, with the neglect of the Slavery/Abolitionist Literature category. The two books selected by the case study preservice teachers were: *Malala’s Magic Pencil* (2017) and *Hidden Figures: The True Story of Four Black Women and the Space Race* (2018). These books are described in detail in the case study chapters.

**Table 3.4**

Preservice Teachers’ Text Selection by Category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preservice Teachers’ RSJ Text Selection, by category</th>
<th>Civil Rights Movement, n=4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Choices:</strong> Let the Children March, Sit-in: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down, Voice of Freedom: Fannie Lou Hamer Spirit of the Civil Rights movement, She Stood for Freedom: The Untold Story of a Civil Rights Hero, Separate is Never Equal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Let the Children March</em></td>
<td>1 team of 2 PSTs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author: Monica Clark-Robinson, African American</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrator: Frank Morrison, African American</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Teams/Authors/Teams Each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sit-in: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down</strong></td>
<td>1 team of 2 PSTs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author: Andrea Davis Pinkney, African American</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrator: Brian Pinkney, African American</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Slavery/Abolitionist Literature, Total, n=0</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environmental Justice, Total, n=10</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choices: A River Ran Wild, Our House is On Fire: Greta Thunberg's Call to Save the Planet, Wangari's Trees of Peace: A True Story from Africa, The Great Kapok Tree</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A River Ran Wild</strong></td>
<td>1 team of 2 PSTs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author: Lynn Cherry, White American</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrator: Lynn Cherry</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Our House is On Fire: Greta Thunberg's Call to Save the planet</strong></td>
<td>1 team of 2 PSTs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author: Jeanette Winter, White American</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrator: Jeanette Winter</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wangari's Trees of Peace: A True Story from Africa</strong></td>
<td>1 team of 2 PSTs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author: Jeanette Winter, White American</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Illustrator: Jeanette Winter</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Great Kapok Tree</strong></td>
<td>2 teams of 2 PSTs each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author: Lynn Cherry, White American</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrator: Lynn Cherry, White</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women’s Rights, n=7</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Malala’s Magic Pencil</strong></td>
<td>1 team of 2 PSTs (CASE STUDY), 1 individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author: Malala Yousafzai, Pakistani</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrator: Kerascoët, White French</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Ruth Objects: The Life of Ruth Bader Ginsberg** | 1 team of 2 PSTs |
|---|
| Author: Doreen Rappaport, White, Jewish American | |
| Illustrator: Eric Velasquez, Afro-Puerto Rican American | |

| **Hidden Figures: The True Story of Four Black Women and the Space Race** | 1 team of two PSTs (CASE STUDY) |
|---|
| Authors: Margot Lee Shetterly, African American with Winifred Conkling, White American | |
| Illustrator: Laura Freeman, African American | |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assorted, n=2</th>
<th></th>
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</table>

| **Nelson Mandela** | 1 team of 2 PSTs |
|---|
| Author: Kadir Nelson, African American | |
| Illustrator: Kadir Nelson | |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Selected, n=2</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Other Side</strong> (fictional story set in 1950s-early 60’s South)</td>
<td>1 team of 2 PSTs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author: Jaqueline Woodson, African American</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrator: E.B. Lewis, African American</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session 1 continued: Introduction to Critical Multicultural Perspective and Text

**Analysis.** Before class, preservice teachers were asked to deeply read both core readings by Botelho & Rudman (2009): *Theorizing critical multicultural analysis of children’s literature* and *Teaching critical multicultural analysis of children’s literature*. Knowing these readings are dense, theoretical pieces, the goal of this session was to provide support in understanding the perspective and to offer opportunities to practice applying the framework by engaging in text analysis. Both instructors co-planned and co-taught this 1 hour and 15-minute session. In Appendix E, you will find the Critical Multicultural Theory PowerPoint (Dalton & Tivaringe, Lecture Slides, 03/10/20, Slide 2). Our guiding questions to outline the goals of the session were “What does it mean to bring a Critical Multicultural lens to the texts we receive and create in the world?”, “What is Critical Multicultural analysis of children’s literature? (Slide 6), and “Why do we need a critical multicultural analysis framework?” (Slide 16).

First, preservice teachers were given an example from a controversial political cartoon and asked to engage in critical analysis of the cartoon using these probes: “Whose story is being told? How are individuals constructed in relation to race and gender? How is the story ended?” (Dalton & Tivaringe, Lecture Slides, 03/10/20, Slide 4). The purpose of this exercise was to collaboratively critique a familiar pop culture reference to show preservice teachers that they already likely employed elements of the Critical Multicultural framework without necessarily knowing the academic term by name. After this warmup exercise, preservice teachers were given about 10 minutes to quietly revisit the Botelho & Rudman (2009a; 2009b) readings and notes. Instructors also provided digital copies of the shared Critical Multicultural Theory PowerPoint (see Appendix E) which highlighted selected excerpts from the core readings. Preservice
teachers were asked to jot down notes and mark up the slides, and to prepare for a rich discussion.

Following, both instructors then co-taught a short, interactive style explanation of the lens, defining Critical Multicultural Analysis of children’s literature and terminology, highlighting the purpose of this lens for social justice. The workshop was sprinkled with opportunities for questions, with both whole group and small group discussions of the importance, purpose, and value of using Critical Multicultural Analysis and the implications of using the framework for teaching multicultural children’s literature in an elementary setting.

Slide 31 marks a shift towards applying the “multi-layered lens” in text analysis, where preservice teachers and instructors collaboratively used this framework as a process applied to their own selected “Reading for Social Justice Project” picture book (Dalton & Tivaringe, Lecture Slides, 03/10/20). Figure 3.3 features slides 31-34, which serve as key slides that offered guiding questions for analysis, adapted from the Botelho & Rudman (2009a; 2009b) core readings.
Figure 3.3. Selected Excerpts from Appendix E: Critical Multicultural Theory PowerPoint.

These were highlighted as an essential resource and were referenced in the Critical Multicultural Analysis Paper Assignment Guide (see Appendix D).

Next in the session was a demonstration of the recursive process of analysis on a few sample pages of the mentor text, *When Marian Sang* (2002) by Pamela Munoz Ryan. After setting the sociopolitical and historical context as a brief introduction to the mentor text, we collaborated in critical analysis used Botelho & Rudman’s three-step analytic process presented in the readings to demonstrate how the main character, Marian Anderson, was constructed by “1. Interrogating focalization of story, 2. Examining social processes of character, and 3. Attending to story closure” (p. 120). The purpose of this pedagogical activity was to immerse preservice teachers in a lived experience of the application of the lens to the mentor text, which was to be used throughout the entire unit to guide preservice teachers in analysis and reflection.
In this portion of the session, I used two scenes of focus from *When Marian Sang* (2002). I read short excerpts from the text, displayed images and direct quotes, and demonstrated Critical Multicultural analysis of both the written text and the illustrations. Figure 3.4 offers an example PowerPoint slide displaying how I guided preservice teachers in the analysis of power, silences, and agency (Botelho & Rudman, 2009) in this selected scene.

*Figure 3.4. Slide Excerpt Applying the CM lens to illustration from *When Marian Sang* (2002).*

This teaching demonstration segued into detailing how they would conduct this analysis on their own selected texts. We introduced the assignment guide and paper requirements outlined in the rubric (see Appendix D). Instructors pointed to the full “Model Paper: Reading to Incite Voice: A Critical Multicultural Analysis of *When Marian Sang*” (see Appendix F) and offered a quick walk-through of the sections of the paper, highlighting its alignment to the outline and rubric. The model was co-written by Dr. Dalton and me and contained two embedded illustrations from the picture book and accompanying analysis, the same images used in the
whole-class model demonstration. As additional resources, this sample paper was posted on the class web portal, alongside two other model papers, written by former preservice teachers who had previously taken the course and written a CMA paper. After a brief whole-class question and answer session addressing the logistics of the assignment, preservice teachers were offered individual or partner work time to continue applying this form of analysis to the books spread out in front of them.

While instructors rotated around the room, preservice teachers collaborated with each other and the instructors as they paged through the texts. Table group discussions included interpretations of theoretical readings and attempts at engaging in Critical Multicultural Analysis in relation to their chosen text. Preservice teachers could be seen placing sticky notes selecting illustrations for analysis and could be heard pulling out social justice themes of the book. The air buzzed with teachers-to-be beginning to brainstorm lesson objectives for their future lesson plan. For the closing of class, instructors brought the class back together to probe reflection, asking: “How does this work using the Critical Multicultural lens change your way of thinking about teaching with children’s literature? How does this work change your way of thinking about teaching and learning?”.

With online models, assignment description sheet, and rubrics, preservice teachers walked out of Session 1 of the “Reading for Social Justice Project” with books in hand, teaching partners chosen, and an introduction to the first assignment of the project, the Critical Multicultural Analysis Paper and instructional resources to guide their analysis. Through the collaborative text analysis workshop experience, preservice teachers were equipped with the Critical Multicultural analytic framework as a tool for more critical attention to texts for transformative teaching. As class concluded, logistical information was shared, as well as
encouragement to collaborate with their teaching partners outside of class, offers from instructors to support preservice teachers in office hours, and as always, a (re)orientation towards our shared goal for social justice.

Session 2: Model RSJ Teaching Demonstration Lesson and Collaborative Text Analysis

The primary objectives for Session two of the “Reading for Social Justice Project” were to:

1. Provide preservice teachers support in translating their analytic frame for an elementary audience
2. Immerse preservice teachers in an enactment of the lesson plan model, and
3. Create a collaborative space for teaching partners to apply a Critical Multicultural lens to their teaching.

The session included a model teaching demonstration lesson, discussion and reflection session, and a review of the model lesson plan (see Appendix I). The session began with greetings and an emotional announcement regarding the forthcoming move to a virtual learning environment due to the impact of COVID-19. After soliciting feedback from preservice teachers regarding extensions and adjustments to coursework, the content of the session began with preservice teachers knowing ultimately that their teaching demonstration was now to be performed remotely on Zoom. Transitioning to core academic content began with a reorientation towards the Critical Multicultural lens and encouragement of connections between the analysis they were writing in their paper assignment to the forthcoming lesson plan design by reading this excerpt from the Critical Multicultural Analysis paper model:

I argue that the use of this Critical Multicultural lens is crucial in presenting America’s hard history. The lens allows a text analysis that reveals and interrogates America’s
legacy of discrimination, segregation, and racism in order to incite voice, by creating resistant readers and agential writers. This type of analysis of children’s literature facilitates the pursuit of social justice by enabling a pathway for students to critically read text and to potentially become voices of their century. Using the Critical Multicultural lens is to cultivate a critical eye when reading by “reading power and exposing how power is exercised, circulated, negotiated, and reconstructed” (Botelho & Rudman, 2009, p.117) The purpose of this lens is to read between the lines (Ladson-Billings, 1992) to bring the dominant discourses into consciousness (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). This analysis takes students beyond reading because after this unveiling of inequities in power, the Critical Multicultural perspective takes us a step further, into action, opening a space for agency. (For full model paper, see Appendix F)

Using this excerpt, instructors highlighted how preservice teachers’ ongoing analysis of their own picture book for the Critical Multicultural Analysis Paper assignment will evolve and be translated to student-friendly language for an elementary audience. To support lesson construction, we designed a five-page Lesson Plan Template (see Appendix H). Based on previous informal survey results that indicated most preservice teachers in the class had never written a full lesson plan before, we spent time to briefly outline the gradual release of responsibility instructional framework (McVee et al., 2015) and I-do, We-do, You-do gradual release format embedded within the lesson plan and emphasized that the lesson plan prompted preservice teachers to tie their instructional decisions to the social justice objective of the lesson.

The core of the session featured my explicit modeling of the lesson plan by enacting a teaching demonstration of our mentor text, When Marian Sang (2002), and as shown in Figure
3.5, offered preservice teachers an accompanying Model Lesson Plan (see Appendix I) as both an instructional tool and resource.

![Figure 3.5. Excerpt from Model Lesson Plan for *When Marian Sang* (2002).]
During the model lesson enactment, I welcomed preservice teachers to enter into a role-playing scenario, as they would do in their teaching demonstration for the final session, where they would take on the part of an elementary student. In this case, the lesson was designed for a
fourth-grade audience. A group of most of the preservice teachers in class physically moved from their seats, joining me “crisscross applesauce” on the carpet, where I was seated with the book displayed at the same level.

The 20-minute lesson began with introducing the text, setting the historical context, and stating the objective of the lesson plan. The objectives were adapted from the Justice Standard 12 from the Teaching Tolerance Social Justice Standards (Teaching Tolerance, 2016): “Students will recognize unfairness on the individual level (e.g., biased speech) and injustice at the institutional or systemic level (e.g., discrimination”). This was translated to student-friendly language: “Students will be able to recognize historical injustice and identify actions of resistance.” During the read aloud, I modeled stopping at the same points I analyzed in the Critical Multicultural Analysis paper, reading from the children’s book, “Finally the girl said, ‘We don’t take colored!’ Her voice sounded like a steel door clicking shut” (p. 8). I emphasized this point slamming my hand on the table audibly for dramatic effect. I demonstrated to preservice teachers how we engage in Critical Multicultural Analysis and instruction by using illustrations and stopping points to align with our social justice goals and asking questions that guide students to understand agency. I asked, “How did Marian respond to the unfairness? What choices did she make in order to resist or fight against this injustice?” and offered turn-and-talk time. While preservice teachers discussed, I rotated around the rug to listen and engage with student responses, followed by a whole group discussion. Another main stopping point in the lesson sought to underscore acts of resistance from both Marian, the main character, and her allies, displaying the illustration and reading: “enraged fans wrote letters to the newspapers…again they were denied. Now teachers were angry and marched in support of Marian in front of the Board of Education” (p. 24). To reorient listeners to the purpose of the
lesson, I asked, “Again, to accomplish our important learning goal, to be able to recognize historical injustice and identify actions of resistance, what injustice is occurring and how did activists resist the injustice of segregation?” (See Figure 3.6). At the end of the read aloud, as I would in an actual fourth-grade classroom, I welcomed preservice teachers back to their seats for independent reflection time and opportunities to display mastery of the standard, with this learning task print out in hand:

**Name: __________________________**

**Writing Activity, Historical Perspective taking TAKING ACTION**

If you were to take the perspective of an activist fighting against segregation in “When Marian Sang”, what would your letter to lawmakers say? Write at least one paragraph that:

1. Names the injustices from “When Marian Sang”
2. Identifies the actions (in the book and in real life) that have already been taking place in the fight against this injustice and
3. Offers an idea towards a more just future

*Figure 3.6. Student Handout from Model Teaching Demonstration.*

Transitioning out of role-playing, I concluded the experience with a reflection session, where I solicited feedback from preservice teachers and offered a critical reflection of my own analysis and instruction. We voiced how they themselves would soon engage in a reflective process like this with their small group after their final teaching demonstration.

Preservice teachers then had the remainder of the session to engage in further critical text analysis of their selected picture book and time for co-designing their lesson plan around their social justice objective. Teaching partners could be seen using Post-It notes to select potential stopping points to apply the Critical Multicultural lens and soliciting instructors for conversations and questions. Before dismissal, preservice teachers were encouraged to continue to collaborate with teaching partners virtually outside of class time to co-design the lesson plan...
for the first draft submission. The draft submission purposely provided opportunities for collaboration, feedback, and reflection, underscoring that we are always seeking to better our instruction as constant learners. In closing the session, we reminded preservice teachers that the following session for the “Reading for Social Justice Project” would be in two weeks, following Spring Break, where they would meet online for a scheduled conference with their teaching partner and instructor.

Session 3: (Virtual) Conference between Teaching Partners and Instructor(s)

After preservice teachers submitted their first lesson plan draft, they received written feedback from one or both instructors (see Appendix J: Instructor Feedback Form: Lesson Plan). Preservice teacher partner pairs had 10–20-minute virtual conferences to support continued critical analysis and collaboration and ask any clarifying questions on instructor feedback. I led all 13 of the conferences; Dr. Dalton participated in a few conferences so that we could quickly debrief about how to use the conference time to best suit student needs. During this time, I used the conversation protocol (see Appendix K: Partner Lesson Plan Conference Protocol), which was purposefully designed to ensure the conference was student-initiated, rather than instructor-driven. The dialogue began by checking in with how preservice teachers were doing generally, followed by welcoming them to lead the session, asking more course-oriented questions, like “How are you feeling about how you’re achieving your social justice goal through your lesson design?” and “What would you most like help with?”. Conversations were often guided using the Instructor Feedback Form (see Appendix J). We also probed: “What are your action items to revise your lesson plan?”, highlighting that the learning process is continual. The conference also became a space for preservice teachers to ask quick logistical questions about the course calendar and the upcoming teaching demonstration.
The instructor concluded the conference by reviewing the teaching demonstration protocol, which was to occur the following week, and offering preservice teachers continued support through email or another zoom meeting before commencement of their teaching demonstration. Between sessions, preservice teachers continued to collaborate with their partners outside of class time in preparation for their final lesson plan submission and teaching demonstration.

Session 4: Final Teaching Demonstration and Feedback Reflection Session on Zoom

In this remote Zoom session, preservice teachers were asked to teach their lesson to another partner pair of classmates in a breakout room, who themselves were role-playing the elementary aged audience. The purpose of this enactment was to provide a space for a teaching simulation to apply the Critical Multicultural lens to teaching and learning. For the logistical organization of the online session, we offered a note-catcher (see Appendix L: Student Note-catcher-Teaching Demonstration Day) that offered preservice teachers a protocol for the session, as shown in Figure 3.7.

![On Tuesday 4/14, synchronous class agenda:
12:30-12:40 Connect and check in
BREAKOUT GROUPS
12:40-1:00 Group A lesson teach
1:00-1:10 Lesson reflection debrief (using guiding questions provided below)
1:10-1:30 Group B lesson teach
1:30-1:40 Lesson reflection debrief (using guiding questions provided below)
1:40-1:45 Reconnect](image)

*Figure 3.7. Protocol for Online Teaching Demonstration Day.*

After a brief whole-class check-in, preservice teachers entered their pre-assigned breakout rooms in Zoom for the hour-long small group time, while Dr. Dalton and I dropped into the various breakout rooms as observers.
On the note-catcher, we offered “Guiding Questions for Lesson Observation & Feedback”, as well as suggested “Reflection Prompts”, for each 10-minute reflection debrief and we encouraged preservice teachers to use this as a resource rather than a script. The reflection prompted presenting preservice teachers to reflect: “What would you say is your biggest success? Most challenging? And biggest takeaway after teaching this lesson?”, “What changes would you make if you were to teach this lesson again?”. The reflection prompts for the paired teaching team listening and participating as the elementary school audience probed the peers to offer a: “Glow (point of success of the lesson, in relation to the social justice goal)”, “Grow (point of precise, constructive feedback)”, “How did the critical multicultural approach come through when teaching?”, and “What would you say is your biggest takeaway after participating in your partner team’s lesson?”, important reflection prompts to support preservice teachers to immerse themselves in this experience at both the student-reader and teacher-analyst levels.

Concluding these small group teaching demonstrations and reflection debriefs, we came together as a whole group to reconnect and introduce the post-project reflection. Following the session, preservice teachers concluded the unit by completing the post-project reflection survey, writing an individual written reflection about the project as a whole (For full reflection, see Appendix M: RSJ Project Reflection Survey). These end-of-unit reflections importantly afforded preservice teachers an opportunity to reflect upon the application of the Critical Multicultural perspective into the integration of multicultural literature and consider its impact on future teaching experiences.

**Data Analysis Tools and Approaches**

I relied primarily on Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) Critical Multicultural Analytic lens as my analytic tool to understand how this “Reading for Social Justice Project” could be an
opportunity to support preservice teachers in taking up critical perspectives in an RSJ Project situated in the context of a Children’s Literature course. I applied this tool to interpret how preservice teachers understand and apply a Critical Multicultural perspective to an elementary audience through their critical analysis of a picture book paper, lesson plans and teaching demonstrations, and project reflections. Through this analysis, I sought to gain insight into the questions, tensions, and discursive shifts in preservice teacher learning and the teaching of this kind of RSJ focused project. This framework is complementary to other critical perspectives, such as critical discourse analysis which interrogates the relationship between texts, their producers, and consumers within social environments in which texts are produced and consumed. Critical discourse analysis explores how power is constructed, mediated, and maintained and the effects of power on positioning people and groups (Gee, 2011; Stevens, 2011; Van Sluys et al., 2006).

Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) CMA also intersects with Critical Multimodal Discourse Analysis, focusing on multiple modes in interaction with one another and embedded in socio-political contexts. Modes play a key role in the instructional experience, and thus, require attention in the analysis (i.e., multiple modes are represented in the picture books, lesson plans, papers, and students’ teaching demos). For example, in my model lesson with our mentor text When Marian Sang (2002), I pointed to the illustration where Marian stood outside the door to the music school, denied entry, and made a strong banging sound as I dramatically read “...like a steel door slamming shut...”, followed by an intense gaze at my role-playing fourth-grade audience. My voice, gaze, and actions all convey my understanding that this is an important moment in the text, a concrete representation of the racial injustice that Marian experienced in
her life. Thus, a Critical Multimodal Analysis is required to go beyond a reliance on oral and written language to capture the full modal communication.

Artifact Analysis

For the two case studies, I triangulated data sources including classroom observations, student assignment artifacts, and the collaborations between preservice teaching partners and instructors to learn how preservice teachers employ a Critical Multicultural perspective in their text analysis, planning, teaching, and reflection responses. For the 23 preservice teachers’ survey ratings of their “Reading for Social Justice Project” experience, I computed descriptive statistics as interpreted in Chapter Six.

The Botelho and Rudman multi-layered analytic framework involves a recursive process of analysis to 1. “Interrogate focalization of story, 2. Examine social processes of character, and 3. Attend to story closure” (p. 120). In addition, they point to the need to examine insider versus outsider perspective of the author (and illustrator) who is telling the story through words and images. Together, these approaches informed my process of instructional design of the “Reading for Social Justice Project” guided my data analysis to recognize, describe, interpret, and explain how discourse constructs and positions people and ideas. Considering that “language use constitutes discourses, ideologies, and subject positions” (Botelho & Rudman, 2009, p. 119-120), and “language is where and how power is reproduced, distributed and maintained” (Botelho & Rudman, p. 102) I analyzed how preservice teachers demonstrate understanding and application of a critical perspective through their analytic writing, lesson planning, and reflection, using the language and illustrations of their picture book as the foundation for their own writing and teaching. I analyzed students’ analysis of the picture book text and images and nonverbal interactions of instructors and preservice teachers (Johnstone, 2018; Ochs, 1979; Rogers, 2018),
including the physical handling of the children’s literature, such as during the analysis and
teaching of illustrations in the picture books. For example, when preservice teachers hold the text
up the camera for audience viewing, what are they pointing to? How do preservice teachers use
focalization to attend to power within the images?

I applied Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) Critical Multicultural Analytic framework to
examine preservice teachers’ critical papers, lesson plans, teaching, etc., adapting it as needed to
reflect my focus on preservice teachers. I have outlined below how the key components of their
framework and how I applied it to my analysis of preservice teachers’ artifacts and events:

Table 3.5
Application of Botelho & Rudman’s CMA Framework to Preservice Teachers’ Artifacts and Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Botelho &amp; Rudman’s (2009) Critical Multicultural Analytic Framework (p. 120)</th>
<th>Application to Preservice Teachers’ Artifacts and Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focalization: “Whose story is this? From what point of view? Who sees? Who is observed?” (Botelho &amp; Rudman, 2009, p. 120)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| “Whose story is this?” | - How do preservice teachers amplify or diminish the voices heard in the text?  
- How do they address missing or marginalized voices? |
| “From what point of view?” | - How do preservice teachers address the point of view expressed in the text and its relationship to who gets to tell stories and have power?  
- How do preservice teachers address author and illustrator identity in relation to insider and outsider perspectives and implications for whose stories are told, and how? |
| “Who sees? Who is observed?” | - How do preservice teachers address who has power and agency in the text?  
- How do they call out (or not) power inequities? |
| “How is power exercised?” | - How do preservice teachers position characters, students, societal structures and norms, and themselves? |
With such questions guiding analysis, this critical approach allows multiple levels of analysis. For example, Riley interrogated story closing when Malala used her magic pencil to speak out against injustice. Stemming from analysis written in Riley’s CMA paper, Riley used the CM lens to interrogated story closure to set up space for student action:

*It’s critical to examine what assumptions are embedded in the closure of Malala’s Magic Pencil and if the ending ideology is open or closed. Malala’s story has a very strong*
ending that is embedded with the assumption that everyone is capable of making a

difference (Final CMA Paper, p. 9).

This example of student use of the CM Analytic lens interrogating story closure. At the research
level, I asked: How do preservice teachers reveal (or not reveal) the assumptions of the story
closure? and analyzed Riley’s lesson plan and final teaching demonstration: How do preservice
teachers address story closure and end the lesson? and how do preservice teachers open up
agential space for students to deconstruct dominant ideologies? Analysis attended to setting up
an agential space, silences and unscripted additions, such as when Riley added in-the-moment
emphasize the urgency of agency to her students: “Wishing isn’t enough. Sometimes if you just
talk about doing something and don’t do it, it’s never going to get done if you just talk about it.”
(Teaching Demonstration, 13:52). Riley then turned to her students to hand over the symbolic
pencil, leaving the ending ideologically open to create an opportunity for agency.

Case Study Data Analysis

Using Critical Multicultural Analysis, I engaged in a recursive analysis process to discern
patterns and discuss how themes occurred across data sources, such as student artifacts (CMA
papers, lesson plans), conferences, teaching demonstrations and lesson debriefs, and written
reflections for the “Reading for Social Justice Project”, further detailed in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6
Data Analysis Tools for Case Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Analytic tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RSJ Critical Multicultural Analysis Paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual CMA papers: Critical Multicultural Analysis</td>
<td>Critical discourse analysis was used to examine PSTs’ understanding and of Picture Book application of the CMA framework (1. Focalization, 2. Social Processes, 3. Story Closure) to their text analysis, focusing on intersectional issues of race, gender, and socioeconomic status?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The focus of the analysis was mainly on the final papers, but at some points I referred to points of change from draft to final in response to written feedback from the instructor, capturing redesign throughout the course of the project.

### RSJ Lesson Plan and Teaching Demo

#### RSJ Lesson Plan Draft and Final

Analysis centered around students’ design of a lesson plan in relation to how issues of social justice are taken up. How do goals and learning activities explicitly address issues of social justice? Do PSTs investigate power, challenge dominant discourses, interrogate intersectionality? What are traces of influence from the critical paper to the lesson plan? What emerges that is new? What specific stopping points were selected for instruction, and what rationale/goal was provided as reasoning? (How) do teachers open agential space for students to deconstruct and reconstruct?

The focus of the analysis was mainly on the final lesson plans, but at some points I referred to points of change from draft to final in response to written feedback from the instructor and the collaborative conference, capturing redesign throughout the course of the project.

#### Instructor Feedback Form and Instructor Partner Team Conference

Points of influence from the instructor feedback form and conference were examined to analyze what gets taken up and what doesn’t. What issues, points of tension, critical incidents, and questions did preservice teachers/teacher educators raise and how did they manifest in their final lesson plan and teaching? To capture redesign throughout the course of the project, I explored what changed from draft to final in response to written feedback from the instructor?

#### Teaching Demonstration Video and oral debrief session

Examination of how preservice teachers’ lesson plans were enacted in the teaching demonstration. Consideration of body positioning, facial expression, gestures, and use of book as non-verbal expressions key to understand the teaching experience and students’ perspectives. Analysis of their small group lesson debriefs revealed further insights into their development of pedagogy in pursuit of social justice. Where do intentions fall short?

### RSJ Project Reflection

#### End-of-unit Individual written reflection in survey format

Analysis sought to understand preservice teachers’ views about their experience throughout the project, including their perceptions of competence/abilities teaching for social justice, the role of Children’s Literature in reading for social justice, etc., as well as their views on the effectiveness of the various learning activities and suggestions for improvement. How do PSTs reflect on critical incidents? What learning do they highlight? When attending to project closing, do PSTs reveal a willingness to continue critical work in their future classrooms?

Analysis of these sources attend to preservice teachers’ consciousness, tensions (Bean & Stevens, 2010) contradictions, and (re)design throughout different iterations. I draw on these artifacts in case studies to look for new ways of thinking, light bulb moments, “critical incidents”, and key takeaways where preservice teachers demonstrated development of critical
perspectives and practices, reflexivity in response to feedback and collaborative experiences, connections to the project’s goals for equity and justice, and application to their future careers as educators. I examined teacher learning through artifacts, instructional decisions, and reflections and discern how they were informed (or not) by the Critical Multicultural perspective. I analyzed how “meaning is constructed and reconstructed through interplay between texts, readers, and contexts” (Botelho & Rudman, 2009, p. 102), first examining how preservice teachers’ selection of stopping points and analysis of illustrations in the picture books suggest that they recognize images as sites of power. I examined to what extent preservice teachers took up goals of critical perspectives, and how these translated (or not) into practice in their lesson plans and teaching demonstrations. I looked for tensions and contradictions, where PSTs goals to enact critical pedagogy fell short in lesson plans for an elementary school audience, as well as analyzed for silences and inaction.

**Analysis of Video Recording**

Critical Multicultural Analysis of teacher practice includes examining not only the product, but also the perspective throughout the process, always considering context (Dalton & Smith, 2012). Videos of whole group classroom settings were analyzed to provide context to understand the case study preservice teachers’ experiences of the teaching and learning environment. I also analyzed how students’ lesson enactment videos to interrogate how the teachers and students are interacting with the illustrations and how both teaching partners and listening partners were participating, verbally and nonverbally. To further understand how the case study preservice teachers were viewing teaching multicultural books, I then connected this video analysis to their written reflections.
When analyzing preservice teachers’ collaborative classroom conversations during text analysis and when co-planning a lesson, and especially focused on conferring with instructors, and in teaching demonstration followed by the small-group lesson debrief sessions. Throughout the case study chapters, I provide transcripts of critical incidents (Farrell, 2008; Seidel et al., 2011) in conferences and teaching demonstrations. I show examples of student work samples of papers and lesson plans, including examining stopping points within the Children’s Literature during the lesson and include images how illustrations are used. For example, in Riley’s teaching of Malala’s Magic Pencil, Riley stops at a page that exposes Taliban violence, and guides students to “really look” at the emotions of the character as she faces injustices based on her gender. In the analysis, I asked: How do preservice teachers amplify or diminish the voices heard in the text? How do they address missing or marginalized voices? to answer RQ 1: How do preservice teachers participating in a “RSJ Project” in their Children’s Literature course understand, value, and apply a Critical Multicultural perspective to expose and critique social issues and themes in multicultural children’s literature?

In the small group debrief session, preservice teachers were prompted to reflect on their own teaching first, some self-selected portions of their own teaching to attend to. Teachers were offered a variety of prompts to facilitate reflection and allow researchers insight into teacher learning processes. Preservice teachers discussed their biggest successes, challenges, and changes. These answers were triangulated alongside final written reflections for congruence and continued development across artifacts to study how these preservice teachers critically design, enact, and reflect on a multicultural literature-based lesson plan project (RQ 1).

Within these conferences, teaching demonstrations, and small group reflection videos, I analyzed preservice teacher-to-preservice teacher interaction, preservice teacher-to-instructor
interactions, interactions between teaching team and listening pair, and analyzed behavior, attitude, and attention. Video analysis sought to capture the ways in which students are communicating through talk, gesture, facial expressions, positioning, spatial arrangements, and physical interactions with the text, and with their remote audience, such as offering their lesson participants a close-up view of illustrations. In order to focus on the preservice teachers positioning and attention in relation to the children’s literature, I stopped video frequently, and through screen capture, created screen shots of their teaching demonstration in short still time frames to see changes in their gestures and movements. For example, Sophia’s fingernails gripped the pages of *Hidden Figures* (2018) as she moved the book towards the camera so viewers could get a closer look (pictured in Chapter Four, Case Study One). With a drawn-out voice, an unscripted insertion, and a pause to allow the audience time to analyze, Sophia asks: “*How did being a woman (drawing out the word) and African American impact her status at her job? Who do you think is holding the power? Take a look at that body language with co-workers*” (Sophia, Teaching Demonstration, 24:31). In her lesson plan, she named the purpose of this stopping point was to “slow readers down”, as she offered her imagined students the tools and space to critically interrogate intersectional power inequities in the text and image.

**Analysis of Student Assignments**

The end-of-unit written reflection importantly afforded students an opportunity to reflect upon the application of the Critical Multicultural perspective into the integration of multicultural literature and consider its impact to future teaching experiences. Explicit prompts for students to reflect on teacher learning allows insight into teacher takeaways. With this artifact, I sought insights into students’ text selection, text analysis, instructional decisions in lesson planning and teaching, as well as reflection on the enactment of a lesson and the broader project, all in the
service of goals for equity and social justice. The survey also collected reflections on project design and the project of the whole and allows a look into how the shift to a remote setting impacted teaching and learning.

In Chapter Six, I use descriptive statistics to present the ratings from 23 Google surveys with written responses. Descriptive statistics allowed attention to teacher learning for insight into the ways in which teachers applied and reflected on project principles and practices of critical, equity-oriented teaching. to understand students’ views about their experience throughout the project, including their perceptions of competence reading and teaching for social justice and the role of/opportunity for children’s literature as a tool. This approach was useful in understanding how they reflected on their own strengths, challenges, development throughout the process, and which moments were salient/critical incidents. In order to organize and communicate such findings through data, I offer tables and graphs.

Throughout my analysis and development of findings, I followed qualitative research practices to contribute to the rigor and quality of my analysis such as basing design on pilot study, writing analytic memos, using conceptual frameworks guide research (Ravitch & Riggan, 2011) and centering analysis to “1. understand the meaning of the events, situations or actions, 2. understand the context, and the influence the context has on their actions, 3. identifying unanticipated phenomena and influences generating new “ground theories” about the latter, and 4. Understanding the processes why which events and actions take place” (Maxwell, 2012, p. 221). For example, when Leah and Sophia highlighted the importance of student-friendly language to discuss challenging topics during our conference, I circled back to analyze the stopping points in the lesson plan that the preservice teachers selected for instruction, instructor written feedback on students’ lesson plan to get a better understanding of the context and
influences informing this critical incident and generated a new code to look across the 23 surveys. Analysis of conference transcripts also considered the process of how preservice teachers collaborated and negotiated this during and after the conference, and connected it to their final lesson plan submission, dramatic enactment, and reflection. I used the research software MaxQDA as an analysis tool for coding the 23 surveys and case study student artifacts. The initial open coding resulted in schemes that drew on the theoretical framing of the study, Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) analytical framework that Multi-Layered Lens of the intersectional identities of race, class, and gender, and how power is exercised and circulated. A key piece of the Critical Multicultural framework is the agential nature of the lens; therefore, agency became an important parent code that included child codes such as: student agency, character agency, and teaching to take action. I examined when students pushed beyond the edge of their comfort zone and engaged in productive, critical questioning and demonstrated courage to teach to disrupt the status quo, such as when Leah reflect in small group “‘how do we address injustices like this? What can we do so stop these things from happening or make an improvement in general?’” (Leah, Small Group Oral Reflection, 28:30). Additionally, I examined how preservice teachers either hedge or interrogate tough topics and difficult conversations, critically or uncritically, such as when Leah interrogated story closure: “Although the story ended on a positive note... their daily struggles of segregation and marginalization didn't disappear. It allows students to recognize that fighting injustice doesn't happen overnight, rather it is a long and strenuating process....”(Leah, Final CMA paper, p. 5-6). I also examined if and how students draw out the themes of resistance and agency within children’s literature and whether they, as performing teachers, created opportunities for student agency in their lesson design.
Another important aspect of the Critical Multicultural lens is the explicit or implicit indication of
intersectionality of identities. Analysis of student papers, lessons, and reflections investigated if and how intersections of race, gender, and class identities, and beyond, are taken up (or not). For example, Leah and Sophia explicitly named how the characters were multiply marginalized, interrogating the intersectionality of race and gender in *Hidden Figures* (2017) from the onset of planning (draft lesson plan), while Riley initially only implicitly gestured towards the intersection of class and gender, and later highlighted this intersectional aspect following instructor feedback.

My analysis also attended to if and how preservice teachers identify the sociohistorical and political context (Botelho & Rudman, 2009; Cochran-Smith, 2004; Janks, 2000; Nieto, 1999; Paris & Alim, 2017), such as whether teachers connect historical injustice and oppression to present day inequities, such as when Leah and Sophia used the word “today” in their lesson plan nine times. These elements of analysis align deeply with the theoretical framework and provided a useful way to attend to the data. I consulted with my co-chairs throughout analysis to obtain critical feedback and guidance on my analytic processes and emergent development of categories, themes, and findings. I wrote analytic memos reflecting on project goals, relationships in data, (Maxwell, 2012; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) and facilitate thinking about my relationships to my data. My memos explicitly incorporated my own identity and experience (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Strauss, 1987; as cited in Maxwell, 2012) addressed my positionality and personal critical perspectives and experiences, asking how they might be influencing what I was seeing and understanding, and what might have been missing, hidden, or silent in my analysis, findings, and conclusions (Maxwell, 2012). I sought insider perspectives from scholars of color (including members of my committee) and am grateful for their review of ongoing drafts throughout phase one through five to aid in analysis.
Phases of Analysis

In Phase 1, I completed a thorough analysis of all 23 students’ reflection surveys, looking for initial patterns and themes. Using a Google Drive sheet, my co-chair and I created a working document to detail codes and definitions. After first pass open coding, deductive codes derived from literature in combination with the initial analysis of the data, research questions, and student artifacts were added. For example, when defining intersectionality (an important aspect of the Critical Multicultural lens), that parent code was defined to include any mention of intersectionality, either explicit use of that term, or as an example, race and gender, race and class, race, gender, and class, gender and class, race and age, gender and age, etc. The recursive process of coding created parent and child codes, with a constant merging and/or collapsing codes. For example, tough topics/difficult conversations were merged and included child codes such as language choice, student-friendly language, hard conversations, not too young. These codes evolved into a finding that the RSJ project supported preservice teachers in crafting instruction that interrogated about the “tough stuff”, rather than leaving silences. Another example of findings that emerged from the coding process is that students’ views on course design were positive, with a particularly strong disposition toward collaborative experiences. This finding came from multiple codes. For example, a design parent code had three child codes: critique, suggestion, helpful and teacher educator-to-preservice teacher, preservice teacher-to-preservice Preservice teachers overwhelmingly positive reflections of the collaborative experiences evolved into additional codes: success in collaboration, collaboration in generative, and new learning from collaboration, especially as many “light bulb moments” came from collaborative events.
In Phase 2, answers from the case study students’ end of unit reflection responses were aligned to their final CMA papers and Final Lesson plans. For example, themes such as multicultural representation in children’s literature, methods for lesson planning, deep critical analysis takes time, attention to (student-friendly language) to discuss tough topics emerged across data sources. In Phase 3, I narrowed selection of case studies by looking for examples of preservice teachers whose codes reflected themes across the broader survey data, such as intentionality/importance of language, tough topics, and collaboration (Data Analysis Memo, 7/16/2- memo, reviewed by Dr. Dalton 8/3/20), as well as those who explicitly nodded to intersectional, agential instruction, essential to the CM lens. I then revisited and refined previous codes from Phases 1 and 2 throughout analysis of video transcripts of teacher conferences, teaching demonstrations, and small group reflections. I transcribed the entirety of those I selected two to three illustrative moments from those, writing analytic memos that documented key and emerging themes. I placed these themes under the respective research questions.

Zooming out, in Phase 4 I triangulated data sources, looked for disconfirming examples, and engaged in a recursive process of coding to expand and prune categories and themes (Denzin, 1970; Maxwell, 2012). I used displays and analytic tools (Maxwell, 2012; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) to facilitate the relationships in the data and support presentation of the process into a visual. An example of one of these analytic displays is shown in Figure 3.8.
I crafted a memo for each case study that organized evidence from artifacts along the themes. For example, in case study one memo for Leah and Sophia, I noted the preservice teachers’ frequent focus on student-friendly language and triangulated data by centering themes and analyzing each artifact submitted. I used levels of inductive, deductive, and thematic coding to examine preservice teacher artifacts and interpret patterns across sources and cases. During this process, I carefully analyzed for disconfirming evidence or counter evidence to the emerging themes. For example, when analyzing Leah and Sophia’s stated goal for instruction that disrupts and interrupts, close coding revealed pedagogical moves that stopped at the first steps of examination of injustice. I coded this as “stopped short” and placed this theme under the original research question: RQ 2: How do these preservice teachers critically design, enact, and reflect on a multicultural literature-based lesson plan project? This finding revealed that preservice teacher would benefit from more support to move beyond examination to interruption and disruption for
truly transformational teaching. Analysis of the source of this silence was the revelation that students did not yet demonstrate an understanding of individual vs. structural disruption.

In Phase 5, after the two cases were crafted, I utilized cross case study analysis to compare how cases addressed the research questions. I looked for similarities and differences between and across cases to identify patterns and contradictions (Stake, 2013). For example, the two case studies differed in their ability to close the lesson by providing the space for students to act. Patterns across cases included: aims for intersectional, agential instruction, with demonstrated willingness, responsibility, and commitment to critical practices in their future classrooms.
CHAPTER IV

CASE STUDY 1

Leah & Sophia Investigate Intersectionality, Interrogate Story Closure, and Grapple with Ways to “Examine” “Deconstruct” and “Disrupt” Systems of Power in Hidden Figures

On the road towards becoming licensed teachers in their children’s literature course, partners Leah and Sophia selected the award-winning book, Hidden Figures: The True Story of Four Black Women and the Space Race by Margot Lee Shetterly (2018) and designed a lesson plan for a third-grade audience. In this case study, I intertwine answers to the research questions:

RQ 1: How do preservice teachers participating in a “Reading for Social Justice Project” in their Children’s Literature course understand, value, and apply a Critical Multicultural perspective to expose and critique social issues and themes in multicultural children’s literature that address issues of race, gender, and/or socioeconomic status?

RQ2: How do these preservice teachers critically design, enact, and reflect on a multicultural literature-based lesson plan project?

Throughout the multi-week project, these future teachers demonstrate their understanding of the critical lens in lesson planning and enactment. In this case study, Leah and Sophia work through the complexities of designing intersectional instruction and connect historical inequities to present injustices because of preserving injustice in our world “today” (Leah, CMA paper; Small Group Oral Reflection; Leah and Sophia Final Lesson Plan). They name the limitations of their lesson and the work that remains because “fighting injustice doesn’t just happen overnight.” (Leah, Final CMA paper, p. 5-6). In the project reflection, these two preservice teachers reveal how dramatic enactment and collaborative opportunities as a part of course design created a supportive space to develop their understanding, value, and application of critical perspectives and practices. Finally, I bring to light how these teachers-to-be aimed for agential, equitable instruction for social justice as they grapple the application of the critical lens as a tool to
examine, deconstruct, and disrupt systems of power in multicultural Children’s Literature. I conclude with implications and discuss limitations that inform the design of future coursework for preservice teacher education.

**Introduction to the Multicultural Picture Book**

Figure 4.1. Book cover of *Hidden Figures: The True Story of Four Black Women and the Space Race* (2018) by Margot Lee Shetterly, illustrated by Laura Freeman.

Written by Margot Lee Shetterly with Winifred Conkling and illustrated by Laura Freeman, *Hidden Figures: The True Story of Four Black Women and the Space Race* was published in 2018. This children’s book is adapted from Shetterly’s adult informational text (2016), inspiring the 2017 Academy Award-nominated American biographical film. An NAACP Image Award recognized Laura Freeman’s illustrations in *Hidden Figures* for Outstanding Literary Work for Children in 2019. The children’s book features four female African American mathematicians working in a segregated unit at NASA’s Langley Research Center in Hampton, Virginia, in the 1940-1960s. The story traces the calculations and persistence of four heroines: Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson, Katherine Johnson, and Christine Darden, Black women who were integral to sending the first individuals into space. While facing discrimination, dismissiveness, and skepticism about Black women’s mathematical abilities, they overcame gender and racial barriers as key contributors in this once untold story.
Illustrated by Coretta Scott King Honoree Laura Freeman, with bold, fully saturated colors, using brushes in digital PhotoShop, these illustrations hold the attitude of the women who are not taking no for an answer. Clever yet subtle touches display the well-researched historical time period, such as background images of segregated drinking fountains or iconic Civil Rights heroes floating on a hovering bus. Freeman’s extensive research using primary source documents from NASA’s website trickles into her art by incorporating a blueprint plan for separate bathrooms and dining rooms for white and “colored” employees to support the historical setting. Freeman’s inspiration from primary source documents, such as photographs, influences the realistic, in-line-with-the-times fashion design; the characters sport colorful dresses and cat-eye glasses, in bold contrast to the plain suited men. These heroines are depicted as dreamers and doers with sparkling earrings and eyes, gazing up at the shining stars and orbiting planets in the dark night sky. Portrayed in action with books in arms, chalk in hand, amongst men and machine computers, these women amaze and inspire all on the research center floor.

**Introduction to the Preservice Teacher Partners**

Leah, a junior double majoring in Psychology and Elementary Education, self-identified as a White female. Leah rated her prior experience with lesson planning as *very familiar* and teaching multicultural literature as *familiar*. Leah rated almost all (6/7) of the project experiences as *somewhat helpful* or *very helpful* to learn and develop skills as a critical educator with goals for social justice. In particular, Leah highlighted all aspects of lesson planning (co-constructing, conferencing with instructors, enacting, and reflecting) as *very helpful*.

Leah’s partner, Sophia, a peer in the Elementary Education major, with a double major in English, who did not self-identify a racial/ethnic identity, rated her prior experience with lesson planning and teaching multicultural literature as *familiar*. Sophia rated project experiences
only as *somewhat helpful* to learn and develop skills as a critical educator with goals for social justice. In particular, Sophia highlighted the theoretical readings, CMA paper, conferencing with instructors, and the co-constructing and enacting lesson plan as most helpful.

Leah and Sophia’s journey to developing critical perspectives and practices was selected as a case study because a. both preservice teachers were Elementary Education majors (as opposed to students in the licensure program), meaning they traveled in a cohort model throughout more extensive coursework, b. unified themes emerged across the analysis of the partners’ teaching and reflections and they frequently used collaborative phrasing like “(My partner) *and I*”, “*we*”, and “*our*” (Leah, Individual Written Reflection; Sophia, Individual Written Reflection; Final Lesson Plan), c. they echoed important commonalities to themes present in the analysis of all 23 participants.

**Leah & Sophia Use a Critical Lens in Lesson Planning and Enactment**

Leah and Sophia each wrote their own critical analysis paper about *Hidden Figures* (2018). They shared their work with one another and then launched into the design of their collaborative lesson plan. In their co-authored lesson plan, Leah and Sophia name the intersection between race and gender as a reason for selecting this text for the “Reading for Social Justice” topic: “The intersectionality of race and gender is a huge part of this book and we want to highlight the ways in which intersectional marginalization creates an even more oppressive experience for women of color.” (Final Lesson Plan, p. 2) Leah and Sophia address the point of view expressed in the text and boldly call out the oppression, amplifying the intersectional analysis of who gets to and does not have power. Sophia takes a step further in her reflection of the project as a whole, explicitly amplifying the agency of the character. She draws on her illustration analysis from the CMA paper and lesson plan in written reflection:
“There were several illustrations that show the power hierarchies established through intersectional marginalization of women of color. Further, these women are important path makers for women of color in STEM, and this should be something shared with children. Considering they are in fact, ‘Hidden’”. (Sophia, Individual Written Reflection).

Here, Sophia is making a play on the title of the text, *Hidden Figures*, to call out silences that exist in literature and society.

Even when reflecting individually, Leah often responded as a partner pair, “*(My partner)* and I chose our book because it portrayed the intersectionalities of being a woman and being African American and how those interact with power structures” (Leah, Individual Written Reflection). She named scenes, such as this one below, that “would create great spots for conversations with students about sexism, racism, marginalization and how these interact with power” (Leah, Individual Written Reflection). In her lesson, Leah focuses on page 13 (Figure 4.2).
This stopping point can be traced from analysis in Leah’s CMA paper:

*I would take the time to pause at this passage and give students the opportunity to think about who has the power in this section. By using a Critical Multicultural Lens, students would question “How is power exercised?” and “Who has a voice?” By giving students the opportunity to think critically about power it helps them begin to think about power not only in books but in their own lives as well.... This is a critical concept to engage the class with as it looks into the ways institutionalized power structures remain deeply ingrained within social structures, and how race and gender impact this.* (Leah, Final CMA paper, p. 4)
In this excerpt from the CMA paper, Leah is already aiming for critical instruction, lesson planning for illustration interrogation writing: “take the time to pause,” (p. 4) signaling an early nod preparing for role-playing. Leah also names the development of a critical perspective of students as a process, as this instance of instruction could support students to “begin to think about” (p. 4) institutionalized power structures within the text and society, recognizing the ongoing work of developing critical consciousness. Leah and Sophia both recognize that the journey to develop this critical concept is a process that is complex, complicated, and crucial.

It’s “Complex,” “Complicated,” and “Crucial,” Leah & Sophia Investigate

Intersectionality as a Guiding Frame

The complexity of translating critical analysis into instruction for an elementary audience was a theme throughout many preservice teachers’ RSJ project journey. As both Sophia and Leah developed an understanding and value of the CM lens to interrogate intersectionality, they named the skill to translate these issues into instruction for young students as complex, complicated, and crucial.

Sophia uses the word “crucial” four times throughout her CMA paper, such as here when she writes:

drawing attention to both the image and the text using the Critical Multicultural approach is crucial in uncovering the interconnected hierarchies of power deficit within the book,” and later that “This would be crucial in developing analysis around intersectional marginalization of women of color in particular….The duality of their marginalization contributes to the inequity of power, and this is important to propose in discussion in the classroom. (Sophia, CMA paper, p. 2)
Sophia is expressing the cruciality of intersectional classroom conversations to expose more fully “the duality of marginalization” (p. 2) and how that’s connected to inequitable power structures.

Leah, too, draws out the importance of investigating intersectionality in her CMA paper:

> Further, we must look at why women, especially women of color, are so underrepresented in STEM careers. (This story) provides a good representation of the ways in which women of color are hyper-marginalized in this setting and understanding why that is. This is a critical concept to engage the class with as it looks into the ways institutionalized power structures remain deeply ingrained within social structures, and how race and gender impact this. (Leah, CMA paper, p. 3).

While is it loud and clear that the Leah and Sophia value the critical perspective as critical to classroom instruction, they sought clarity in how to translate these topics into student-friendly language.

**Leah and Sophia Name and Navigate the Complexity of “Student-Friendly Language for Hard Conversations and Complicated Topics”**. Many students in the Reading for Social Justice Project echoed the challenges of transmitting complex topics and language to an elementary audience as a challenge and opportunity to expose and critique social issues and themes in children’s literature. In their end-of-project reflections, Leah and Sophia reflect on their biggest takeaways and successes (Table 4.1):

**Table 4.1**

*Leah and Sophia’s Reported Successes and Challenges throughout the Reading for Social Justice Project*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Takeaway/success</th>
<th>Challenge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“My biggest takeaway is the importance of using student-friendly language for hard conversations and complicated topics. It is important to me that I am able to communicate effectively with kiddos, while not”</td>
<td>“The greatest challenge I had was finding my way to be able to use language and descriptions that would foster discussions using the multicultural analysis lens. It took me some rewording and collaboration to truly be able”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Taking away from the experiences of the people’s stories I am teaching by watering them down.” (Sophia, Individual Written reflection)

One of the three most important things learned: “how to design a lesson for children that surround hard (but real) conversations about power.” (Sophia, Individual Written reflection)

“Communicate hard concepts with student-friendly language, while still recognizing that students are capable of learning hard things.” (Sophia, Individual Written reflection)

“Working through this project with (my partner)...I think this allowed us to bounce ideas off of each other and think of the best way to teach this lesson. By offering us the chance to co-teach this lesson I think it allowed me to work with my partner to develop a lesson plan that would incite powerful conversations with students about a very important social justice topic!” (Leah, Individual Written reflection).

“I think the biggest challenge for me was writing the Critical Multicultural Analysis paper then attempting to write a lesson plan. I think it was hard for me to write a college level paper that detailed the marginalization of women of color and then attempt to write a lesson in student friendly language.” (Leah, Individual Written Reflection)

Both preservice teachers draw out the challenge of using student-friendly language to do deep critical analysis. Sophia names them “hard” conversations three times (CMA paper; Small Group Reflection; Individual Written Reflection), while Leah names them as “powerful” (Individual Written Reflection). While toiling with the challenge, both Leah and Sophia still expressed a value of the process and position students as capable of learning these complex concepts. While naming these hard conversations as complex and complicated, they call out the importance important of “not water it down” (Sophia, Individual Written Reflection) or “dumbing down” these conversations (Leah, Individual Written Reflection). They seek student-friendly language to have “hard (but real) conversations about power” (Sophia, Individual Written reflection), resisting silence.

They both note co-teaching and collaboration as an important part of the process in developing more student-friendly instruction. They use the words “working through” (Leah, Individual Written reflection) and “rewording” (Sophia, Individual Written reflection) to signal an ongoing process, productive in and of itself. The negotiation and affordances of collaboration indicate the collaborative components of the project design were important spaces to develop
critical perspectives and practices. Furthermore, the students indicated this ongoing process will continue into their future work as educators. For instance, in her reflection, Leah goes back to that critical incident of the technical term *intersectionality*:

*In future teaching, I will make more conscious efforts to speak and set goals using student friendly language. When (my partner) and I were trying to explain intersectionality it would be quite difficult for students to understand such a big word right away. So in the future I will make better attempts at wording and explaining things in a way that would click for students.* (Leah, Individual Written Reflection).

Here, Leah expressed the desire to intentionally script lessons in the future. Given the limitations of the course design with dramatic enactment (instead of teaching in schools), this lesson scripting makes assumptions about what students can/cannot understand. While Leah and Sophia continually position students as capable, their notes point to the limitations of an imaginary audience.

Furthermore, in our conference, we collaboratively grapple with the complexity of these topics:

*Sophia:* “*This was about the intersectional marginalization of women of color specifically, and I was just... I feel like that's kind of a complex topic to understand the duality of marginalized groups and how that would affect power structures, but I'm just curious if you had any advice on how to approach that subject with a younger audience? ’cause that's our main goal, but I'm just worried that we're not doing that very effectively.*”
**Kirsten:** “Yeah, that's a really important goal. And you're right, it's like, how do we talk about this to elementary school students, to third-graders? ... And this is why we kind of ask you to script your language, you and (Student Name) might find it helpful to actually practice... Do a demo practice teaching, just you two, and script your language, like how would we actually describe this to a third-grader? and once you start being pressured to say it out loud rather than just write it down on a piece of paper or on your screen that you've been staring at all day anyway, then you start to really think through things like, ‘How would I talk to a third grader about this (intersectionality)?’” (Student-Teacher Conference, 4:50).

In the initial probe, Sophia is eager to support younger students, in this case third-graders, to understand “the intersectional marginalization of women of color” which they name (a few times) as “kind of a complex topic” (Student-Teacher Conference, 4:50). While Sophia is soliciting my advice, she voices a concern about the effectiveness of accomplishing their goal in the lesson plan. Here Sophia is drawing out a point of tension and asks for advice, as they aim to support young students in the complex task of reading power to understand social processes and interrogate intersectionality. I respond in the form of a facilitator, as a thought partner, rather than a director or evaluator, not with an answer but a reiteration of our audience and a suggestion to use role-play as a tool to brainstorm potential pathways towards our goal. The conference continues as the Sophia centered the conversation on teaching tough topics to a young audience:

**Sophia:** “Yeah, I think where I struggle is I just don't wanna take away the seriousness of the topics that we're talking about by trying to not water it down, but I just don't wanna take away from...’cause they are, they're serious issues that should be... That needs to be addressed and talked about, but I think I'm struggling with finding the balance between
using maybe too advanced of vocabulary without undermining the whole issue that we're discussing by trying to make it more friendly. I don't know.” (Student-Teacher Conference, 5:23).

Sophia shifts from a “should” to a “need to be” very quickly (Student-Teacher Conference, 5:23), as if correcting herself in the moment, positioning this work as essential. She is implicitly positioning her third-grade students capable of understanding complex topics, attempting to script student-friendly language in ways that balance the complexity of the topics.

Their final lesson plan submission includes attempts to translate critical perspectives into student-friendly practices; In Figure 4.3 Leah and Sophia scripted teacher language aiming to “use the illustrations to unravel the intersectionality between race/gender and power” (Final Lesson Plan, p. 5):
#3 Stopping place in text

Reason for stopping, related to the social justice goal/objective of the lesson:

The reason we would choose to stop here is to provide an opportunity for students to use the illustrations to unravel the intersectionality between race/gender and power. In the image we see Mary, an African American woman in a room full of white male peers. We would want to bring attention to this and think about how Mary would've felt and relate it to the low number of women of color in STEM today.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#3 Stopping place in text</th>
<th>What we will say/do:</th>
<th>What might the students be doing/saying?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read the page then begin questioning students about visual aspects of the book</td>
<td>Listening to the pages then answering questions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>What do you notice about this image?</em></td>
<td><em>Mary is the only woman</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>How do you think Mary felt in this environment?</em></td>
<td><em>All the men are white</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>How did being a woman AND being African American impact Mary's status at her job?</em></td>
<td><em>Mary is the only African American in the room</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Do you think situations like this still happen today?</em></td>
<td><em>Nervous about being the only woman</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Out of place because she was the only African American</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Harder for her to have a voice</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Made her feel nervous</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Made it harder for her to move up or get a better role</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>No because segregation is not happening anymore</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Yes because people of color still have less opportunities</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Yes because sometimes people think girls can't do the same things as boys.</em></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4.3. Lesson plan excerpt, stopping point #3, as preservice teachers plan for intersectional instruction.*

Here Leah and Sophia plan to guide students in illustration analysis. The capital letters "AND" showcase plans to emphasize intersectionality. This plan to address intersectionality is then verbalized during their dramatic teaching enactment with peers (featuring myself and the two other preservice teachers role-playing as students) with a drawn-out voice, an unscripted insertion, and a pause to allow their audience time to analyze: “*How did being a woman*
(drawing out the word) and African American impact her status at her job? Who do you think is holding the power? Take a look at that body language with co-workers” (Sophia, Teaching Demonstration, 24:31). Figure 4.4 is a screen capture of preservice teachers in intersectional illustration analysis, during stopping point #3, holding up the text to the camera for their students to see:

*Figure 4.4. Preservice teachers in intersectional illustration analysis, during Leah and Sophia’s teaching demonstration stopping point #3, (Shetterly, 2018, p. 13).*

During the final lesson enactment over Zoom, the Leah and Sophia flow in between full role-play mode as a third-grade teacher and meta-talk as college student analysts to their fellow classmates about their intentions:

*so after this we would kind of just think about the intersectionality of race and gender again and its ties to power...so having the students think *...how do you think she was feeling? How would you feel if you had to keep asking and asking and asking to get something done* Then having them look at the power hierarchies in this page, ask them like’ who do you think is in charge? And why do you think that?’* (Leah, Teaching Demonstration transcript, 25:33).
That in-the-moment, unscripted addition of “who do you think is in charge? And why do you think that?” (Leah, Teaching Demonstration transcript, 25:33) is evidence of Sophia and Leah deepening attention to power structures, using the concept of who is in charge to support students' understanding of power relationships within the text in a student-friendly way.

Leah and Sophia take the space in the post-teaching small group oral reflection to call out the critical incident of teaching technical terms, like intersectionality, to their imagined third-grade audience: “We know that this is kind of a complicated topic of dissecting that kind of power hierarchy. We would not use the word intersectional and stuff like that when we would be teaching it” (Sophia, Small Group Oral Reflection, 31:11). Sophia names the topic as complicated for the younger demographic and rejects the use of the formal word intersectionality. Their lesson plan uses more student-friendly language, in contrast to Leah and Sophia’s use of the terms in their other academic papers submissions (CMA, reflections, lesson rationale), explicitly naming “stereotypes,” “marginalization,” and “oppression.” Instead, words such as “injustice,” “segregation,” and “discrimination” did make it into the script, perhaps because they are part of the larger curriculum (Final Lesson Plan).

In their post-teaching, small group oral reflection, the students dive into the complexity of teaching technical terms. Leah follows Sophia’s abandonment of the technical term “intersectionality” by saying “With just one lesson, it's kind of just scratching at the surface of those two intersections so I would love to turn it into a whole week's worth of lessons” (Final Teaching Demonstration, 31:50). Leah’s quick elucidation suggests her intention to continue the conversation, to deep dive into topics central to achieving social justice. This pivot is proof of planning for the future, as students contend with the limits of one 20-minute demo lesson. The debrief continues with explicit plans for the next time they teach this lesson with real students.
"There's Still Injustices Happening in Our World Today," Leah & Sophia Interrogate Story Closure and Connect Past to Present

By attending to story closure, Leah and Sophia seek to prevent injustices from being viewed as a thing of the past and connect text events to what this means in today’s world. Traced from Leah’s analysis in her CMA paper, she highlighted the triumphant ending and aimed to disrupt the fairy tale message that you will achieve your dreams if you work hard. She extends the book’s positive ending to consider today’s realities:

> In a book about triumph regardless of race, gender, or class it may leave students thinking that all is well in the world. To get my students thinking more critically I would immerse them in a conversation in which we compare and contrast the past and the present... at the end of the book, it leaves students confident that because the women were strong and persisted that everything worked out. Because we do not live in a perfect world, I would have a student-led conversation and question whether or not prejudices exist in our world today. I would emphasize that we no longer have colored vs. white facilities or segregated busses, schools and classrooms but I would encourage my students to think about if we still see injustices related to race today. Or injustices related to gender or sex. By having students question and deeply think about this question I think it would give them the opportunity to notice situations of injustice and find agency. (Leah, Final CMA paper, p. 5-6)

Leah aims to set students up to attend to story closure to question the status quo to “give them the opportunity to notice situations of injustice and find agency” (p. 6). This aim translated into both Leah and Sophia’s lesson plan, included in the teachers’ selected Teaching Tolerance Social
Justice Standard: “Justice, Standard 11: Students will analyze the harmful impact of bias and injustice on the world, historically and today.” Here, the teachers aim to trace historical injustice to contemporary issues to current day injustices.

Leah and Sophia planned instruction that rejects the approach that injustice is over, and explicitly recognizes the persistence of injustice. For example, in the rationale set for stopping point #1, they name injustices happening today: “It is a good chance to bring up how segregation is no longer taking place the way it used to in the past, but there is still racial prejudice and stereotyping that can cause a lot of harm” (p. 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#1 Stopping place in text</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason for stopping, related to the social justice goal/objective of the lesson:</td>
<td>What we will say/do (indicate which partner is saying/doing what):</td>
<td>What might the students be doing/saying?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We would pause here to allow for students to discuss the impacts of segregation on people of color and especially women of color. It is a good chance to bring up how segregation is no longer taking place the way it used to in the past, but there is still racial prejudice and stereotyping that can cause a lot of harm.</td>
<td>“Who was impacted by segregation?” “How did segregation limit what people were allowed to do and pursue?” “Although segregation isn’t legal today, do we still see instances of injustice surrounding people of color?”</td>
<td>Students listen as the page is read and after the question is posed they are given the opportunity to turn and talk to a partner about their ideas. This will then turn into a full class discussion in which students can build off each other's ideas:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• People of color  • African Americans  • People couldn't go in the same rooms  • They had different jobs  • They didn't have as many opportunities  • Sometimes people treat them differently  • I'm not sure  • Yes because sometimes they don't get as many opportunities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4.5. Excerpt from lesson plan, stopping point #1, where Leah and Sophia aim to connect past to present, and anticipate a variety of student responses.*
Leah and Sophia then script teacher-level language (Figure 4.5), leading students from identifying “who was impacted by segregation?” to the impact of these institutional barriers, “How did segregation limit what people were allowed to do and pursue?” (p. 3). They follow the who and how questions, answers which can be ascertained directly from the text, to scaffold the conversation to support students connecting historic injustices to present-day inequities:

“Although segregation isn’t legal today, do we still see instances of injustice surrounding people of color?” (p. 3). These two preservice teachers are creating opportunities for their students to connect to this history.

In the rightmost column, the lesson plan format guides preservice teachers to anticipate student response. Here, Leah and Sophia brainstormed a variety of levels of understanding from their imagined students in response to their scripted question “Do we still see instances of injustice surrounding People of Color?” (p. 3). They take this imagined space and brainstorm one response they may anticipate as “I’m not sure” (p. 3). Here, they are starting to call out the possible limits of students’ experiences/abilities to connect/respond to their probes about injustice.

Throughout their lesson plan the word “today” is used nine total times: six times when providing the rationale for stopping points and three times during scripted instruction for their elementary audience. In Table 4.2 below, I analyze how Leah and Sophia plan instruction during three out of four total stopping points, and the after-reading discussion which were selected to support students to connect segregation, marginalization, and injustice of yesteryear to today’s current inequities:
### Table 4.2
Leah and Sophia’s Stopping Points throughout Lesson Plan Connect Past Injustices to Present-Day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stopping point in the text</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Teachers’ script connecting past to present</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>“to discuss the impacts of segregation on people of color and especially women of color. It is a good chance to bring up how segregation is no longer taking place the way it used to in the past, but there is still racial prejudice and stereotyping that can cause a lot of harm”.</td>
<td>“Although segregation isn’t legal today, do we still see instances of injustice surrounding people of color?”</td>
<td>Leah and Sophia connect past to present as they lead students to parse out the difference between de jure and de facto segregation. They take a stance and strongly state “there is still racial prejudice and stereotyping” and name the harmful impacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>“To realize that the intersection of race/gender/power were all barriers for Mary and the other women. In this page we see that Mary wants to apply for a certain job but is unable to because she needs to take classes at a university that does not allow “colored people”. We would pause here to discuss how this impacted Mary and how it can still impact people today.”</td>
<td>All teaching points refer to past injustices. No discussion or connection to current day.</td>
<td>While Leah and Sophia set the intention to discuss how “it can still impact people today”, this was not addressed in the teacher script. This missing connection could have been a good point of intervention for lesson plan feedback or conferencing, considering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>“To use the illustrations to unravel the intersectionality between race/gender and power. In the image we see Mary, an African American woman in a room full of white male peers. We would want to bring attention to this and think about how Mary would’ve felt and relate it to the low number of women of color in STEM today.”</td>
<td>“Do you think situations like this still happen today?”</td>
<td>After a series of scaffolded questions that lead students to identify intersectional marginalization, Leah and Sophia offer this last open question to connect discrimination of the past to present day injustice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**After reading:**
(This is the portion of the lesson that provided)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stopping point in the text</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Teachers’ script connecting past to present</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| After reading: | “Our learning goal is to look into the way in which...” | “Why do you think the...” | Leah and Sophia connect the title and author’s purpose to draw out (past)**
opportunities for students to respond to and expand on the book through questions/discussion/activities)

**Things to think about as you plan:** What happens after you read the last page of the book? ...What ideas have you decided to emphasize (keep in mind your goals here?)?

**the intersectionality of race and gender create the increased discrimination of women of color in the context of power structures.** Further, the field of STEM is the main focus of this lesson in the way the women of color have been treated and what this means today.

**title is called “Hidden Figures?” What does the author mean by “Hidden?” Why might this story be “Hidden”? Why are we only really learning about these women and their stories now?”

**Meta-intentions:** “Further, we should discuss how this may even still be present today, and how women changed science and math for women of color. Looking at how although segregation is behind us, systematic racism is still heavily present in many institutions.”

silences in children’s literature and U.S. society. They continue with not scripted language, but meta-analysis/intentions set for the future, as they “Should discuss how this may even still be present today”. The use of the word “may”, a tentative verb, is followed by a strong statement that “systematic racism is still heavily present in many institutions.” Interestingly, this language was not in quoted scripted teacher talk; it remained on the margins of what they deemed student friendly. This suggests preservice teachers are able to set intentions to identify systematic racism but need support in translating this into teacher talk.

After many instances of supporting students to connect past to present, Leah and explicitly name their aim:

**Time and time again, the women in Hidden Figures were faced with barriers of systematic racism, segregation, sexism, and prejudice. To be able to pursue the career path they intended, the women had to use courage, strength, and determination to rise above the unfair situation they were in...after reading and critically thinking about the text, we hope students would recognize the harm imposed on the women in the book. Additionally, students would recognize that although we are in a different time, there are still unfair situations of injustice happening today.** (Final Lesson Plan, After Reading Activity, p. 7)

Time and time again, Leah and Sophia tie history in *Hidden Figures* (2018) to the persistence of injustices still happening today, despite moments of progress. These instructional decisions were consistent with their commitments for critical instruction that evolved through the Reading for Social Justice Project. Time and time again, from the CMA paper, through lesson plan, the teaching points scripted above, and both the small group and individual reflections, Leah shows
some evidence of her emergent understanding, valuing, and application of the Critical Multicultural lens in connecting past and present-day injustices.

In the final moments of the lesson plan, Leah and Sophia plan to probe students to make the connection between the story and their own worlds, in contemporary times, naming: “there's still injustices in our world happening today” with a significant jump to have students apply it to their “own lives.” (p. 7) Leah also, in a variety of ways, confronts the challenges associated with resistance work, that justice work in an ongoing progress that takes time, like she did in her CMA paper:

*Although the story ended on a positive note... their daily struggles of segregation and marginalization didn't disappear. It allows students to recognize that fighting injustice doesn't happen overnight, rather it is a long and strenuating process.... By reading books with a critical multicultural lens, it allows students to be actively interpreting situations. It gives them reason to be empowered learners and change makers. Using a critical multicultural lens gives students the chance to incite their inner strength, voice, and address injustices in their own lives.* (Leah, Final CMA paper, p. 5-6)

Both Leah and Sophia recognize the unceasing efforts of justice work as they close the project reflecting intentions to improve this lesson in the future and name takeaways that will impact actions in their future classrooms.

**The Importance of a Collaborative, Reflective Space to Prepare Future Teachers**

Throughout reflection opportunities, Leah and Sophia vividly describe how components of the course design (CMA paper into lesson plan, dramatic enactment, and small group oral reflection) impacted their trajectory using the Critical Multicultural Analytic approach. The Zoom lesson demonstration concludes as students metaphorically take off their teaching hats and dive into reflection through small group reflection in a lesson debrief. Following the probes on the after-teaching guide (See Appendix L: RSJ Student Note-catcher Teaching Demonstration Day), the performing teachers solicit feedback from their listeners on what they think the biggest
success of the lesson is. Taking a sip of something in a white ceramic mug, the two performing teachers take a quiet, reflective pause. I’m enjoying jotting notes as a fly-on-the-wall observer. Their listeners, Laura, a White and Latinx female, and Ina, a White female, in the elementary major and minor respectively, take the time to praise the teachers’ focus on intersectionality:

I really kind of liked how you kept bringing it back to like the intersectionality of her being African American but also a woman...” While waving hands from one side to the other, continuing “...just to make sure they (students) understand how there’s two barriers (holds up two fingers) that she’s trying to break through that I think is really important for kids to know, just how much harder she had to fight to get her voice heard

(Laura, Small Group Oral Reflection, 30:29)

This praise not only shows that the participants-acting-as-students received the strong, central message of intersectionality as a focus, but this critical textual analysis was a strength of the lesson. This reflective moment, made possible through demo-day course design keeping at least 10 minutes of post-teaching sacred for reflection, offered the opportunity for acting teachers to receive feedback from the acting audience, but also important for the listening teachers to see and learn from other, live, examples of critical instruction as the teachers work through integrating intersectional instruction.

In the small group oral reflection, Leah reiterates her aim to personalize instruction, so students connect to their own lived experiences to become agents and advocates of change. She emphasized a more explicit plan:

Leah: One of the big things we wanted to hit on is that although their stories ended positively, it was really hard for them to get there. And sometimes when you’re reading a book and you flip the page and everything is perfect, but we kinda wanted to show
students that there’s still injustices in our world happening today and to be able to do these amazing things you do have to have a lot of strength and courage and power and it’s hard to get there sometimes. And so, just having a conversation about them, about ‘how do we address injustices like this? What can we do so stop these things from happening or make an improvement in general?’ (Leah, Small Group Oral Reflection, 28:30)

These unscripted additions that aimed to activate students arose only in the small group debrief reflection session. Leah dives back to using the words “we” and “our” (Small Group Oral Reflection, 28:12) to signal a collective effort and responsibility to address injustice. Here, Leah opens the space for action, potentially empowering students’ “what can we do?” (Small Group Oral Reflection, 28:22), signaling a collective effort.

The reflective conversation evolved into one that names the silences in society. For the first time aloud, albeit after teaching, the Leah and Sophia teaching team emphasized the title of the text, Hidden Figures, thinking aloud “we could kind of draw out the word ‘hidden’ in the title” (Teaching Demonstration, 26:48). Leah explicitly named the reflective space created by small group lesson debrief as generative for this lesson and for take-aways for future teaching:

A lightbulb moment for me was the lesson reflection with a small group. In this reflection the ‘students’ we taught gave (my partner) and I some ‘glows’ and ‘grows’ that helped me reflect deeper on our lesson. It helped me appreciate what went well and reflect about what I could improve on next time! (Leah, Individual Written Reflection).

As both the teaching partners and listening pairs pointed out glows as intersectional instruction and grows as improving student-friendly language, they reflect on opportunities to act while
referring to the next time they teach the lesson, pointing toward using this lesson and this lens in their future classrooms.

Leah & Sophia Share Their Willingness, Responsibility, and Commitment to Using a Critical Lens in Their Future Classroom

Throughout Sophia’s individual written reflection of the project, a theme that emerges is the importance of diversity and representation in literature in her future classroom. “This book and experience has shown me the lack of representation for women of color’s stories to be shared, and the allowance of recognizing the marginalized power they hold.” She commits to go more into depth about these topics and a strong commitment to broaden representation in her classroom library:

I will definitely be making sure my children's book collection is incredibly diverse and representative. This will help foster conversations in the classroom that will be beneficial for my students, as well as being inclusive. We must show representation of all types of people and provide safe and welcoming environments. (Sophia, Individual Written Reflection).

With the words “definitely” and “must”, Sophia commits to action beyond the Reading for Social Justice Project.

In Leah’s reflection of the project, she, too, connects to representation as she names “the importance of using multicultural literature in the classroom because it can represent windows, doors, and sliding glass doors for students!” (Leah, Individual Written Reflection). With an exclamation mark and words from Rudine Sims Bishop’s (1990) seminal reading that set the purpose and tone of the project in the first week, Leah is energetically carrying these concepts through weeks of analysis, planning, enactment, and reflection. She describes explicitly how this
could be expanded in the future, detailing how she would craft a unit to dive deep into themes of social justice:

First, I would want to **unpack some of the big words** in the text such as segregation, sexism, and discuss intersectionality. I would then begin to question students about gender and **how gender is constructed in our society**. Overall, I would want to hit on the marginalization the women in the book faced and **how it is still prevalent today**. .... I would additionally want to find some kind of **call to action** in which students apply what they learned from the lesson and **think of its implications in the real world**. (Leah, Individual Written Reflection)

Leah is drawing out how she would continue to use Critical Multicultural analysis to read and expose power in children’s literature and connect to real world implications and connections to present time. In doing so, Leah’s call to action has the potential to open an agential space for students to deconstruct dominant ideologies and push back on dominant discourses.

**Leah & Sophia use Critical Multicultural Analysis to “Examine” “Deconstruct” and “Disrupt” Systems of Power**

Leah and Sophia selected *Hidden Figures* (2018) from the instructors’ curated collection of resistance literature with intentions that evolve from “examining” injustice, to “deconstructing” power relations, to finally “disrupting power structures and stereotypes” (Leah, Individual Written Reflection; Sophia, Individual Written Reflection; Final Lesson Plan).

Throughout their post-project reflections, both preservice teachers’ most significant takeaway from the multi-week unit was developing a critical analytic approach when teaching children’s literature. Leah names the critical paper as a helpful process to “**uncover more of the injustices**”, writing:
The biggest takeaway after completing my paper was the importance of picking apart sections of books. Without the critical paper, I think I would've missed some of the important parts to bring up with students. The critical paper helped me uncover more of the injustices the women faced within text and illustrations” (Leah, Individual Written Reflection).

Leah highlights how the process of writing the almost nine-page paper, which was flanked by collaborative analytic experiences with her partner and both instructors, supported the examination of injustices “within text and illustrations.” Leah again displays her understanding of the purpose of the CM lens to read power by unraveling messages, first in a passive voice writing: “Educators are encouraged to help students unravel the message a book is trying to send” (Leah, Final CMA paper, p. 3). before shifting to active voice, locating herself and her desires to examine issues of power: “I want to have my students dive deep into the realm of stereotyping and prejudice” (Leah, Final CMA paper, p. 5). This shift from a distant other to locating herself and expressing hopes for her future students is evidence of the development of an emerging identity as a critical educator.

Leah expresses the affordances of the CM lens as a tool to go beyond reading, to engage in analysis and instruction that evolves from deconstruction to disruption:

Using this lens allows the reader to examine intersectionalities of race and gender and its ties to power. Instead of merely reading the text, educators and students alike become immersed in the message. They are given the chance to critically think about the injustices of the past, present and future. A Critical Multicultural Lens opens up the opportunity for a classroom to exercise agency and become advocates (Leah, Final CMA paper, p. 2).
Leah presses onward beyond the mere reading of the text to use this lens to question and push back on dominant discourse to open a space for agency. Again, in her reflection, she centers on the importance of acting after the examination:

*Teaching children’s literature with a critical multicultural perspective means diving deep into the injustice and inequities in books. It additionally means taking these instances of inequity and applying it to our own lives. By teaching with a critical multicultural lens, students become agents and advocates for change* (Leah, Individual Written Reflection).

Leah is moving from the deep dive examination of injustices and aims to craft instruction that guides students to ultimately disrupt systems of power in their own lives, becoming “*agents and advocates for change*” (Leah, Reflection).

Leah’s partner, Sophia displays similar prioritization of the purpose of a critical analytical approach with children’s literature to deconstruct power institutions writing: “*I think that it is so important to develop an analytical approach towards these books that deconstructs power institutions and marginalized groups*” (Sophia, Individual Written Reflection). Sophia again prioritizes deconstruction when she defines teaching multicultural literature for social justice with a critical lens as: “*deconstructing institutions of power and systematic power that are so heavily preserved by society. It means using analytical lenses and recognizing how these power constructions effect marginalized groups.*” (Sophia, Individual Written Reflection).

Sophia equates a critical analytical lens with not only recognizing or examining but deconstructing institutions of power. Furthermore, she calls out the perseverance of inequitable power structures that lead to marginalization. While both preservice teachers demonstrated an understanding of the first steps to examine injustice, there is evidence pointing to emerging
identities of critical educators with the ultimate goal of the Critical Multicultural lens to disrupt inequitable systems of power.

While many phrases indicated Sophia valued Critical Analysis as a tool for “decoding” and “shedding light on” (Sophia, Final teaching reflection 27:47) there were zero instances of Sophia using the word “disrupt” or other verbs indicating acts of resistance, in her individual final paper or final reflection, evidence of that final step towards interruption is not evident yet, but perhaps still developing. The one moment where Sophia was implicated in explicitly aiming the disruption of power structures was the co-authored lesson plan, when language transferred from her partner, Leah’s, CMA paper, was carried into the rationale of the lesson: “Students should engage with this text as it highlights the ways in which intersectional marginalization of race and gender impact women of color in society in institutions of power. This is crucial in disrupting power structures and stereotypes.” (Final Lesson Plan, p. 2) The selected transfer of this excerpt (using the verb “disrupt”) is a nod to how course design encouraged connections between assignments with spiraling prompts to encourage students to develop critical analysis into practice (Appendix D: CMA paper Assignment Guide and Appendix H: RSJ Lesson Plan Template). As this addition was Sophia’s only mention of progressing from examination and deconstruction towards the aim for disruption, this instance showcases the potential of co-planning and co-teaching might to foster the opportunity for preservice teachers to share knowledge.

Lost in translation, when aims to “disrupt” fall short

While their rationale for text selection was to disrupt power structures, this section examines how the stated goal did not translate into practice within their co-constructed lesson plan. Their teacher language is translated into a script for their third-graders: “Our goal is to find
spots in our book where we see injustices happening and think about how the words and actions of other people treated certain groups of people unfairly. We will think about how these people felt when they were treated this way.” (Final Lesson Plan, p. 2) Upon closer analysis, each of the four stopping points in the lesson was selected to examine and/or recognize injustice, with a concluding conversation that provided the rationale for selecting this closing to “recognize the ways women of color are marginalized and affected in power hierarchies.” (Final Lesson Plan, p. 7) When analyzing the difference between the stated intention of the critical lens to disrupt power structures and the pedagogical moves that stop short at the examination of injustice, it is evident that preservice teachers may need more support in guiding students to go beyond examining and recognizing, to disrupting systems of power for truly transformational teaching.

The difference in these two preservice teachers’ development is also shown in their individual written reflections as they set explicit goals for their future classrooms. Leah sets explicit goals for her prospective students to become “empowered change makers” and “agents and advocates for change.” (Leah, Individual Written Reflection). In contrast, Sophia set goals that were only those first steps to examine and recognize, calling out her goal to “foster conversations”, aims to craft “inclusive” instruction, and “show representation” in “safe and welcoming environments.” (Sophia, Individual Written Reflection) While diversity and inclusion efforts are necessary and important parts of taking the first steps to examine and recognize injustice, moving beyond recognition, and into action, is central to interrupt and disrupting inequitable power structures. However, even recognition and critique are valuable aspects of the learning process at this stage of their journey. In the next section, I offer an example of a moment where students were not yet reaching their ultimate aim of planning disruptive instruction.

While Leah and Sophia were able to name “the unfair racial segregation and barriers” (Final Lesson Plan, p. 2) and aim for students to be able to recognize systemic injustices in their rationale of the lesson plan, they did not script instruction that supports students further beyond appreciating individual actions by the heroines. When guiding students along the stopping points, the teachers planned points to amplify the message of the characters’ perseverance in their final lesson plan:

*Time and time again, the women in Hidden Figures were faced with barriers of systematic racism, segregation, sexism, and prejudice. To be able to pursue the career path they intended, the women had to use courage, strength, and determination to rise above the unfair situation they were in...* (Final Lesson Plan, Lesson Rationale, p. 1).

Time and time again, the preservice teachers use words throughout that lesson plan that amplify the characters’ courage three times, strength five times, persistence three times, and hard work and determination one time each, positioning the characters as agential. They center the message that Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughn, Mary Jackson, and Christine Darden “didn’t let barriers stop them” (Final Lesson Plan, p. 2). While this message is an accurate, valuable, a central point of the text, and reflects the author’s framing, highlighting only the characters’ individual acts of resistance does not broadly open the space for students to see allies’ actions, nor does it open the opportunity of structural level disruption.

In response to this individual-level focus, Dr. Dalton, the instructor of the course, probed Leah in her written feedback to her CMA paper: “I’m curious – is it just persistence that allowed the women to be successful? Were there key people or other things happening that supported them or worked against institutional barriers?” (Dr. Dalton, Instructor Feedback Form). Here,
teacher-to-student collaboration is utilized to support students to situate the text in the broader historical and sociocultural context, to recognize the negotiation process of resistance, and offer a pathway to understanding disruption at the structural level. Rather than pointing students directly towards other character allies, Dr. Dalton’s probe was offered to encourage Leah and Sophia to (re)analyze and respond.

Later, in a conference with both me and Sophia, Leah reveals her grappling with her intention to script student-friendly language in aims to close the lesson in a way that names the limits of individual resistance.

*I was struggling with that too... I didn't really wanna just ask, ‘how do you think she was feeling’, then just move on, because it's kind of like trying to get students to embody something that the book just makes it seem so short, like she went and she kept asking and asking and asking to be in these meetings, and then she finally got put in (to a more powerful position), and so it just makes it seem like it was this thing where, well, if you just ask and ask and ask it will happen. That's why I didn't want them to leave the lesson thinking that if you're strong, everything will work out because it doesn't always work out, but I didn’t know how to phrase that.* (Student-Teacher Conference, 5:35)

By raising this contention, Leah attends to story closure, almost critiquing how the text is focused on strength and effort of the individual character. While the characters succeed in the fight against unjust systems, Leah pulls out an important consideration as she imagines her own students absorbing lessons from the text. She voices that she wants her students to understand the realities of activist work, “it doesn’t always work out” (Student-Teacher Conference, 5:27).

While not explicitly naming individual vs. structural change, she names the limits of individual-level resistance work.
In our Zoom conference, I responded to Leah’s critical incident:

*How do we get deep rather than staying on that surface level?...This is why we (referring to teachers in the field) spend so long, and sometimes do an entire month project on one book. If you want to narrow your 20-minute lesson and focus on two pages... (I followed by offering an aspect of course design that considered this limitation, an outlet for all that couldn’t be covered) The good thing is when you all are done teaching the lesson you’ll have an opportunity to write a reflection that says OK if I were to teach this book for a week, these are all the things I would want to focus on, but for this one 20-minute lesson, I chose to focus on this because of this. (In the meantime) I would recommend in order to prepare for that, you both meet up and practice (scripting that language); once you start practicing on the screen then I think it will become really concrete how might we do this with third-graders. (Student-Teacher Conference, 6:45)*

I responded as a facilitator not with an answer but a naming of the limits of the lesson paired with a structural offer to narrow the focus to dive deeper into story closure. I offer a concrete suggestion to collaborate and use role-play as a tool to brainstorm potential pathways towards concluding the lesson to align with the social justice goal set from the onset. In hindsight, more points of contact or hands-on-text-analysis paging through the book, pointing out potential pages of focus, could have scaffolded the Leah and Sophia more generatively. It is possible instructor-selected scenes would have been worthwhile here to provide a concrete next step for further analysis, such as where the text showcases efforts of other disruptors, linking hands in protest, allies in united resistance.

Later in the post-teaching debrief, Leah recognizes the limits of a single lesson as she cautions the group, “*With just one lesson, it's kind of just scratching at the surface*” (Small
Group Oral Reflection, 31:50). Also echoed by other preservice teachers in the project, many lamented that they needed more time, because this 20-minute read-aloud would not be enough to cover the weight and scope of these topics. This showcases preservice teachers’ coming to terms with the limits of the assignment and that the pursuit of social justice must move beyond one lesson. In these precious 20 minutes, Leah and Sophia decided to investigate the importance of intersectionality, a theme found throughout most preservice teachers’ lesson plans (although sometimes in a very superficial manner) and an essential part of Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) Critical Multicultural Framework.

**Conclusion**

Throughout the multi-week project, these future teachers demonstrate their emergent understanding of a critical perspective and apply Botelho and Rudman’s analytical lens to the reading of their multicultural picture book, *Hidden Figures* as a tool to examine, deconstruct, and disrupt systems of power that the three African American women experienced at NASA during the early days of the space race. This pair was somewhat unusual in how they were able to take up intersectionality of gender and race as a guiding frame for the lesson, something that can be challenging for students to translate into student-friendly language. The lesson plan conference with the instructor appeared to be pivotal in helping them to think about how they might teach their lesson so that children would understand intersectionality. They revised their lesson plan to make it more explicit and reflected on this issue in their reflections.

These future teachers apply the CM lens to call out the persistence of injustice and aim to support students in recognizing this by connecting injustice in the pages of the text to present issues and students’ own lived experiences. They name the limitations, as this lesson is the first step in an ongoing journey of justice work. Leah and Sophia lament that a 20-minute read-aloud
would not be enough to cover the weight and scope of these topics; paired with their explicit commitment to use a critical lens in their future classrooms, this showcases how they were coming to terms with the limits of the lesson and that the pursuit of social justice must move beyond this lesson and project experience.

After this project, Sophia rated herself as feeling *prepared* and Leah rated herself as *very prepared* to select and analyze and design and teach multicultural literature for social justice purposes. With three out of four positive ratings, both students recommend keeping this Reading for Social Justice project a part of future coursework. Leah and Sophia name the affordances of collaborative experiences as they work through the complexities of designing intersectional instruction. As a part of navigating these complexities, these two preservice teachers reveal how dramatic enactment of a lesson and small group oral reflection as a part of course design created a supportive space to develop teachers’ understanding, value, and application of critical perspectives and practices. Insights from analysis of this case show how components of the course design (i.e., CMA paper into the lesson plan, dramatic enactment, and small group oral reflection) created important collaborative, reflective spaces to prepare future teachers that positively impacted their trajectory using the Critical Multicultural Analytic approach.

I am grateful for Leah and Sophia’s participation as they share their learning process as critical readers and teachers throughout this unit and proud of their first steps in the journey and commitment to become more critically conscious educators.
CHAPTER V

CASE STUDY 2

Riley Unpacks Power, Deconstructs Dominant Ideologies, and Aims for Intersectional, Agential Instruction in *Malala’s Magic Pencil*

Riley selected *Malala’s Magic Pencil* by Malala Yousafzai (2017) as a text to read for social justice. Throughout the following case study, I trace how Riley’s use of a Critical Multicultural lens shaped her learning and intentions to teach through a series of classroom assignments and collaborative feedback. These included the Critical Multicultural Analysis paper draft, feedback, and final version, as well as the process adapting that analysis for an elementary audience by designing a lesson plan draft, conferencing, and final lesson plan and teaching demonstration.

Riley rated her prior experience as “familiar” with lesson planning and “somewhat familiar” teaching multicultural literature when completing a post-project reflection survey. Like most students in the undergraduate Children’s Literature course, Riley rated all project experiences as *helpful* to learn and develop skills as a critical educator with goals for social justice. In particular, Riley highlighted the collaborative aspects of the Reading for Social Justice Project as *most helpful*: “Getting feedback”, “Classroom conversations”, “Lesson conferencing with instructors”, and “Communicating with instructors” (Individual Written Reflection). These post-project ratings signal that although Riley’s project was solo, the collaborative experiences in the design of the Reading for Social Justice Project supported her development of critical perspectives and practices.

I preview Riley’s development of critical perspective and practices with a quote from her final reflection. When asked: “What does teaching children’s literature with a critical multicultural perspective for social justice mean to you?” She writes:
Teaching children's literature with a critical multicultural perspective means helping students see and unpack inequalities in books. This also means making connections between these issues and present times, or in one's local community. Teachers need to help students learn to read for social justice and the only way to do this is by highlighting power dynamics and showing how they relate to race, gender, class, etc. If teachers ignore ideologies, and historical and institutional factors at play in children's literature, we take part in reinforcing and perpetuating social inequalities. Therefore moving away from this, and using a critical multicultural perspective to highlight and analyze these issues, is essential. Another very important aspect of teaching children's literature with this perspective is making room for students’ agency as they learn about these inequalities and want to take action. This action should be encouraged so we can move towards empowering students to be agents of change. (Individual Written Reflection)

Riley’s explanation of the Critical Multicultural lens demonstrates several words and phrases (in bold) that align with the theory’s core components applied to reading and teaching for social justice. This concluding quotation serves as a crescendo to the “Reading for Social Justice Project” and demonstrates Riley’s well-developed sense of purpose and value of the CM lens. This excerpt informs several themes I will explore throughout Riley’s journey as a critical educator to: a. unpack power to resist reproduction, b. develop an intersectional approach to analysis and instruction, and c. set up space for student action. Finally, I bring to light how Riley’s identity formation as a teacher and learner showcases her willingness, responsibility, and commitment to using a critical lens in her future classroom using Malala’s Magic Pencil (2017).
Figure 5.1. Book cover of Malala’s Magic Pencil (2017) by Malala Yousafzai and illustrated by Kerascoët. This autobiographical picture book was authored by the youngest Nobel Peace Laureate in 2014. Little, Brown and Company recently published the text in 2017. In the book, Malala traces her journey growing up in Pakistan as an advocate for girls’ education. The magic pencil is both a metaphorical and literal device as Malala uses her voice and written word to speak out for women’s rights in her community to go to school. The text names the threat of violence, and the illustrations offer a glimpse of the violence Malala experienced because of her activism. Throughout the illustrations, the husband-and-wife illustrator team, Kerascoët, capture the optimistic spirit of hope with willowy lines and watercolors, contrasted with dark shadows of deep purple and blues that characterize the real dangers Malala faced. From the powerful symbol of the pencil emulates a shining gold swirl, signaling the ripple effect of dissemination of knowledge and power of education and its currency against injustice and oppression.

Riley Uses a Critical Multicultural Lens to Unpack Power

In our core course readings, Botelho and Rudman (2009) theorize Critical Multicultural Analysis as a way to read power, specifically, “how power is exercised, circulated, negotiated,
and reconstructed” (p. 117). Throughout the project, Riley uses the Critical Multicultural lens to unpack and takes a step further to disrupt power in children’s literature and sees children’s literature as a tool to transform US society. Riley defines “teaching children's literature with a critical multicultural perspective” as “helping students see and un-pack inequalities in books.” (Individual Written Reflection). Riley’s analysis, lesson planning, teaching, and reflecting on her selected text, *Malala’s Magic Pencil* (2017), Riley unpacks power through critical interrogation of authorship and examination of social processes to view texts in the broader historical and socio-political context.

**The Power of Insider Authorship**

A Critical Multicultural analyst should examine authorship for authenticity, consider insider versus outsider perspectives, and focalization of story. Riley drew out the author’s insider perspective as an important characteristic of the text: “*Since Malala experienced the harmful impacts of prejudice, she is able to talk about these experiences and she does so in a way that encourages others to care about her story and other instances of suffering*” (Final Lesson Plan). She highlights the importance of insider authorship as the value of an author who narrates their own story: “*Malala tells her story of experiencing and seeing injustices related to class, gender and education and by standing up against them she becomes an advocate for change.*” (Individual Written Reflection). Riley leveraged insider authorship and centered her lesson on the author’s connection to the setting and real-life events, highlighting actions Malala took against actual injustices. With the turn towards Malala’s action, she showcases the interruption of power hierarchies. By addressing the point of view expressed in the text, Riley highlights the value of an insider perspective and begins to analyze its relationship to who gets to tell stories and therefore has power. In her lesson plan, she selects instructional stopping points where the
character met injustices with resistance, which later fluidly translates into stopping points in her lesson plan where she discusses the power of the author situated within a broader historical and socio-political context.

**Social Processes and Inequalities**

Riley’s journey to develop a more critical perspective by uncovering power structures is made apparent through her reflections on her own development throughout the project. On multiple occasions, Riley illustrates how her thinking has changed:

> “When thinking about the first time I read Malala's Magic Pencil compared to reading it now, I am shocked at how much my understanding of Malala's story has changed. The critical analysis gave me a better understanding of the social processes and inequalities involved in Malala's story”. (Individual Written Reflection)

Here, Riley details the utility of the CM lens to attend to power dynamics closely. Specifically, she points to how the lens served as a tool of analysis that allowed her to develop consciousness of the “social processes and inequalities”.

Riley examines social and institutional processes, writing: “Children’s books are embedded with various social, political, and institutionalized meanings that can have negative impacts if they are ignored” (Final CMA paper, p. 2). Riley names the necessity of recognizing societal structures as a teacher with aims to equip readers with the lens. She narrates the value of the CM lens in doing so, as “examining the discourse and themes in children’s literature can highlight present systematic and institutional factors at play and offers important ways to examine these social processes with children” (Final CMA paper, p. 2).
Riley Names the Critical Multicultural Lens as an “Essential” Tool to Deconstruct Dominant Ideologies

Riley calls out that the Critical Multicultural lens can serve as a tool to understand the (re)production of power and positions teachers as responsible for this crucial step. As she explains that “teachers need to” help students learn to read for social justice, Riley states later: “using a critical multicultural perspective to highlight and analyze these issues, is essential” (Individual Written Reflection). She positions teachers as responsible for unpacking power to push back on dominant discourses and offers the CM lens as a tool for interruption. In her own words at the conclusion of the project, several weeks after being assigned core course readings, Riley is echoing Botelho & Rudman’s (2009) ideas about the ultimate purpose of the CM lens:

Young and adult readers should know that unless they are able to read for social change and justice, they will find themselves affirming and maintaining dominant ideologies that privilege some groups over others. Bringing a critical lens to the study of multiculturalism in children's literature invites ‘the reader to deconstruct dominant ideologies that have been instrumental in perpetuating social inequities and distributing power unequally’ (Botelho & Rudman, 2009, p. 108). (Final CMA paper, p. 11).

She reiterates the importance of highlighting power dynamics and positions both “young and adult readers” as responsible for reading and exposing power (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). She is naming the multi-level analysis that “should” occur as teachers equip students with the tools to deconstruct and resist the reproduction of power asymmetries.

Teachers need to help students learn to read for social justice and the only way to do this is by highlighting power dynamics and showing how they relate to race, gender, class, etc. If teachers ignore ideologies, and historical and institutional factors at play in
children's literature, we take part in reinforcing and perpetuating social inequalities.

(Individual Written Reflection)

Riley aims to resist the perpetuation of injustice by highlighting social processes and locating intersectional power dynamics for the ultimate goal of interruption.

**Riley Connects Past and Present Inequalities**

In the introduction of the lesson, Riley situates the story in Pakistan, scripting: “*Malala’s life was harder than other peoples because of where she was born and because of the rules and issues occurring in her village in Pakistan*” (Final Lesson plan, p. 3). In her final teaching demonstration, taking on full role-play mode for her imagined 5th-grade audience, she elaborates on this:

*Here in the U.S. all kids get to attend school for free. But, from reading Malala’s story yesterday, we learned that not everyone gets to go to school. What would someone lose or not be able to do if they didn’t get an education? Think about how this would impact their future? Think about how it would impact you...Do you think that’s fair?* (Final Teaching Demonstration, 3:37)

This script can be traced from her Critical Multicultural analysis paper where she writes: “*It is our role as educators to help students make connections between Malala’s story and present-day issues. To do this, multicultural analysis is vital.*” (CMA Paper Draft, p. 9). In this segment of the lesson, Riley is soliciting students to connect their own experiences and privileges to that of the character. In doing so, she guides them to acknowledge the socio-political context in which they are situated. In her lesson plan she had intended to draw these points out further, but the parenthetical addition to “*(connect to opportunities for jobs, finances, food, shelter)*” (Final Lesson Plan, p. 3) signal either an afterthought or an un(der)developed idea. At this moment in
her lesson plan, it appears that Riley is beginning to understand how power asymmetries are circulated and reproduced by connecting the story to structural inequalities, but the parenthetical intention to connect does not transform into instruction during her teaching demonstration. This analysis left in the margins is a missed moment that leaves silences, a gap between her developing critical perspectives and practice.

Riley comments on the process of developing this critical awareness to “uncover the unfairness”, raising the point “It's important to not tell students issues and why they're wrong, but to help them uncover the un-fairness for themselves” (Individual Written Reflection). Riley is naming how she values creating the space for students to unpack power, opening an agential space for students to deconstruct dominant ideologies, reminiscent of how the project itself was designed for preservice teachers. Riley aims to design instruction that encourages students to attend deeply and critically to the literature in the context of the social processes within the historical and socio-political context to deconstruct, question, and push back on dominant discourses and ideologies. Furthermore, Riley positions herself as the teacher holding an important role in facilitating that process.

**Riley Addresses “Heavy Topics”**

Unpacking injustices for an elementary audience is a theme that resonated throughout the students’ projects. Riley names “heavy topics” as a possibility/opportunity to identify power structures, address injustices, albeit with risks:

*Malala’s story is directly connected to and influenced by complex power structures, politics and violence. However, since this is a children’s book these heavy topics are not explored with much depth or detail which can be good and bad...discussing some of the hardships she overcame with students could be very meaningful.* (Final CMA paper, p. 8)
Riley boldly analyzes this text’s subtle reference to violence of the Taliban. Riley recognizes hardships as potentially a “meaningful” areas of text exploration. In the safe space of her CMA paper, when Riley uses the word “could”, it signals a careful consideration of attending to these tough topics with actual children. Here, Riley recognizes that there are risks to exploring issues, such as violence, with young children. She considers both “good and bad” outcomes, signaling careful planning and application beyond our imagined audience to the real classroom. Weighing these risks, she selects this same scene of analysis in their CMA paper. Later in her fifth-grade lesson plan and teaching demonstration (stopping point #2) where Malala faces the threat of weapons, Riley attempts to bring the dominant discourses into consciousness to shine a light on injustices to disrupt power (Botelho & Rudman, 2009).

As the project is designed for students to consider how critical perspectives translate into practices in the elementary classroom, the CMA paper prompts students to select specific scenes of deep analysis and consider them for future teaching. Riley reasons:

*This page would provide a crucial lesson for students for many reasons. There is a lot going on both through the discourse and images. The power embedded within this page about the ability of these men to take away girls’ education needs to be highlighted and examined with children.* (Final CMA paper, p. 4)

Riley uses the CM lens to interrogate power and positioning, applying the critical perspective into practice by reading and exposing power both the text and the image. After weighing the pros and cons of attending to a section of the text that exposed “heavy topics”, Riley chose this scene as a stopping point in her lesson plan to analyze with students critically. In her teaching demonstration, Riley reads the scene from the text aloud:
Riley: But soon powerful and dangerous men declared that girls were forbidden from attending school. They walked the streets of our city now. They carried weapons.’

(Kirsten: (Me, in 5th grade role-play): like, not allowed to go to school.)
Riley: (Riley holds up her makeshift whiteboard with the word “forbidden” and definition pre-written out: “‘Not allowed something’ and continues teaching). And I even wrote the sentence from the book so we could kinda go back to it. So girls were forbidden from attending school, and kinda highlight that.” Shifting back into teacher role play mode, “…Why do you think these men would forbid these girls from going to school and not allow them to go?

Kirsten: (with a concerned expression on my face) They were mean and they had guns.

Riley: And is that fair to them?

Kirsten: No, then the girls are scared and then they don’t even want to go to school.

Riley: Yea, and they liked school before this…So I wanna, I know it’s hard here, but if you can look at the picture, I really want you to look at how Malala felt.

Kirsten: Yea she looked scared, like looking over her shoulder, like who is following me?

Riley: Yea, would you feel scared if dangerous men weren’t allowing you to go to school? I would definitely stay scared. (Teaching Demonstration, 9:54)

With this intentional stopping point, Riley slowed down readers, she makes time slow down and directs student onlookers to “look at the picture; I really want you to look at how Malala felt.” (Teaching Demonstration, 11:06) deliberately emphasizing the emotional reaction of the character paired with words such as “powerful” and “forbidden”. She is using this stopping point to point students’ attention to how power is exercised, to begin to understand how power asymmetries are reproduced, opening space for students to deconstruct dominant ideologies
through both text and image (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). Riley continues reading, and while she never explicitly circles back to the dangerous nature of the geographical context, she later leads students to reflect on another “heavy topic” how people are unevenly privileged based on their identities through intersectional instruction.

Riley Takes Up Intersectionality in Lesson Planning and Enactment

Critical Multiculturalism is not complete without an intersectional approach to analysis. Just as Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) use of the CM lens examines the intersectionality of race, class, and gender to fully reveal how power is exercised and generated, depicted in the theoretical framework by a magnifying glass hovering over three overlapping silhouettes, Riley layers the complexities and interrogates the construction of power relations with class and gender.

When setting the stage for teaching, the lesson plan probes students to reflect on their Social Justice mission and goals. It asks students to get to the root of reading this text, asking: “Why does this lesson matter?”, Riley answers: “Malala discusses issues of gender and class that could easily be overlooked and ignored by readers and educators. However, these issues lie at the foundation of the story and present in society, so it is our role as educators to talk about them” (Final Lesson Plan). Riley names her rationale for student engagement in this lesson, with this book as the base, interrogating intersectional identities of gender and class. She names these intersectional identities as the “foundation of the story and present in society,” using the word “foundation(al)” for a second time. Continuing, Riley takes personal responsibility, and even points towards the responsibility of “educators” more broadly, just as Riley previously offered the Critical Multicultural lens as a tool to prevent issues being “overlooked and ignored”, Riley
uses this word “overlooked” again when she provides a rationale for turning her students’ attention towards Malala’s response to gender expectations:

> It’s important to discuss how gender and its implications are presented on this page so it’s not overlooked. This page also highlights issues of gender and class, as Malala talks about being upset for the families who cannot afford to send their daughters to school.

> Both of these big issues need to be talked about. (Final Lesson Plan, p. 3)

Riley demonstrates her intentions for intersectional instruction, saying “both” of these issues to be attended to, prevent silences, and disrupt injustice in children’s literature and society.

Riley reflects how the reiterates how the theory supported her analysis in our post-teaching conversation: “I feel like that analysis really helped me look at OK the class and the gender issues, instead of glossing over those...I think that really helped me look at that through this lens” (25:22). Here she is resisting reproduction, “instead of glossing over those” to translate into teaching. To do so, she selected purpose stopping points and scripted critical questions to set students up to recognize multiple, intersecting identities and name injustices to begin to push back on dominant discourses.

For example, in stopping point two (as shown in Figure 5.3), Riley uses focalization to highlight the intersections of gender and class of the characters over the course of the story. From the first stopping point, Riley narrates her purpose for stopping at this scene, where Malala’s father explains that not all families are able to send their girls to school for economic reasons.
Figure 5.3. Illustration from Malala’s Magic Pencil (Yousafzai, 2017, p. 12) showing Malala’s father explaining how girls’ educational opportunities were limited by economic factors.

While the rationale for using this scene as a stopping point suggests Riley’s commitments to address intersectional issues of power, this first draft had not yet translated this teacher-level analysis into intersectional instruction. Here, Riley provides a rationale for stopping, related to the social justice goal/objective of the lesson:

This page is an important stopping point because Malala’s father tells her not all girls get to attend school because some of them have to stay home and help provide for their families. This highlights the presence of inequalities related to gender, class and education. It’s important to discuss these issues with students as it’s important to discuss these issues with students and make room to talk about their reactions and feelings to/about these injustices. (Final Lesson Plan, p. 4)

Riley’s words highlight not only her understanding of the importance of examining intersectionality, rationalizing stopping here to “highlight the presence of inequalities related to
gender, class, & education”, but also her intentions to “make room” to address injustices in instruction. Intersectionality is a challenging concept to understand and across the study, preservice teachers reflect on the challenge of applying it to teaching. In her first lesson plan draft, Riley only addresses gender injustice. After conferencing with me, she revises the teaching plan to include explicit attention to gender and class in her discussion prompts, pointing to the role of feedback and collaboration.

The Role of Feedback and Collaborative Experiences

While tracing Riley’s development to unpack power and deconstruct dominant ideologies, it is clear that the collaborative experiences throughout the project played a positive role in supporting the development of a critical lens. In particular, Riley highlighted the collaborative aspects of the Reading for Social Justice Project as most helpful: “Getting feedback,” “Classroom conversations,” “Lesson conferencing with instructors,” and “Communicating with instructors” (Individual Written Reflection). With this data, it is becoming clear how specific collaborative course activities supported a critical analysis of the picture book to support Riley’s development of a deeper understanding of a Critical Multicultural perspective to expose and critique social issues and themes in children’s literature.

The impact of collaborative experiences can be traced back to her deep interrogation of the text (Figure 5.4), where in her Critical Multicultural Analysis paper she writes:

*When first reading the book, I looked over this page...*” where in the original text it says:

“But soon powerful and dangerous men declared that girls were forbidden from attending school. They walked the streets of our city now. They carried weapons.

(Yousafzai, 2017, p. 20)
Riley continues in her written reflection about the process of (re)analysis using the Critical Multicultural lens, “...As I mentioned I overlooked this page, so it would be easy for students to do the same, but by using this lens to inform teaching, students can investigate the power dynamics at play” (Final CMA paper, p. 8). Riley is explicit here about her development towards becoming a more critical reader.

Specifically, the role of feedback as a collaborative experience supported Riley in translating critical perspectives into practice. After reading Botelho and Rudman (2009) texts, attending classes with both whole group and small group critical analysis of text, Riley, like many students in the course, expressed valuing the Critical Multicultural lens to expose and critique social issues and themes in Children’s Literature. She offers “students can” name and interrogate that power explicitly but as recognized through draft lesson plan submission, she was yet to plan practices to lead students to do so. In designing the first draft of the multicultural
literature-based lesson plan project, Riley’s intentions did not yet translate into practice. In supporting preservice teachers’ development of critical perspective, the Reading for Social Justice Project was purposefully designed to incorporate multiple points of intervention and collaboration to support students from theory to pedagogy. My comment during our one-on-one conference aimed to praise intentions set at the meta-level, and I encouraged translation into practice in our one-on-one conference:

*Instructor: like in your last...in your lesson plan the left-hand side you have some really good material, I want you to draw it into the middle column* (referring to the section that probed teachers to script their language) *because I want to make sure that language, like “power dynamics”, you can talk to fifth graders about power dynamics.* (Student-Teacher Conference, 6:35)

Following the conference, Riley makes final edits to her lesson plan draft, submitting a final draft that adds scripted teacher language to rally student attention to power dynamics through both text and image: “Now I want to really focus on the illustrations here because there is a lot going on and they are really powerful. What do you notice about this picture? (About Malala, the men, other people)” (Final Lesson Plan, p. 2). This two-sentence addition reveals the role of feedback and coaching to push Riley’s explicit naming of power relations (“they are really powerful”) in the lesson and showcases instructor support to turn intentions for critical perspectives into practice. In her lesson demonstration, she narrated her intentions to “slow down” making sure her students do, too, as Riley seeks to interrupt her former tendency to “overlook” or “gloss over” elements of the text. This instructional decision teacher learning and reflexivity as a result of collaborative feedback perspective translating into critical pedagogy teaching with multicultural literature.
The Role of Feedback in Supporting Intersectional Instruction

I offer excerpts from Riley’s draft and final lesson plan (Figure 5.5) to showcase the development of more intersectional instruction through collaboration:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we will say/do: (indicate which partner is saying/doing what):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Malala seems really upset/sad after learning some girls cannot go to school and says she feels lucky to be able to go to school. I want everyone to turn and talk with a partner about if you feel lucky to go to school after learning some people cannot go. Ask your each other, does this make you feel lucky to be able to go to school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Do you think it’s fair/right that some girls cannot go to school and have to work at home? Why not?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Why do you think girls have to stay home and not boys?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we will say/do:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School in Pakistan isn’t free, so some people couldn’t afford it. Lower class families with less money prioritized the education of boys over girls. Girls were only able to go to school if a family had leftover money, otherwise they had to stay at home to help make money, clean and cook. How are girls from lower class families faced with more injustices?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(We can see how lower class girls are subject to more prejudice.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is Malala privileged compared to other girls in her community? (Compared to the girl at the dumpster)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why do you think girls have to stay home and not boys? Is that just?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 5.5. Excerpts from Draft Lesson Plan vs. Final Lesson Plan, p. 6-7.*

When words like “lucky” transform to words naming “prejudice”, and when words like “fair/right” develop into questions that center on justice, Riley’s revision incorporates more intersectional instruction that questions power, explicitly asking: “*How are girls from lower-class families faced with more injustices?*”. This revision can be traced from collaborative
conversation between this student and instructor, intentionally created to support students in translating critical analysis (from their CMA paper) into critical pedagogy (multiple iterations of lesson plan drafts). Shortly after submitting the lesson plan draft, I commented in the shared GoogleDoc: “You may have to draw out the class privilege here...because her family could afford paying for her brother’s school first, which was a PRIORITY, and then they had money left over for her. This ties in RACE and CLASS”. I offered that guidance on Riley’s lesson plan draft emphasizing, in capital letters, the intersectionality of race and class. This written feedback was aimed to support Riley in developing intersectional instruction and was reemphasized in oral feedback during our one-on-one Zoom conference. As Riley originally intended to do in her rationale, I encouraged Riley to translate intersectional analysis into instruction, saying:

**Kirsten:** On one of your stopping points, I’m trying to help you tie in the amazing work you did in your paper, talking about gender and class and the intersectionality of that...you might want to explicitly pull out for students, kind of the intersections between gender and class... that might be really important to pull out...

**Riley:** I’ll definitely add that in there too. (Student-Teacher Conference, 6:25)

In response, Riley revised her scripted teacher language in her final lesson plan to engage in the notion of intersectionality and concepts of inequities/privilege/justice more explicitly. From draft to final, Riley’s planned questioning moved from “Do you think it’s fair/right that some girls cannot go to school and have to work at home? Why not?” to intentionally design a question to allow students to draw out the interconnectedness of multiple marginalized identities, asking: “How are girls from lower-class families faced with more injustices?” (Final Lesson Plan). This series of edits highlights the role of collaboration and conferencing, as I coached Riley to center the lens’s aim and use an intersectional approach. Notably, Riley’s development
as a critical educator is evidenced when she changes the framing of “luck”, as it was written in the book and scripted into planned teacher language in the first iteration of the lesson plan, to explicitly introduce the concepts of “prejudice” “privilege” and “injustice.”

Riley continues to highlight this critical incident in the text by adding to her scripted language initially written in her lesson plan, reiterating the importance of this instructional moment, adds to the intersectional analysis, calling out: “This kind of points out that sometimes lower-class families face more injustices, especially those girls who can’t attend school...” (Teaching demonstration, 5:33). By repeating the word “injustice” here, Riley calls out intersectional power inequities through intentional stopping points, which serve as an example of how conferencing helps move the student toward application. This (re)design shows the role that both written feedback and a conference as a collaborative space to reinforce concepts and troubleshoot tensions and sticking points can play in helping a student move from understanding and intention to planning for action towards the project’s goals for equity and social justice.

**Riley Imagines a Space for Student Action**

Riley centered the concept of agency and action in her Critical Multicultural Analysis paper, which she titled “Reading to Inspire Agency: A Critical Multicultural Analysis of Malala’s Magic Pencil”. She writes:

*Malala’s power grows as she resists and pushes back against traditional norms/inequalities, as she returns to the idea of the magic pencil ...This perspective will help students read for social change as they learn about how Malala took action against gender and class-based discrimination. ...Her resistance to accepting inequalities and her ability to overcome adversities invites and encourages readers to see the potential they hold for making changes.*  
(Final CMA paper, p. 8)
With this excerpt, Riley addresses the point of view expressed in the text to call out the action and agency of the character. Riley centers instruction on the real-life resistance work of Malala and sees it as an opportunity for her students to resist and challenge domination. When she says: “This perspective will help students read for social change,” Riley shows how she not only understands the Critical Multicultural lens but values the perspective as a tool to expose and critique social issues and themes in children’s literature. When she names change-making for the second time, she is welcoming students to not only see, but challenge, the social constructions towards potentially a new, more equitable, way of organizing. While a valiant effort as a stated intention in her paper, application of this theory into agential instruction proved to be a challenge not only for Riley, but for her classmates as well. This common experience is perhaps to be expected as preservice teachers are beginning to develop skills as critical educators, discovering possibilities for making change as first steps on their journey. In the next section, I offer excerpts where Riley aims for agential instruction.

**Riley Uses Intentional Stopping Points for Agential Conversations: “Wishing isn’t enough.”**

Below Riley stops at this page (Figure 5.6) in the book, where Malala uses her “magic pencil” to advocate for societal change. She names the purpose of stopping point #4: “Students will see themselves as agents of change” (Final Lesson Plan, p. 7, as shown in Figure 5.7). Here, Riley is explicitly stating her rationale for instructional design to empower students to act.
Figure 5.6. Illustration from *Malala’s Magic Pencil* (Yousafzai, 2017, p. 24) showing Malala using her magic pencil to “speak out”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#4 Stopping place in text (page number): Pg. 24</th>
<th>What we will say/do:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Wishing wasn’t enough. Someone needed to speak out. Why not me? I wrote about what it felt like to be scared to walk to school and how some of my friends had moved away because of the threat they faced in our city. I wrote about how much I loved school and how proud I was of my uniform.”</td>
<td>“What do you think Malala meant when she said, ‘wishing wasn’t enough’? Malala’s agency grew as she decided to take action and speak out for herself and other girls denied education. Malala wrote about the inequalities she and others faced, and her words brought more justice and fairness to the world. What do you think is going to happen as more and more people read about Malala’s story?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reason for stopping, related to the social justice goal/objective of the lesson:** On this page, I highlight the initial action Malala takes as an advocate in order to draw students. Since the purpose of this lesson is for student to see how people have been agents of change so its important to focus on how Malala begins taking action about issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What might the students be doing/saying?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I think students will be able to understand Malala meant she had to do something (take action against injustices) when she said wishing wasn’t enough. Student will most likely say people will think it’s not fair girls cannot go to school and possibly help her. I think students will say people and themselves will/do care because it’s unfair and everyone should be able to go to school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.7. Excerpt from Final Lesson Plan, stopping point #4.
Riley asks students to understand Malala as someone who acted to make change, to later turn towards students seeing themselves as capable of making change. Riley rereads this line from the text: “Wishing wasn’t enough.” (Yousafzai, 2017, p. 24) and follows by expanding on how wishing and talking without doing isn’t enough. Not originally present in the final lesson plan, she adds: “Wishing isn’t enough. Sometimes if you just talk about doing something and don’t do it, it’s never going to get done if you just talk about it.” (Teaching Demonstration, 13:52). This unscripted addition is an in-the-moment teacher move to emphasize the scene deliberately. Here, Riley is showing how not only the character resists and challenges domination and unsilenced institutional issues in society, but, in a soft but firm voice, uses this stopping point to point students to imagine their own actions. After naming the injustices Malala faced and her activism against the injustices, Riley speaks directly towards her imagined student audience (me), using the pronoun “you” four times, creating an interactive literary experience, bringing the reader into the story. As a teacher, she attended to story closure by opening a space for students to push back on dominant discourses and consider themselves interrupters, being agents of change in their own worlds.

Riley Interrogates Story Closure: “Does that make you think you could make a difference and help others? How?”

In her final paper, Riley interrogated story closure to set up space for student action on the last page of her CMA paper:

It’s critical to examine what assumptions are embedded in the closure of Malala’s Magic Pencil and if the ending ideology is open or closed. Malala’s story has a very strong ending that is embedded with the assumption that everyone is capable of making a difference (Final CMA Paper, p. 9).
Riley selects this next stopping point (stopping point #5, Figure 5.7) as the conclusion of the read aloud, she observes for students: “Malala’s agency really grew as she decided to take action and speak out for herself and other girls who were denied education. And Malala wrote to bring more justice and education to the world.” (Teaching Demonstration, 14:02).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#5 Stopping place in text Pg. 32</th>
<th>What we will say/do:</th>
<th>Students may be wary to the idea but hopefully they will be they can also have big impacts in the world.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Do you still believe in magic? I do. I wrote alone in my room, but people all over the world were reading my story. Millions now know it and help me spread my message of hope. I had at last found the magic I was looking for – in my words and in my work”</td>
<td>What actions did Malala take to bring more justice and fairness to the world? What were some of the impacts of Malala’s social activism? Throughout Malala’s story magic is an important symbol. How do you think magic is a symbol for Malala’s agency and resistance to injustices? How did Malala find magic in her own words and work? How can words be magical? Does that make you think you could make a difference and help others? How?</td>
<td>Students will likely say her words helped her make a difference which was her dream.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason for stopping, related to the social justice goal/objective of the lesson: This page provides as important stopping place because it highlights how Malala continued to advocate for equality, despite many set-backs. It's important to highlight how Malala found her power and became an advocate for herself and others. This discussion promotes and encourages students to care for others and be active agents of change.</td>
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</table>

*Figure 5.7. Final Lesson Plan, stopping point #5.*
Riley highlights the character’s agency, guiding students to recognize how Malala pushed back on dominant discourses and oppression. She names the actions Malala took to reclaim her power and takes it a step further, turning to students, offering the opportunity to act, asking: “Does that make you think you could make a difference and help others? How?” (Final Lesson Plan, p. 7). Not only does Riley offer entry points with a yes or no question, but she also probes for the very next crucial step “How?” that allows students to take ownership of this activist stance, connect to their own lives, and to begin to imagine what it might be like to act for positive social change.

Furthermore, Riley begins to name the limits or potential challenges of this line of questioning when considering potential student response. The lesson plan template requires preservice teachers to anticipate student response in the final column. Riley responds realistically considering that “Students may be wary of the idea but hopefully they can also have big impacts in the world”. With these words, she is anticipating student response; she is cautiously optimistic about students’ abilities to consider the possibility of creating change, with the hope that it will help them move to action in the future. Her instruction that follows the conclusion of the read-aloud that goes beyond her goal that “Students will be able to identify injustices and understand the impacts of social activism” (Final Lesson Plan, p. 1) and takes instruction to the next level, setting up the space for student action.

Riley’s concluding remarks aim to creates the space for student agency: “Maybe using your voice is your magic pencil?” (Teaching Demonstration, 17:05). By leaving the lesson’s closing ideologically open and welcoming students into the story using a second-person point of view, Riley plans to open an agential space for students themselves to begin to understand the power of their symbolic or literal pencil. And the lesson does not stop there. Riley then plans an
after-reading activity and reflects on her plan with intentions to teach this in her future classroom.

**Acting after reading: “Becoming an Advocate Activity”**. As the pages of the book close, Riley has planned an after-reading activity. This discussion intended to *“promote and encourage students to care for others and be active agents of change.”* She named it a “Becoming an Advocate Activity” where students would brainstorm ideas to act against injustice. In her final lesson plan, Riley plans, *“As a class we will talk about ways to be activists. While highlighting Malala’s letter writing, we will also talk about other ideas such as posters, art, music, performances, etc., so students have multiple ways to express themselves”* (Final Lesson Plan, p. 8, as shown in Figure 5.8). Rather than concluding the lesson, Riley passes the pencil to students, positioning the end of the book as an opening for activism.

![Restate your Learning Goal:](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Restate your Learning Goal:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Students will be able to identify injustices and understand the impacts of social activism”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion Questions/Activity:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Becoming an Advocate Activity: Students will see themselves as agents of change, as they choose an injustice from Malala’s story to advocate for.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students will have a brainstorming worksheet with the following ideas to think about and questions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malala wanted to make a difference in the world. Throughout her story she talked about injustices related to class, gender and education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Which of these injustices are you most interested in and/or do you think is the biggest issue?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Why do you think this issue needs to be changed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What ideas do you have for changing or bringing attention to this issue?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 5.8. Lesson Plan Excerpt, “Becoming an Advocate” After Reading Activity.**

Importantly, this activity opens the conversation with students, asking them to imagine themselves making a difference. It is important to draw out the limitations here: a. In this dramatic enactment, with the assumed student audience, Riley is a) setting up space for her
imagined audience to act, and b) students are asked to “imagine.” Riley does not suggest the difference between this kind of imagining activity and supporting the class in choosing something they might work on together to take action. However, it is an important beginning in her ongoing journey to develop critical perspectives to translate into practice.

The Me in “We”: Riley’s Identity Formation as an Educator Committed to Social Justice

Riley’s identity formation as preservice teacher who is part of a group of professional educators is apparent throughout her final reflection. Increasingly throughout the unit, Riley identifies as a member of a group of educators who bear the responsibility of critical perspective that translate into to expose and critique social issues and themes in children’s literature. Through this project and reflection, she identifies herself “As an educator I would highlight this page to discuss the adversity Malala faced and her courage and bravery as she continued to be an activist.” (Final CMA paper, p. 6). Highlighting again Riley’s closing call in the last assignment of the project, Riley looks towards her future classroom, writing:

*Teachers need to help students learn to read for social justice* and the only way to do this is by highlighting power dynamics and showing how they relate to race, gender, class, etc. If *teachers* ignore ideologies, and historical and institutional factors at play in children's literature, we take part in reinforcing and perpetuating social inequalities.

(Individual Written Reflection)

By using the phrase “teachers need to,” immediately followed by the use of self-identifying pronoun “we” Riley is voices sense of belonging to a group of educators whose duty it is to read for social justice. The word “essential” is used nine total times in the Final CMA paper as Riley calls for the use of the CM lens to have critical conversations in the classroom. She confirms her commitment to expose and critique social issues and themes in children’s literature that
addresses issues of race, gender, and/or socioeconomic status. From the ending of her very first project submission, Riley uses the word “our”: “It is our role as educators to help students make connections between Malala’s story and present-day issues. To do this, multicultural analysis is vital” (Final CMA paper, p. 11).

Albeit project limitations only offered the opportunity to enact a lesson with peers or the instructor, rather than a performance within a live classroom, Riley is identifying with a group of professionals she is soon to be a part of. She directly states how she would apply lesson learning in this imagined space to her future classroom:

I would apply these lessons by making reading for social justice and using a critical multicultural lens a part of my classroom by using social justice centered books like Malala. I want to center lessons around in-justices and agency because it will help students deconstruct social issues and be a part of changing them, not perpetuating them. By helping students to see and question these issues we are empowering them to become positive agents of change in this world. (Individual Written Reflection).

This demonstrates how Riley both desires to (“want”) and intends to (“would”) carry a critical stance towards multicultural literature and instruction. She names the potential dangers of uncritical instruction, and values focalization on injustices, paired with agential positioning. She is holding herself and her preservice teacher peers/educator colleagues implicitly assumed in the “we “responsible for understanding of how power asymmetries are reproduced, to prevent “perpetuating them” in order to plan for critical instruction that aims to interrupt.

Summary

I am grateful for Riley’s participation in the study as an opportunity to learn from her, especially since she conducted her project on her own, and not with a partner.
In closing the project, Riley *strongly recommended* keeping the Reading for Social Justice Project as a feature of future coursework. When rating her sense of preparedness, she rated herself *very prepared* to select and analyze multicultural literature and *prepared* to design and teach multicultural literature for social justice purposes.

Throughout the “Reading for Social Justice Project” journey, I trace Riley’s development of the value of the potential of the lens in all it can do to expressing its indispensability as an essential tool in the classroom. This case highlights that the experiences throughout the “Reading for Social Justice Project” supported Riley to use the lens to develop critical perspectives and practices. Riley makes it explicit that the CM analytical lens is an “essential” tool to unpack power, “*deconstruct dominant ideologies,*” and to discuss “*heavy topics.*” Riley intentionally pairs these “heavy topics” with the desire to mobilize action: “*I really wanted to focus on the combination of the injustices and her agency. I feel like they kinda have to be together in a way*” (Small Group Oral Reflection, 25:14). While Riley is just beginning her journey towards becoming an activist teacher, she recognizes the importance of pairing instruction that interrogated power dynamics to draw out inequities tied with crucial steps to set up space for student action. As Riley analyzed, designed, enacted, and reflected on this multicultural literature-based lesson plan project, she used the Critical Multicultural lens to interrogate story closure to set up space for student action, even if it stopped at a preliminary stage of imagining. Riley’s case has important implications on research and practice in teacher education.
CHAPTER VI

Preservice Teachers’ Ratings of their RSJ Project Experience

This chapter presents findings from a survey administered at the end of the project to obtain preservice teachers’ perspectives on their Reading for Social Justice Project experience, as revealed through their ratings on a closed item, Likert scale survey. This information from 23 preservice teachers complements the richly detailed case studies, providing insights about how preservice teachers viewed the usefulness of the project and project activities in relation to critically analyzing and selecting multicultural books, and designing and teaching lesson plans to their peers. In addition, we sought their views on the specific course activities, and the impact of the switch to an online format midway through the course due to the pandemic.

Familiarity with General Lesson Planning and Teaching Multicultural Literature Before the RSJ Project

With regard to general lesson planning, there was roughly an even split in preservice teachers’ perceptions of their familiarity with lesson planning before taking part in the research project (see Figure 6.1). Specifically, 13 out of the 23 (57%) preservice teachers reported they were familiar or very familiar with general lesson planning. Specifically, six preservice teachers (26%) reported they were very familiar, and seven (30%) reported familiar. Additionally, six (26%) of the preservice teachers reported they were somewhat familiar with lesson planning, and four preservice teachers (17%) reported they were not familiar with lesson planning.
Preservice teachers reported much less familiarity teaching multicultural literature. 74% of the preservice teachers reported that they had no or limited experience teaching multicultural literature before taking part in the research project. Specifically, 12 preservice teachers (52%) reported *no familiarity* teaching multicultural literature. Five preservice teachers (22%) reported they were *somewhat familiar* teaching multicultural literature and five preservice teachers (22%) reported that they were *familiar*. The reported lack of prior experience in teaching multicultural literature is further illustrated by the fact that only one out of the 23 preservice teachers reported they were *very familiar* teaching multicultural literature.

**Preparedness for Selection and Critical Analysis of Books and Teaching Multicultural Literature After the Project**

After completing the RSJ Project which sought to increase preservice teachers’ experience with lesson planning and teaching multicultural literature, there was a dramatic, positive shift away from preservice teachers’ initial lack of familiarity to feelings of
preparedness to select and analyze multicultural literature and then to design and teach a lesson for social justice purposes (see Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2. Preservice teachers’ ratings on how well prepared they are to select and analyze multicultural literature and to design and teach multicultural literature for RSJ purposes.

The ability to critically analyze multicultural literature is essential to teaching with this literature. 96% of the preservice teachers reported they felt prepared or very prepared to critically analyze multicultural literature. More specifically, nine of the 23 preservice teachers (39%) reported feeling very prepared and 13 preservice teachers (57%) reported being prepared. There was only one preservice teacher (4%) who reported they felt somewhat prepared, and no preservice teachers reported not prepared. With regard to designing and teaching multicultural literature for social justice purposes, 78% of the preservice teachers reported they felt prepared or very prepared. 12 of the 23 preservice teachers (52%) reported they felt very prepared, and six preservice teachers (26%) felt prepared. Five preservice teachers (22%) reported they felt somewhat prepared, and no preservice teachers reported not prepared. Preservice teachers’ strong feelings of preparedness to design and teach multicultural literature after completing the
project is in dramatic contrast to their initial perceptions of familiarity with multicultural literature teaching. Initially, 12 of the 23 preservice teachers (52%) reported they were not familiar with this kind of teaching. Afterward, 12 preservice teachers (52%) reported they felt very prepared to teach, and 26% felt “prepared”. Their responses suggest that the project had a strong, positive impact on preservice teachers, and that the majority now felt that they could design and teach a lesson for social justice purposes. Importantly, their level of preparedness in lesson planning and teaching was less than that reported for book selection and critical analysis (96%), which is somewhat to be expected, given that teaching requires application and pedagogical knowledge.

Helpfulness of RSJ Experiences in Developing Skills as a Critical Educator for Social Justice

In this survey, preservice teachers reflected on the series of collaborative workshops and class activities and rated how helpful these various experiences were in supporting their development of skills as a critical educator with goals for social justice. Figure 6.3 shows that all the activities received positive ratings from the majority of preservice teachers, with 78% rating the activities as somewhat helpful or very helpful. Preservice teachers rated the project experiences ordered from most helpful as: “Lesson planning with their partner” (17/23), “Enacting the co-taught lesson” (13/23), “Writing Critical Multicultural Analysis paper and feedback” (12/23), “Lesson conferencing with instructors” (11/23), “Lesson Reflection Session with a small group” 10/23), “Reading Botelho and Rudman chapters” (6/23), and “Book Analysis Workshop using the CMA perspective” (6/23). However, three of the activities earned a negative rating of not very helpful or not helpful at all from one or two preservice teachers: “Lesson Reflection Session with a small group” (2/23, 9%), “Writing Critical Multicultural
Analysis paper and feedback” (1/23, 4%), and “Lesson conferencing with instructors” (1/23, 4%).

Figure 6.3. Preservice teachers’ ratings of how helpful the RSJ class activities were in developing their skills as a critical educator with goals for social justice. (n=23)

In general, most of the course experiences were rated as helpful in developing their skills as a critical educator with goals for social justice. Broadly, it’s important to note how much preservice teachers valued applying the CM perspective to lesson planning and teaching. In school of education courses, preservice teachers often look forward to the teaching application experiences, such as lesson planning and enactment. Surprisingly, “Writing the Critical Multicultural Analysis paper” received a positive combined rating of 78%, where 18 out of 23 preservice teachers rated as very helpful or somewhat helpful suggesting the majority of preservice teachers valued the theoretical class activities. Perhaps more to be expected is their positive rating of the opportunities to demo teach their lessons with peers and to work with their partners on the design of the lesson. Preservice teachers are typically eager to try out their teaching, and although the zoom session was less desirable than teaching in person, it nevertheless provided an opportunity to teach.
Recommendations for Teaching the RSJ Project in the Future

When asked if they would recommend keeping the RSJ project in the future, 15 out of 23 preservice teachers (65%) selected recommend strongly, seven preservice teachers (30%) selected three out of four on the scale, and only one preservice teacher (4%) selected a two out of four on the scale (see Figure 6.4). Combined, 95.6%, or 22 out of 23 preservice teachers, recommend keeping the RSJ project in the future. Zero preservice teachers would not recommend this project. These ratings, considered alongside the overwhelming positive ratings of the majority of experiences in the RSJ unit, showed that preservice teachers viewed the project as valuable to developing skills as critical educators with goals for social justice.

Figure 6.4. Preservice teachers’ recommendations to keep the RSJ project for future preservice teachers in children’s literature. (n=23)

Effect of Hybrid Online Course Experience on Preservice Teacher Success

While originally planned as a fully in-person experience, midway through this project, we switched to an online course environment due to impacts from the COVID-19 global pandemic. Because of this, it was important to ask preservice teachers to what extent they thought this
change to a hybrid experience affected their success in the RSJ project, with results displayed in Figure 6.5 below:

![Bar chart showing preservice teachers' ratings of the impact of the hybrid online experience to their success in the RSJ project.](image)

**Figure 6.5.** Preservice teachers’ ratings of the impact of the hybrid online experience to their success in the RSJ project. (n=23)

A majority viewed the hybrid experience neutrally. Over half the class, 12 preservice teachers (52%), reported they felt the hybrid experience neither strengthened nor made their experience less strong than if completed entirely in person. Eight preservice teachers out of 23 (34%) felt somewhat less successful because of the switch to hybrid online, and two preservice teachers (9%) felt their success in this hybrid online project was *much less than in person*. Interestingly, one preservice teacher (4%) noted that this switch strengthened their experience.

**Helpfulness of Online Experiences**

We asked preservice teachers to reflect on the specific online course experiences and rate how helpful they were skill development as critical educators with goals for social justice as displayed in Figure 6.6. The majority neutral response to the switch to a hybrid experience survey item presented above is mirrored in preservice teachers’ response to the “overall hybrid
online experience” item here, where ten of the 23 preservice teachers (43%) preservice teachers responded *neutral*. Eight preservice teachers (35%) responded that the “overall hybrid experience” was *not very helpful* and four preservice teachers (17%) responded that it was *somewhat helpful*. Interestingly, one preservice teacher (4%) noted the overall hybrid online experience was *very helpful*.

![Figure 6.6](image-url)

**Figure 6.6.** Preservice teachers’ ratings of how helpful the hybrid online RSJ class activities were in developing their skills as critical educators with goals for social justice. (n=23)

All of the activities generally received positive ratings. In terms of which experiences were rated *very helpful*, in rank order, preservice teachers first rated “Collaborating with partner on lesson planning” (17/23, 74%) and “Communicating with Instructors Bridget and Kirsten” (15/23, 65%) as most helpful, followed by “Teaching our lessons in Zoom breakout room” and “Getting feedback about our draft papers online”, which nine preservice teachers (39%) rated as *very helpful*. “Participating in zoom classes and conversations” and “Participating in lesson plan conference in Zoom” both were rated *very helpful* by six out of 23 preservice teachers (26%). Only one preservice teacher (4%) rated the overall hybrid online experience as *very helpful*.

Some activities elicited ratings of *not very helpful* or *not helpful at all*. There were three activities that earned ratings of *not very helpful*. Eight out of 23 preservice teachers (35%) rated the “Overall hybrid online experience” as *not very helpful*, followed by three preservice teachers
(13%) rating “Participating in lesson plan conference in Zoom” and two preservice teachers (9%) rating “Participating in lesson plan conference in Zoom” as not very helpful. There was only one activity, which received a single vote of not helpful at all “Teaching our lessons in Zoom breakout room”. While course design adaptations were made swiftly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the overall effect of the switch to an online modality was that it neither positively nor negatively impacted preservice teacher experience.

**Summary**

Survey results reveal a positive shift in preservice teachers’ self-reports of how prepared they were to select and analyze multicultural literature and then to design and teach a lesson for social justice purposes. This dramatic contrast to their initial perceptions of familiarity with multicultural literature teaching showcases the development of preservice teachers throughout the “Reading for Social Justice Project”. All the in-person project activities received positive ratings; collaborative experiences involving partners and instructor feedback were especially rated as most helpful. The majority neutral response about the effect of hybrid online course experience on preservice teacher success points towards a direction for future research to explore how collaborative spaces could be more supportive and generative online. These insights can inform future iterations of this project as well as *Children’s Literature* coursework more broadly in the field of teacher education. Finally, it is important to qualify these findings with the caveat that the reflections were not anonymous, they were part of the students’ assignments for the RSJ project. It is possible that some students chose to make positive comments because they knew that they would be receiving a grade for the project and might have been reluctant to share negative views. As part of the permission process and later during the project, Dr. Dalton and I had assured students that Dalton, the instructor of record, would evaluate and grade their work.
and that she would not know who had agreed to participate in the study until after course grades were submitted at the end of the semester. In addition, we told them that these grades were not shared with me, so that I could maintain my researcher role separate from grading. However, some students may still have stated more positive views than they would have if the reflection survey had been anonymous.
CHAPTER VII

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In this dissertation study, I have critically examined how preservice teachers participating in a “Reading for Social Justice Project” (RSJ project) in their Children’s Literature course understand, value, and apply a Critical Multicultural perspective. I draw primarily on Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) framework to aim to equip preservice teachers with the tools to expose and critique social issues and themes in multicultural picture books. The texts selected for analysis explicitly address issues of race, gender, and/or socioeconomic status and center around the theme of resistance literature. The research questions guiding this study were:

RQ 1: How do preservice teachers participating in a “Reading for Social Justice Project” in their Children’s Literature course understand, value, and apply a Critical Multicultural perspective to expose and critique social issues and themes in multicultural children’s literature that address issues of race, gender, and/or socioeconomic status?

RQ2: How do these preservice teachers critically design, enact, and reflect on a multicultural literature-based lesson plan project?

In this concluding chapter, I discuss key findings unique to each case, and themes across cases. I relate these themes to the findings from the whole class survey data. I indicate the contributions and acknowledge the limitations of the study that have important implications for research, theory, and practice.

Insights from Preservice Teachers’ Experiences in the RSJ Project

The RSJ project was situated in a Children’s Literature course as a core requirement of a teacher education program whose mission is to improve social justice and equity in education. The program aims to prepare equity-minded teachers with opportunities to learn how to support culturally, economically, and linguistically diverse students. Central to that work is attending to questions of power and privilege. The RSJ project was one approach that aimed to provide
opportunities for preservice teachers to connect Critical Multicultural theory into practice through a spiraled, collaborative cycle of text analysis, lesson planning, teaching demonstration with peers, and reflection, interspersed with collaborative opportunities to generate questions, reflect on critical incidents, and receive and respond to feedback. My findings suggest that incorporating a RSJ project allows opportunities for preservice teachers to develop perspectives and practices when teaching with multicultural children’s literature to support social justice in their future classrooms.

The case studies and analysis of project reflections provides insight into how these preservice teachers critically design, enact, and reflect on a multicultural literature-based lesson plan project. Throughout the multi-week unit, these future teachers demonstrate their understanding of the critical perspective and apply this analytical lens as a tool to unpack power and enact intersectional instruction. These preservice teachers voiced aims for agential instruction and social justice as their purpose. They used the Critical Multicultural Lens in lesson planning and enactment and displayed the courage and commitment to have hard conversations about complex and heavy topics. The preservice teachers began to situate the text in the broader historical socio-political context by connecting past injustices to present inequities. Notably, the preservice teachers expressed intentions to go beyond an examination of injustice, to deconstruct text in aims to disrupt systems of power and resist.

Throughout the process, Leah, Sophia, Riley, and other preservice teachers in the course aimed for agential, equitable instruction for social justice, with their explicit willingness, responsibility, and commitment to using the critical lens in their future classrooms. In a preliminary way, these preservice teachers began to see the opportunity of texts, apply a critical lens as a tool for interrogation, and imagine how children’s literature can be a site for
transformation. In navigating these goals, the preservice teachers reveal critical incidents that give us insight into the challenges they faced, such as student-friendly framing and concrete ways to enact agential instruction. Through events and reflections on project activities, the preservice teachers reveal how collaborative experiences, (instructor feedback, conferences, dramatic enactment, and opportunities to reflect as a part of course design) created a supportive space to develop teachers’ understanding, value, and application of critical perspectives and practices.

**Preservice Teachers Use a Critical Multicultural Lens to Unpack Power**

The preservice teachers in our case studies named the critical lens as an essential tool to expose and critique social issues and themes in children’s literature. They expressed the value of critical interrogation of text to unpack power within the text and image to deconstruct dominant ideologies. The critical analytical lens enabled preservice teachers in our case studies to interrogate resistance literature and unveil the harsh histories, violence, injustices, marginalization, discrimination, and oppression within the pages and connect it to present-day injustices. While the preservice teachers name the topics as heavy and complex, they use the Critical Multicultural lens to interrupt their former tendency to overlook or gloss over. Instead, the RSJ project created a safe space to practice in a low risk setting that encouraged questions, reflection, rehearsal, and redesign. Rather than a tough topic to skim or skip, Leah, Sophia, and Riley ultimately selected many of these moments as stopping points for instruction for their (imagined) elementary audience; in doing so they sought to shine a light on the injustices, in attempts to bring the dominant discourses into consciousness with the ultimate aim to disrupt power (Botelho & Rudman, 2009).
When highlighting injustices, preservice teachers used focalization to highlight the characters’ individual agency. Leah, Sophia, and Riley called out the characters’ courage, hard work, and determination in resisting injustice but did not point to larger resistance movements. While influenced by the authors’ focus on the characters’ individual acts of resistance, this finding has implications on text selection and authorship, for teacher educators and educators alike to interrogate focalization as they select texts for their curriculum. This pattern points to a need to support preservice teachers bridge the gap between a focus on individual vs. structural disruption. This finding points to an important opportunity in future research in teacher education to support preservice teachers in recognizing system-level oppression, and in response see a pathway to system-level activism and social change.

Throughout the case, Leah and Sophia kept coming back to the challenge of translating complex topics (such as intersectionality) into student-friendly language for an elementary audience. While toiling with the tension, Leah still expressed a value of the process and positions students as capable of learning these complex concepts. The role of feedback as a collaborative experience also positively supported Riley’s explicit naming of power relations (and increasingly intersectional instruction and showcases instructor support to turn intentions for critical perspectives into practice. All three preservice teachers use the CM lens to interrogate story closure and happy endings (Boutte, 2002; Lenski, 2008) and close the lesson in their first attempts at designing agential instruction.

**Preservice Teachers Aim for Agential Instruction**

Key tenants of Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) Critical Multicultural analysis are to move students from recognizing to disrupting injustice. Leah, Riley, and Sophia aimed for agential instruction by highlighting the characters’ agency paired with a purposeful positioning of their
student audience as agents of change. They displayed the courage and commitment question and push back on dominant discourse with goals for social justice. While a valiant effort, applying this crucial concept into agential instruction proved to be a challenge not only for the preservice teachers selected for case studies but across the course, as many preservice teachers were not yet reaching their ultimate goal of planning disruptive instruction.

In Chapter Four, the analysis reveals that the pedagogical moves stop short at the examining of injustice; findings illustrate that preservice teachers may need more support in guiding students to go beyond examining and recognizing, to disrupting systems of power. While many phrases indicated preservice teachers valued Critical Analysis as a tool for shedding light on injustice, evidence of that final step towards interruption is not there yet, but perhaps still developing. However, even recognition and critique are valuable aspects of the learning process at this stage of their journey.

While Sophia set goals that were only those first steps to examine injustice, Leah set explicit goals that go beyond merely reading the text for her prospective students to become agents of change. Although the ambitious goal was set, it is not until the small group lesson debrief, and then again post-project in the individual written reflection, when Leah names her next steps as involving “some kind of call to action in which students apply what they learned from the lesson and think of its implications in the real world.” (Leah, Individual Written Reflection) This important addition, only arising in reflection after teaching, suggests that preservice teachers need more support in opening a space for activism, and the reflective space supported reflexivity.

In Chapter Five, Riley serves as a key example of centering agency when she offers the CM lens to “invite and encourage readers to see the potential they hold for making changes”
(Final CMA Paper, p. 8) and continually referred to her students as change agents. Riley is designing empowering instruction and planning to create opportunities for students to reimagine and reorganize their world. Far from critiques of multiculturalism’s surface level diversity and inclusion efforts (Au, 2009), Riley demonstrates a willingness for her instruction to move beyond a conversation and into opportunities to reimagine and reorganize students’ worlds. While Riley, Leah, and Sophia are just beginning their journeys towards becoming activist teachers, they recognized the importance of pairing instruction that interrogated inequities in power with the crucial next steps to set up space for student action.

**Preservice Teachers Demonstrated a Willingness, Responsibility, and Commitment to Using Critical Lens in Their Future Classrooms**

All three students in the case studies, and many in the survey, demonstrated a willingness, responsibility, and commitment to use the critical lens in their future classroom. As Leah and Sophia admit the limitations of their lesson, they refer to future work as critical educators. Sophia and Leah say the project showed them that it is important to not just diversify representation in their future elementary school classroom libraries, they commit to go more into depth about intersectional power inequities in the word and world (Freire, 1970; Freire & Macedo, 1987).

As Riley crafts agential instruction, she commits: “The lesson would not stop here” (Final Lesson Plan, After Teaching), setting intentions for the future. Uniquely, throughout the RSJ project, Riley increasingly identifies as a member of a group of educators responsible for and committed to teaching social justice. Each of these preservice teachers took up critical concepts in their artifacts over time. In their end-of-project reflections, many of the preservice
teachers’ reflections of the RSJ project as a whole echoed case study teachers’ value of the project experience and drew out the importance of ongoing work to become critical educators.

**Preservice Teachers View the RSJ Project as Important and Useful in Preparing Them to Be Critical Educators**

Chapter Six presents the findings from selected survey reflection items. The larger survey was designed to learn the 23 preservice teachers’ views on the purpose, use, and value of the Critical Multicultural lens and the RSJ Project as a whole. The survey responses offered insights about feelings of preparedness for the selection analysis and teaching multicultural literature after the project and indicated preservice teachers’ ratings of the helpfulness of project experiences in developing skills as a critical educator for social justice and the effect of the switch to a hybrid online course experience.

The overall findings indicate that the project had a strong, positive impact on preservice teachers, as 96% of the preservice teachers reported they felt *prepared* or *very prepared* to critically analyze multicultural literature after the project. Preservice teachers’ strong feelings of preparedness to design and teach multicultural literature after completing the project is in dramatic contrast to their initial perceptions of familiarity with multicultural literature teaching. And as Leah, Sophia, and Riley echoed, they viewed the project as valuable to develop skills as critical educators with goals for social justice. Their responses suggest that they perceived the project as helpful in their preparation to develop critical perspectives and practices. The survey also collected responses about individual course experiences to gain insight into implications for the design of the project.

In general, all the activities received positive ratings from the majority of preservice teachers. A common pattern between cases and whole class survey data is preservice teachers
rating collaborative experiences as *helpful* or *very helpful* in developing their skills as a critical educator with goals for social justice. As Leah, Sophia, and Riley recalled details from RSJ project activities, they expressed the value of the collaborative events and reflective spaces, which deepened their understanding of how critical perspectives could translate into instruction aimed at social justice. As discussed within the case studies, the collaborative components of the RSJ project seemed to be a significant facet of the project design, as the experience allowed them to consider the audience and act out their student-friendly language as they attend to power relations and aim for intersectional instruction.

Conferences and small group oral reflection teaching debrief sessions brought to light both predictable and unpredictable moments, where teachers had a chance to call out critical incidents (Farrell, 2008), call for support, ask questions that gave us insight into their development and challenges that might not have overwise been revealed. As this project was designed drawing inspiration from teacher education research that highlights the importance of creating a community of inquiry (Clark et al., 2014; Engeström & Sanino, 2005; Short & Harste, 1996; Torres 1998). These ratings and anecdotes reveal that the collaborative, reflective aspects of the project offered important opportunities for critical consciousness to emerge.

When the RSJ project switched to an online environment due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was important to ask preservice teachers how the change affected their success in the project. A majority viewed the hybrid experience as neither positively nor negatively impacting their project experience. When online project activities were rated, teaching our lessons specifically in Zoom breakout room was ranked as the least positive, which points towards implications of this study on future theory, research, and practice. A direction for future research to explore how collaborative spaces could be more supportive and generative online.
Implications for Theory, Research and Practice

Theoretical Implications and Future Directions

This study draws on critical theories that respond directly to critiques of Multicultural Education. A growing area of literacy scholarship critiques the use of the Critical Multicultural lens in teacher education, citing that it limits exploration of the social construction of readers’ own identity. Given the increasing asymmetry between the profile of the student body, the relatively unchanging teacher profile that is mainly composed of White, middle-class, female teachers (Glenn, 2015; Howard, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1995; NCES, 2018a; Sleeter, 2008) and the widespread White Ethnocentric values of the school system (Aldridge, 2006; Atleo et al., 1999; Hollins, 2020; Kohl, 1995; Mendoza & Reese, 2001; Morrow, 2003; Piper 2015) this cultural and racial mismatch (Harper, 2018; Larson & Irvine, 1999) necessitates critical attention to teachers’ own identities. Though the CM lens is offered as a tool to shine light on the intersections of race, class, and gender, findings in this study echo recent research that indicates preservice teachers demonstrate a need for more support as to how our identities are impacting pedagogical practices and relationships with students (Martino, 2015).

In order to advance racial justice, Picower’s (2021) research demonstrates how preservice teachers’ ideology of race, consciously or unconsciously, shapes how they teach. Picower argues that in order to advance racial justice, White teachers must reframe their understanding of race, recognize themselves as a part of an inequitable system, confront complicity (Cutler, 2020) and consider how our race interacts with our environment (Metta, 2015) and that work starts in teacher preparation. Van Bell (2010) names the challenge of identity work as “It is not a comfortable or easy thing to examine one’s own role in perpetuating discourses of racism and inequity” (p. ix). Critical education spaces can confront discomfort by naming that the enemy is
not whiteness itself, but its dominance (Jay & Jones, 2005). Critical Whiteness theories could provide powerful opportunities to examine personal positioning. When the problem is rooted in the system and paired with a personal location of self in the system, self-reflexivity supports teachers in seeing themselves in the solution. More studies to investigate how preservice teachers can be supported to identities to locate themselves as a part of the inequitable system that unequally privileges some over the others, and then locating themselves as a part of the solution is a crucial step in challenging the status quo.

Viewing the broader historical socio-political context requires more attention to the readers’ role as active participants in constructing meaning (Trites, 1994) and a conversation that addresses the readers’ subject position and the transaction between a reader and a text (Rosenblatt, 1938; 1978). Gaining traction in the field is an expansion of Bishop’s (1990) “windows, mirrors, and sliding glass doors” analogy who holds literature has the potential to “transform human experience and reflect it back to us, and in that reflection, we can see our own lives and experiences as part of the larger human experience.” (p. ix) Krishnaswami responds by asking: “Why stop there?” as they complicate this metaphor by offering the multifaceted prism (2019). This prism adds complexity to the original metaphor encouraging readers to reframe and refract new light, where literature can:

- disrupt and challenge ideas about diversity through multifaceted and intersecting identities, settings, cultural contexts, and histories. They can place diverse characters at these crucial intersections and give them the power to reframe their stories. Through the fictional world, they can make us question the assumptions and practices of our own real world.” (Why Stop, 2019, para. 6)
Krishnaswami offers a prism to welcome us to “laugh at our follies and expose our weaknesses, whether we come to these books as insiders or outsiders” and to “reconsider whose history we know and whose we have ignored” to play with light and shadow, as an opportunity to “right its injustices” (para. 16). If the ultimate aim for the CM lens is a true exposure of systems that oppress, with the goal for interruption and disruption of inequities, the role of the reader must be considered, especially for dominant culture teachers engaging with literature about non-dominant characters and people. White teacher-educators, researchers, teachers, and Predominantly White Institutions have the responsibility to bring reflections of their own identities into inquiry.

**Pedagogical Implications and Future Directions for Teacher Education**

As research in teacher education has documented both young adult literature and children’s literature as transformative tools (Flores et al. 2019; Glenn, 2012; 2015; Haddix & Price-Dennis, 2013; Landa & Stephens, 2017; Lohfink, 2014). This study offers resistance literature as the primary texts of analysis and presents an opportunity for future research. Flores et al. (2019) review of literature of preservice teacher education calls on teacher educators to “select books that challenge assumptions and speak of possibilities for change” (p. 228) Nieto (1997) warns that authentic literature isn’t only offering narratives that are “upbeat, consistently positive, sentimental, romanticized, or idealized reality”. Rather than relegating tough topics to the margins (Flores et al., 2019) or engaging in protectionism (Hubbard & Swain, 2017), these preservice teachers take this practice opportunity to engage in “hard (but real) conversations about power” (Sophia, Individual Written reflection). Their choice to have difficult conversations with young children about injustices, marginalization, discrimination, and oppression and interrogate happy endings, show that the critical lens supports teachers in beyond surface-level diversity efforts.
The setting of this study is an imagined space where preservice teachers are not yet contending with constraints within schools, such as scripted and standardized instruction (Flores et al. 2019; Milner, 2013; Sleeter & Carmona, 2016; Yoon, 2013), Common Core State Standards to align to, or negotiating student, parental, and administrative pushback. Because of this contextual limitation, preservice teachers are not yet experiencing the real-life risks and consequences of engaging in activist work. The risk is idealism that might later be confronted with resistance or obstacles is not fully anticipated. Findings of this study show the value of creating a practice space where students can prepare, ask questions, make mistakes, and reflect in a critical community of inquiry that embraces discomfort. Implications for teacher education programs include the incorporation of resistance literature, interrogation of happy endings, and connections of historical injustice to persistent present-day inequities. Directions for future research can point to learning more about how educators can incorporate activism in their classrooms.

**The Next Steps for Social Action**

As mentioned in other sections of this chapter and dissertation, critical theories in education see literacy as an opportunity to enact social justice to resist oppression, challenge injustices, and engage in social action to change the status quo (Christensen, 2000; Fetterley, 1978; Freire, 1972; Janks, 2000; Luke, 2012; Morrell, 2004). Critical pedagogies deconstruct the mechanisms of language and text that maintain power (Freire & Macedo, 1987; Morrell, 2004; 2008) to problematize the relationship between the oppressed and the oppressor (Freire, 1984; Lankshear & McLaren 1993; Lee, 2011). A crucial step in critical pedagogies is taking action to confront power inequities to reconstruct and restructure systems. True critical pedagogies must include social action in authentic, community-based ways. This section highlights some of the
key work illustrating social action as a potential path for future research through a shift in the student-teacher relationship, creating classrooms as counter-spaces, and empowering educators as activists and allies in the community. Concluding comments offer avenues for extensions of the Reading for Social Justice Project for authenticity and community-based action.

**Shift in the Student-Teacher Relationship.** The “critical” in critical pedagogies seek to shift Eurocentric perspectives to being informed by a multiplicity of perspectives that map onto the shifting demographics of the school system. When teachers value the plurality of the identities of students and practices, then they can act to address the asymmetries in the system. To do so, teachers’ reflections of self within the system remain central. As hooks (1989) declares, in order to transform social structures, we must first transform ourselves.

Many white students in teacher education programs have not had to face their own whiteness (Weiler, 1988). Irizarry (2015) and others (e.g., Howard, 1999; McIntyre, 1997; 2002; Raible & Irizarry, 2007; Sleeter, 2001) hold that white race consciousness is an essential component in interrogating power eradicate racist policies and practices in schooling. Irizarry’s research about effective teachers of students of color reveals that teachers who actively refute colorblindness and acknowledge differences among students and between themselves and their students (including admitting to and acting on disconnections) are more successful in culturally responsive instruction (Irizarry, 2009; Raible and Irizarry, 2007). Teachers who made intentional efforts to become more connected to communities within which they teach and value the “funds of knowledge” (Moll et al., 1992) which their students bring are better informed to enact pedagogy that mirrors and values the demographic diversity of students they are teaching.

To prevent the reproduction of inequitable systems, teachers should acknowledge the impacts of their positionality in the teacher-student relationship. In Laduke’s (2015) reflection as
a White teacher educator who names the benefits associated with being white, credits reflection opportunities as helpful in coming to “discover the water”, Kelly Maxwell’s (2004) metaphor to support the understanding of the historical sociopolitical contexts in which teachers and students are situated. Laduke calls teacher educators to cross borders, elicit emic perspectives, and direct attention to the struggle of those marginalized. She encourages her teachers to equalize the teacher-student hierarchy by relinquishing power and standing in solidarity to “share collective experiences—triumph as well as tragedy—and allow these experiences to inform their lives and their teaching practice” (p. 191) to begin to see “the water”. Implications in the “Reading for Social Justice Project”, and teacher education more broadly, is supporting teachers to acquire knowledge about themselves, their students, and the historical socio-political contexts in which they are teaching, to acknowledge power dynamics within the classroom space and larger community and begin to use that knowledge as a tool for social change opening classrooms as counter-spaces.

**Classrooms as Counter-Spaces.** To create a classroom as a counter-space is to offer opportunities for the reconstruction texts (Vasquez, 2014) to become a redistributive mechanism for social justice (Fraser, 1997; Luke, 2012). Through the methods of inclusion (Luke & Woods, 2009), invitation of multiple viewpoints (Lewison et al., 2000; Lewison et al. 2007; Vasquez, 2014), and the democratization of text production (Janks, 2010; Luke, 2012; Morrell, 2004), critical pedagogy is to talk back (Comber, 2001) using “rhetoric of strengths” (Auerbach, 1995, p. 644). When sharing the space and enacting anti-hegemonic practices, historically marginalized students are valued and offered opportunities to be contributing members of the classroom, facilitating better teaching and learning.
Morrell (2008) holds that by enacting critical literacies we are engaged in social praxis. Morrell’s (2017) essay highlights literacy practices of teachers as agents of change when they provide access to diverse text, teach tools to become reflexive readers of the word and world, offer opportunities to produce and distribute counter-text and unite with parents and community partners in social action (Morrell, 2017). The incorporation of counter-narratives against deficit perspectives of students has the potential power to give voice to stories often silenced in order for teachers to better understand the students’ lived experiences. Allowing youth to narrate their identities, understanding the ongoing process and how people, schools, and institutions contribute to the constant negotiation. Where students feel acompañamiento (Sepúlveda, 2011), to document and create acts of resistance against oppression and hegemony. Solórzano & Yosso (2002) sees counter-stories potential to

(a) build community among those at the margins of society by putting a human and familiar face to educational theory and practice, (b) challenge the perceived wisdom of those at society’s center by providing a context to understand and transform established belief systems, (c) open new windows into the reality of those at the margins of society by showing possibilities (d) construct another world that is richer than either the story or the reality alone. (p. 360)

A curriculum and classroom with opportunities for students to have a say in what is said and a hand in what’s being said allows participants a space for “reclaiming and re-imagining” (Cruz, 2001, p. 663) that names and addresses issues of power and hegemony. Testimonios, stories of trials and triumphs, stories of struggle, hope, and empowerment give space for reflection and expression and the space for students to envision an alternate future.
Beyond reading counter-stories, classrooms as counter spaces offer students opportunities to produce counter-stories, (Farrell, 1998; Morrell, 2015). When reading, analyzing, and teaching literature, Morrell (2017) outlines explicit questions for teachers:

“What do these texts say implicitly or explicitly about who is valued? How are readers allowed to engage these texts? What types of questions do we ask of these texts? Are students exploring the politics of text selection? Are they encountering a diverse array of voices? Do they have the power to speak back to texts? Are they composing and distributing multimodal texts of their choosing to authentic audiences?” (p. 460)

While reminiscent of Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) Critical Multicultural Analysis that drew upon Morrell and Morrell’s critical pedagogies, Morrell (2017) crucially takes that next step for social action to compose and distribute. That next step is social action that goes beyond an examination of power to set students up for reconstruction to allow students the opportunity to “speak back”. This would be an essential extension to Riley’s lesson, where students could be offered more than just the imaginative space. As Riley closes the reading of Malala’s Magic Pencil, she planned an after-reading “Becoming an Advocate Activity”; she planned to create a space where students would brainstorm ideas to act against injustice. In her final lesson plan, Riley commits, “As a class we will talk about ways to be activists.” Critical pedagogy is the next step to move on to social action. Future directions in research in critical teacher education are how to support preservice teachers to create classrooms as counter-spaces, highlighting alignment with the tenets of social action-based learning.
Educators as Activists and Allies in the Community. Beyond shifting classroom dynamics between the teacher-student relationship, critical pedagogies open the space for social action as teachers and students take up these issues in their communities. Morrell’s (2008) research with social studies teachers offers examples of educators who developed curricula focused on grassroots organizing and local politics, such as the electoral process of their own school board, or to become involved in an issue important to their own lives. These educators made connections between disciplines, such as math where students could study trends in demographic shifts and correlated achievement data of marginalized populations (such as women in STEM), and in science, where students measured toxicity levels in soil, developed research reports, and created environmental action projects with recycling programs and creating and managing urban gardens on school campuses. These examples offer an important outlook to the potential of critical pedagogies taking that crucial step for authentic, community-based social action.

Acosta (2015), a Latino student who traces his journey through schooling in the K-12 system as a member of a marginalized population, recognized praise and high expectations to be helpful amidst unhelpful stereotyping and deficit perspectives of his Latino counterparts. He highlights the transformational capacity of teachers in partnerships with students, families, principals, and community leaders who have the opportunity to form powerful groups in collective resistance against deficit positioning. The undergraduate student draws out the opportunity in collaborative research, as he draws on his experience being welcomed onto a Youth Participatory Action (YPAR) research project.

Another example of collaborative Participatory Action Research (PAR) is project is Mothers United (2011) where educational ethnographer Andrea Dyrness and five Latina
immigrant mothers-turned-community-organizers become critical, action-oriented reformers amidst a small school movement in one of the most overcrowded and under-performing public school systems in the U.S. Findings from this book describe how even well-intentioned movements could potentially cause harm, especially if all stakeholders are not equipped with equal stakes in decision-making processes. These parents were silenced, marginalized, and discounted by those who claimed to be fighting for reforms on their behalf, but together these Madres, a few teachers, and community members act in ways that offer lessons for educators working for change with immigrant parents. Pedagogy that values the contributions of parents in their children’s education has emancipatory potential for resistance that’s transformative. The three bilingual educators who valued the participation of parents asked: “How can we work with you? What can we do?” and opened the way to a fruitful collaboration that resulted in the creation of the parent center, highlighting the opportunity in recognizing these parents as change agents. “The lesson for professionals is simple: listen, learn, support, and follow. Professionals need not only to listen to parents’ perspectives and critique of their children’s schooling but also to learn from parents’ ways of being in community.” (p. 194). This research shows that when parents are positioned as carrying a wealth of knowledge and strongly affirmed in their identities as experts from their lived experiences, this recognition and validation empowered social action that resulted in real community change. The recognition and validation of parents can be extended to value students’ cultural backgrounds, experiences, and contributions is an asset-based shift in the learning environment that ultimately results in a collaboration that improves teaching and learning.

While not within the scope of the study, an important next direction for preservice teacher education is considering PAR as a way to reinvigorate multicultural education (Irizarry,
Irizarry demonstrates how YPAR’s explicit attention to power tied to a commitment to action improves the educational experiences and outcomes for youth traditionally underserved by schools. Irizarry calls out quality teaching practices that are congruent with the goals of the field, including: “the development of a more critical edge in curricular content, encouraging the co-construction of knowledge, and the affirmation of diverse perspectives, thus creating exciting possibilities for social change” (p. 198). Close colleague Jeff Duncan Andrade’s (2007) YPAR study documents how a group of students enrolled in a summer media literacy program used YPAR to develop counter-narratives related to exposing inequality and debunking majoritarian notions, contributing to a more robust and accurate portrayal of urban youth of color.

YPAR offers avenues for extensions of the “Reading for Social Justice Project” potential ways they could be taken up in projects following the responding and teaching enactment of resistance picture books for next steps for authentic, community-based social action. Important research also documents the challenges of participatory activist research (Irizarry & Brown, 2014). These difficulties surround adapting a methodology premised on action, authenticity, and youth empowerment while navigating institutions that are adult-centered and standards and content-focused world. These studies have important lessons for educators as activists and allies in the classroom and community as they navigate the politics of social change.

Praxis can play a fundamental role in contributing to revolution. Duncan-Andrade and Morrell (2008) offer critical pedagogy as a possibility for moving from theory to practice. They outline suggestions to improve coursework in Teacher Education to include opportunities to read and discuss complex critical social theory, reflect upon the general principles of pedagogy in the immediate contexts where they will be working, have access to formal or informal learning spaces to witness effective critical pedagogy and ultimately transition from observer to supported
participant. They push for teacher education programs to develop their own projects and research studies that document the ways that preservice teachers are drawing upon critical pedagogy to improve understanding of the transformation of educators from well-intended to transformative. Future work could consider how resistance literature and social justice objectives could be intertwined and aligned with national standards. Teaching with resistance literature provides interesting opportunities to move to larger social action, considering how these stories connect to present day and larger emancipatory movements.

As the institution of schooling is an agent of social reproduction; teachers play a critical role in that translation of messaging and therefore have the opportunity to disrupt systems of social reproduction (Duncan-Andrade, 2009; 2020). Jeff Duncan-Andrade holds teacher educators have the opportunity to create space in our university classrooms to support teachers to be in seeing the conditions of schooling and create a safe space to unsilence injustice and take action. He boldly states that radical transformation of schools and a true disruption of systems of social reproduction cannot and will not occur without the training of teachers as critical pedagogues and names the “enormity of the challenge” (2000, p. 191). He positions students and teachers as agents, holding onto audacious hope of the transformative potential of critical educators.

Critical pedagogy is an opportunity for enlightenment, resistance, liberatory, emancipatory, and transformative action (Freire, 1984; Luke, 2004; Morrell, 2004; 2008; 2015). “The Reading for Social Justice Project” offers important first steps to equip teachers with critical pedagogy is to empower teachers to use language and literacy for advocacy (Knoblauch & Brannon, 1993; Morrell 2008; 2017), and future directions for research see educators as
activists and allies creating classrooms as counter-spaces as the catalyst for authentic, community-based social action to create a more equitable and just society.

**Limitations of the Study**

**Limits of the Lens**

Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) Critical Multicultural Analysis requires readers to view texts in the broader historical and socio-political context. Notably, the self is a key part of the historical socio-political process. This study finds a lack of preservice teachers’ personal location of identity within that socio-historical context. Loudly silent is the mention of teachers’ own (in most cases, White) identities. Although there were many examples of preservice teachers pointing fingers to name oppressive and racist systems and taking the next step as naming themselves as responsible to push back on power, they stopped short of recognizing their identities (many as white people) who benefit from a system of power that unevenly privileges. This finding echoes trends in the literature that report White teachers’ persistent hesitation or avoidance when talking about race (Beach, 1997; Glenn, 2015; Sharpe et al., 1990; Picower, 2012).

While the findings of this study reveal Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) Critical Multicultural Analysis as useful a tool to engage in intersectional analysis and instruction, it is important to caution celebrations of the extent of the multidimensionality of the intersectional, yet restricted, lens. Intersectionality is never-ending and must not be reduced to only focus on social categories of race, gender, and socioeconomic status. This narrow focus is an additional limitation to the CM lens that fails to capture the complex dynamics of intersecting identities. Case study participants themselves began to pull out elements of geographical location, citizenship, religion, age, education as elements of analysis; these important identities were not
central to the lens (and our study) showcasing preservice teachers are already looking beyond the limitations of the lens. These findings imply it would be important to expand the lens to be even more multidimensional.

**Limits in Instruction and Enactment**

While the RSJ project encouraged preservice teachers to use the Critical Multicultural lens to prepare resistant readers to unpack power and interrogate story closure, this space is housed in an undergraduate-level course that does not include a practicum component, where preservice teachers can enact their lesson plan. When designing this study, this limitation was considered and the proposal designed a space to engage in dramatic enactment as a play-space, with their peers acting as their elementary audience.

Because of the imagined space, one valid question we could ask is: is planning for agential instruction actually acting? It is important to call out the limitations to these activist intentions. Riley rereads this line from *Malala’s Magic Pencil* (2017): “Wishing wasn’t enough. Sometimes if you just talk about doing something and don’t do it, it’s never going to get done if you just talk about it.” (p. 24). Embedded in her lesson plan is a critique of inaction, a warning for preservice teacher education that stops at the intention. In the whole class survey data, preservice teachers set impressive intentions for socially just, agential instruction. the stated goal did not always translate into practice within their co-constructed lesson plan. As empty rhetoric and good intentions that stop at intent is critiqued for failing to create real structural change (Castagno, 2014; Lewis & Diamond, 2015; Welton et al., 2018), institutions have the responsibility to create opportunities for intentions to translate into practice. These insights offer possibilities for critical teacher education to develop preservice teachers not only willingness,
responsibility, and commitment to using the critical lens in their future classrooms but points out the importance of opportunities for enactment.

Shor (1992) calls out that a critical, empowering curriculum starts from connecting to “what students know, speak, experience, and feel” (p. 22). Because of the imagined audience, preservice teachers’ do not know their audience in the ways they would if they were working together in a practicum. In their work using multicultural literature with preservice teachers, Christ and Sharma’s (2018) study problematizes preservice teachers lack of knowledge about students’ cultures and identities as a challenge when implementing culturally relevant pedagogy. Without a deeper understanding of students’ lives (Berry, 2005; Cutler, 2016; Goldenberg, 2013; Stinson, 2013) viewing texts in the broader historical and socio-political context becomes difficult. Based on preservice teachers’ development of critical perspective and practices I examined throughout the data, I hold dramatic enactment still has value as a feature of course design if practicum application is unavailable/inaccessible.

Limits and Possibilities of One Book, One Course, One Lesson

Given the current structural constraints of the teacher education program within the U.S. (Ball et al., 2009; Dutro & Cartun, 2016; Janssen et al., 2015; Lampert et al., 2010; Landa & Stephens, 2017), and within the school of education within which the study took place, the RSJ project was housed within an individual course. Students themselves lamented that that justice work requires more time. As Malala’s Magic Pencil (2017) closes with the lines “One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world” (p. 39); this optimism and opportunity must be in conversation with the limitations of the study. Leah importantly calls out the limitation that “fighting injustice just doesn’t happen overnight” (Leah, Final CMA paper, p. 5) and brings this limitation up in the small group oral reflection: “With just one lesson, it’s kind of
just scratching at the surface” (31:50). Lohfinks (2014), among others, names the challenges of preparing novice teachers and measuring development through only one semester and emphasizes true transformation requires more than one assignment in one course to reflect the ability to effectively implement and to demonstrate the depth in understandings and commitments.

This project offers 23 preservice teachers an opportunity to teach one lesson, on one book, in one course, where students are taking beginning steps on a journey to becoming critically conscious educators. Given the overall design of the RSJ project and the findings of the study, preservice teachers would benefit from support extending beyond one course and the RSJ project. Such extended support could be even more effective when embedded as a key component of a teacher preparation program more broadly. The RSJ could be used as a project that preservice teachers develop across their entire preparation experience, with the ultimate goal of lesson enactment in an elementary school classroom, followed by reflection and redesign. By creating a cross-course and practicum-based connection, the RSJ project can become a program-long journey for preservice teachers to enact, refine, redesign, and continue to reflect on their journeys to become critically conscious educators. The project’s benefit would continue with theoretical connections to content beyond literacy contexts, such as theoretically dense foundational education courses and methodological training.

For example, social studies methods could be a site for continued conversation, such as exploring individual vs. structural disruption. Long-term continuity could foster deeper pedagogical and theoretical study and opportunities to engage in practice that is connected to their work as future teachers. This long-term structure could foster longitudinal research in
teacher education to document if and how teachers continue to implement critical practices in their practicum settings, and even in their future classrooms.

**Limits and Possibilities in Online Instruction**

Given that the dramatic enactment teaching session was migrated to virtual format due to COVID-19, this modality change further contributed to the limitations of role-playing. There were a few instances of preservice teachers revealing that both their peers as the audience and the modality impacted their performance: “This would be a powerful lesson in an actual classroom. It's awkward when we’re doing it to peers, and also we’re not in person... I think doing it with kids would be awesome.” (Sophia, Individual Written Reflection). Zoom also created limitations in data collection, where virtual breakout groups became distinct spaces where other learning could not overlap. While text analysis began in the first two in-person sessions, the migration to a virtual environment created limitations in data collection and collaborative opportunities. For example, co-planning sessions were no longer students paging through the book together, with an instructor buzzing around the room readily available for in-the-moment support, instead was confined to a scheduled conference. That being said, there were other possibilities opened by the modality migration, such as collaborative feedback sessions became 10 or more minutes of focused student-instructor conferences, an opportunity facilitated by remote facilitation, which preservice teachers named as generative.

**Conclusion:**

It is the quest of critical educators to uncover the legacy of language and power that shapes text (Christensen, 2009), to formulate habits of recognizing embedded ideology, and to make visible the constant reproduction of the dominant structures and ideologies (Abramowitz & Giroux, 2003; Giroux & McLaren, 1986). Critical Multiculturalism calls for more than reading
of diverse texts, to expose power relations to interrogate “how power is exercised, circulated, negotiated, and reconstructed” (p. 117) in order to craft a pathway that moves to action to challenge existing inequitable power structures. Critical Multiculturalism in teacher education pushes teachers beyond surface-level adoption and blind, uncritical incorporation of diverse texts, in efforts towards solidarity and critique (Nieto & Bode, 2008) resistant reading practices (Botelho & Rudman, 2009), and self-reflexivity. As Riley, Leah, and Sophia say, disrupting the reproduction of systems of dominance to reinvent of social rules to restructure social order (Banks & Banks, 1995).

The development critical perspectives and practices will always be an evolving process. This multicultural literature-based lesson plan project is the beginning of an ongoing journey for preservice teachers to become more critical educators. As preservice teachers demonstrate their development throughout this unit, they begin to make sense of texts to unveil inequities in power with ultimate aims to disrupt and design instruction that is increasingly intersectional, and they imagine a space that sets students up to act. By engaging in this process of analysis, teachers translate critical multiculturalism into critical pedagogies, opening a space to resist reproduction. These critical pedagogies are the most crucial, agential footsteps on the pathway to engagement and action through the sliding glass door (Sims-Bishop, 1990). This study showcases how preservice teachers put a spotlight on the injustices that circulate through text and develop critical perspectives and practices using multicultural literature to take the path of interruption for agential, transformative teaching.


Delpit, L., & Dowdy, J. K. (2002). The skin that we speak: thoughts on language and culture in


Howard, G. R. (2016). We can't teach what we don't know: White teachers, multiracial schools. Teachers College Press.


Janks, H. (2000). Domination, access, diversity and design: A synthesis for critical literacy


Bibliography: Children’s Literature


Cline-Ransome, L. (2012). *Words set me free: The story of young Frederick Douglass*.


APPENDICES

Appendix A: Course Syllabus Excerpt

Assignment 3: Reading for Social Justice Project

(5% paper draft + 10% paper final + 6% lesson plan draft + 7% lesson plan final/Teach + 2% reflection = 30% total)


You and a partner will select a social justice themed picture book and will individually write a 4-5 page critical multicultural analysis paper. You will co-design and teach a lesson based on your book to a small group and will write individual reflections. Please upload materials to CANVAS on the due date prior to the beginning of class. This assignment connects to Goals 3, 5, and 7, and will evaluate progress on XX TQS elements \textit{1.1 DP, 1.3 DP, 1.4 DP, 1.5 DP, 3.8 DP}.

Appendix B: Reading for Social Justice Project Book Selection List

Reading for social justice project, Recommended Picture Book List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civil Rights Era of the 50s and 60s</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Let the Children March by Monica Clark-Robinson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separate is Never Equal by Duncan Tonatiuh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sit-in: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down by Andrea Davis Pinkney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice of Freedom: Fannie Lou Hamer Spirit of the Civil Rights movement by Carole Boston Weatherford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She Stood for Freedom: The Untold Story of a Civil Rights Hero by Joan Trumpauer Mulholland</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slavery/Abolitionist</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sojourner Truth's: Step-Stomp Stride by Andrea Davis Pinkney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom by Carole Boston Weatherford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words Set Me Free: The Story of Young Frederick Douglas by Lesa Cline-Ransome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad by Ellen Levine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>Environmental Justice:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A River Ran Wild by Lynn Cherry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our House is On Fire : Greta Thunberg's call to save the planet by Jeanette Winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wangari's Trees of Peace: A True Story from Africa by Jeanette Winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Great Kapok Tree by Lynn Cherry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Women’s Rights
Malala’s Magic Pencil by Malala Yousafzai
Heart on Fire: Susan B. Anthony Votes for President by Ann Malaspina
Ruth Objects: The Life of Ruth Bader Ginsberg by Doreen Rappaport
Hidden Figures: The True Story of Four Black Women and the Space Race by Margot Lee Shetterly, Winifred Conkling
The Power of her Pen: The Story of Groundbreaking Journalist Ethel L. Payne by Lesa Cline-Ransome

Assorted:
Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez Book by Kathleen Krull
Dolores Huerta: A Hero to Migrant Workers by Sarah E. Warren
Nelson Mandela by Kadir Nelson

Appendix C: Assignment Guide- Reading for Social Justice Project Overview

PLEASE NOTE THAT WE HAVE UPDATED THIS GUIDE TO REFLECT OUR SWITCH TO AN ONLINE COURSE DURING THIS TIME THAT WE ARE RESPONDING TO THE CORONA VIRUS SITUATION. SEE YELLOW HIGHLIGHTS.

Assignment Guide: Overview of Reading for social justice project (35% total)
This guide provides an overview of the project. Please use this self-check form to keep track of your progress. Please refer to the assignment guides for the critical multicultural paper and the lesson plan and the final project individual reflection guide that will be posted on CANVAS. Kirsten will also share her critical multicultural paper and lesson plan and will teach a demonstration lesson. Dive in deep to this project and enjoy the journey! Please note that since we have 5 extra points from dropping the book to movie club, I have increased the points for this project from 30% to 35%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>% of grade – 30% increased to 35%</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
<th>Self-Check-Completed? Y/N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book Selection</td>
<td></td>
<td>3/3 - 3/5 (select)</td>
<td>Yes for All!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select book with partner</td>
<td></td>
<td>3/10 (bring to class)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bring book to class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Multicultural Paper Draft</td>
<td>5% (automatic grade if submitted on time – goal is formative feedback)</td>
<td>3/17- update to 3/31, feedback 4/2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Multicultural Paper FINAL</td>
<td>10% -- increased to 12%</td>
<td>3/31 – update to 4/9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Plan Draft</td>
<td>6% (automatic grade if submitted on time – goal is formative feedback)</td>
<td>3/19 – update to 4/2, feedback</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson Plan FINAL</strong> and</td>
<td><strong>7% -- increased to 9%</strong></td>
<td><strong>4/2 – update to 4/14. Teach</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Teaching in class</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Written reflection</strong></td>
<td><strong>2% -- increased to 3%</strong></td>
<td><strong>4/16 – update to 4/21</strong></td>
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<td>Optional: Sign up for a</td>
<td><strong>Optional - not connected to</strong></td>
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<td>30- minute interview in</td>
<td><strong>project grade</strong></td>
<td><strong>between 4/8-4/30 with</strong></td>
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<td>April with Kirsten (for</td>
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Please upload materials to CANVAS on the due date, prior to the beginning of class. This assignment connects to Goals 3, 5, and 7, and will evaluate progress on CO TQS elements 1.1 DP, 1.3 DP, 1.4 DP, 1.5 DP, 3.8 DP.

**PART 1** - You and a partner will select a social justice themed picture book from the list provided and will each individually write a 4-5 page critical multicultural analysis paper. You will share and discuss your completed papers with one another.

**PART 2** - You and a partner will co-design a lesson plan and teach the lesson based on your RSJ book to a small group of classmates.

Co-Design with Partner: Please make arrangements to meet virtually with your partner to create your lesson plan together. You might want to work on a Google Doc so that you can work on the document simultaneously and see one another’s work. Once you have a draft and are refining it, I recommend that you use edit suggesting mode so that the changes are visible and you can decide whether to accept the changes or to make further revisions.

Online teaching update: Everyone will join our zoom class on 4/14, 12:30-1:45. You and your partner will be assigned to another team (Kirsten is setting up these breakout rooms). After a brief whole class check in, you will enter your assigned breakout room in Zoom. You will teach your lesson to the other team, get feedback, and then repeat again so that the other team is able to teach their lesson and get feedback. You will be asked to record your session. Bridget and Kirsten will be dropping in to the various breakout rooms during your demo teach.

**PART 3** - You will submit an individual reflection about the project as a whole.

**OPTIONAL for research study participants:** Sign up with Kirsten for an optional 30-minute interview in April to further discuss your project and experiences. This is not connected to the class or your grade.
Appendix D: Assignment Guide: Critical Multicultural Analysis Paper and Rubric

ASSIGNMENT GUIDE: READING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE PROJECT

CRITICAL MULTICULTURAL ANALYSIS (CMA) PAPER (17% OF TOTAL GRADE)

Draft Due: Week 10, 3/17, upload CMA paper draft to CANVAS before class

5% (automatic grade if submitted on time – goal is formative feedback)

You will receive feedback by 3/19

FINAL Due: Week 12, 3/31, upload CMA paper FINAL to CANVAS before class

(10% -- increased to 12%)

You and a partner will choose a book from the Reading for Social Justice picture book list. You will critically read the book and individually write a 4-5 page critical multicultural analysis of the book using ideas, theories, and perspectives presented in class (note: images are in addition to this page count). In addition to the analysis, address how the book might be used in the classroom environment for an elementary audience (you can imagine this, even if you are not planning to pursue teaching as a career!). Please use the various issues we have read about and discussed to critically engage with the text. See example papers posted on Canvas in the Assignment Guide Folder.

The structure of the CMA paper is as follows:

1. Introduction
   a. Title page: Title of paper, your name, image of the book cover and bibliographic information (title of book, author, illustrator, date of publication, publication press).
   b. Hook: Why is it worth engaging critically with the chosen text?
   c. Introduce the text through a brief summary.
   d. Clearly articulate your thesis statement (i.e. how a critical multicultural perspective informs your analysis of this book, as well as how this analysis will affect teaching and learning in your future teaching. Please include 1-2 illustrations from the children’s literature in this section.

2. Body Section(s): Application of a theoretical perspective
   a. Intro to paragraph: Explain how you will use the Critical Multicultural lens to analyze your book. Explain it and its use/purpose/value
   b. In this section, you are asked to write an analytic paper of your chosen children’s book, focusing on both the written text and the illustrations. Please use 2-3 concepts found in critical multicultural analysis (use the Botelho and Rudman chapters, as well as class powerpoints and other readings, cited below). You may also want to conduct additional research on the Internet about your book, and/or the issues it raises for you). You can focus on a variety of concepts discussed in
the readings and in class but remember that even as you try to separate these concepts, they are all interconnected in a variety of ways.

i. Ideology
ii. Discourse
iii. Race
iv. Class
v. Gender
vi. Environmental justice
vii. Power
viii. Historical/Social/Political
ix. Intention/Impact etc.

3. Connection to Teaching and Learning

a. Here, you are asked to take the theoretical discussion you have written above and discuss how this analysis might affect your teaching of this text. Through this process, how are you coming to understand, value, and apply a critical multicultural perspective to the analysis of a social-justice themed picture book?

i. It is important to highlight the implications of this kind of analysis for your future students, the goals of this analysis for your students, and connections you could see your future students making in relation to text-to-text, text-to-self, and, most importantly, text-to-world. Remember, when I say text-to-world, I am referring to how you will connect the text and its analysis to current events happening in our world to bridge the text to your students’ lived realities.

b. Discuss one or two ways the book could be used in your individual classroom.

4. Conclusion

a. Discuss the importance/purpose/value of teaching with a critical multicultural lens. What can we take away from this form of analysis?

b. How does this work using the Critical Multicultural lens change your way of thinking about teaching with children’s literature? How does this work change your way of thinking about teaching and learning? What implications does it have for future classrooms?

Class Readings:

Core Readings:


Supporting readings from the Syllabus:


6 Reasons to use informational text in the primary grades. Scholastic blog post based on book by Duke and Bennett-Armistead https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/6-reasons-use-informational-text-primary-grades/

Rubric: (30 points total)

Introduction:

Introduction to the text (2 points)
- Offers a careful, thorough and nuanced summary of the text and relevant details.
  - Provides biographical information and two illustrations relevant to lens and analysis.
- Provides a thorough summary of the text. Provides some biographical information and one illustration.
- Provides a basic summary, biographical information and illustration not directly relevant to forthcoming analysis.
- Weak and partial summary. Missing biographical information and illustration.

Introduction and central argument (2 points)
- Clear and insightful thesis. Explains reasoning how a critical multicultural perspective informs analysis of this book, as well as how this analysis will affect teaching and learning in your future teaching.
- Clear thesis on how a critical multicultural perspective informs analysis of this book, as well as how this analysis will affect teaching and learning in your future teaching.
- Clear thesis, but rather obvious. Is beginning to explain how a critical multicultural perspective can informs analysis of texts OR how this analysis could affect teaching and learning in your future teaching.
- Difficult to identify thesis, unclear, or misaligned with assignment

**Body Section(s): Application of a theoretical perspective**

**Develop explanation and purpose of the Critical Multicultural perspective (4 points)**
- Clear explanation of the Critical Multicultural lens and its use of analysis for this text. The use, purpose, and value of this lens is well defended, through well-developed arguments that are supported by careful reasoning.
- Explains the use of the Critical Multicultural lens. Defends the use of this analysis for this text, and notes the value of the use of this lens.
- Beginning to understand the Critical Multicultural lens and its use of analysis for texts in general.
- Not yet demonstrating an understanding of the Critical Multicultural lens, it’s use, purpose, or value.

**Use of concepts & Application to the literature (4 points)**
- Application of the components of the critical multicultural perspective is well integrated when applying to both visual and textual examples from the children’s book. Intersections between concepts is explicit.
- Applies components of the critical multicultural perspective to both visual and textual examples from the children’s book.
- Sometimes applies components of the critical multicultural perspective to either visual and textual examples from the children’s book.
- Components of the Critical Multicultural perspective are absent, unclear, misunderstood or misapplied. Examples from the literature are disconnected from the concept.

**Offers evidence from course materials to support thesis (4 points)**
- Evidence from readings and course materials used to support arguments. Excellent integration of quoted/paraphrased material into writing. Uses both core (B & R, 2009) readings and additional course materials.
- Appropriate evidence sometimes used to support thesis and to buttress most arguments, good integration of sources into writing. Uses both core (B & R, 2009) readings.
- Weak use of evidence, inadequately supported thesis and/or sub-arguments, weak integration of quoted/paraphrased material into writing. Uses one core reading.
- Very weak use of evidence, fails to support thesis and/or sub-arguments, very weak integration of material into writing.

**Connection to teaching and learning (6 points)**
- Thoughtfully discusses the goals and implications of the Critical Multicultural lens for future students. In detail, discusses two tangible ways this book could be used in an elementary classroom by utilizing the Critical Multicultural Perspective.
- Discusses the goals and implications of the Critical Multicultural lens for future students. Discusses one or two tangible ways this book could be used in an elementary classroom by utilizing the Critical Multicultural Perspective. 
- Discusses the goals or implications of the Critical Multicultural lens for future students. Attempts to describe ways in which this book can be used in an elementary classroom, but the connection or application of the Critical Multicultural Perspective is unclear. 
- Unclear goals or implications to future students in elementary classrooms. Lacking application of the Critical Multicultural Perspective in tangible or appropriate ways.

Conclusion (4 points)
- Explains the importance, purpose, and value of teaching with a Critical Multicultural lens directly tied to the arguments and analysis above. Details thinking about how this lens impacts own teaching and in a broader society. 
- Explains the importance, purpose, or value of teaching with a Critical Multicultural lens. Begins to explore how this lens impacts own teaching and in a broader society. 
- Attempts to explain the importance, purpose, or value of teaching with a Critical Multicultural lens. Narrow view of the application of the lens. 
- Importance, purpose, or value of teaching with this lens is still unclear. Application of lens to classrooms and society is lacking.

Organization and clarity (2 points)
- Coherent and clear, all paragraphs support position, each paragraph cumulatively builds an understanding and application of the Critical Multicultural lens, each paragraph supports its topic sentence, excellent transitions. Clear writing. 
- Mostly coherent, paragraphs generally supports thesis (but may not cumulatively build or connect), good transitions; few unclear sentences. 
- Often lacks coherence, mixed support for thesis, transitions often missing or weak; informal language or unclear sentences. 
- Incoherent, lacks support for thesis, transitions weak and often missing, numerous unclear sentences.

Punctuation, grammar, formatting etc. (2 points)
- No mechanical errors, correct formatting, page numbers, margins. 
- 1-3 mechanical or formatting errors 
- 4-5 mechanical or formatting errors 
- 5+ mechanical or formatting errors
Appendix E: Critical Multicultural Theory PowerPoint

1. Theorizing Critical Multicultural Analysis of Children’s Literature
   Botelho & Rudman, Ch. 5, B.Dalma

2. What does it mean to bring a critical multicultural lens to the texts we receive and create in the world?

3. Award Ceremony for US Open Final, 2018. Naomi Osaka defeated Serena Williams

4. Controversial Serena Williams Cartoon Ruled “Non-Racist” By Australia’s Press Council, 2/28/19
   “This Offends me and my wife. What the hell is this?”

5. Getting started:
   My reading journey through Ch. 5, Botelho and Rudman

6. What is critical multicultural analysis of children’s literature?
   Critical multicultural analysis of children’s literature focuses on the examination of power as a factor in what gets written, illustrated, and published. In other words, meanings found in children’s books are not from language alone but from institutional practices, power relations and social position. Children’s books mirror these power relations and offer windows into society; critical multicultural analysis magnifies these relationships, naming the institutional and personal locations of the discourses from within which we read, the power relations involved, and their implications for social justice. P.101
Deconstructing dominant ideologies

Bringing a critical lens to the study of multiculturalism in children's literature invites readers to deconstruct dominant ideologies of U.S. society which privilege those whose interests, values, and beliefs are represented by these prevailing worldviews. Critical multicultural analysis is reading power within the complex web of social relations. P. 102

Language, discourse, and power

Language is where and how power is reproduced, distributed and maintained. Oral and written language constitute text to be analyzed and challenged. Meaning is constructed within a complex web of power relations rather than words substituting for objects and actions. These meanings are temporarily fixed. Meaning is constructed and reconstructed through interplay between texts, readers, and contexts. Just like identity, meaning is a process. P. 102

Insider-outsider

Our findings demonstrate that we cannot discount the cultural membership of the author. The insider author and illustrator are more versed in or have more access to culturally specific discourses and histories than outsiders to the culture. These writers and artists tend to have a greater understanding of how language is used and how power is exercised within and outside the culture. Class, race, and gender power relations shape this cultural specificity, shaping up the notion of culture as stable and fixed, as dynamic, multiple, and shifting nature is made visible. Many of these writers bring the reader up close to the complexity of culture and its power relations. We also acknowledge that no person can speak for or represent an entire group. We are all outsiders to a degree, unless we are specifically portraying ourselves. And even then our portrayal is a representation of our lived experience. P. 104

Self-esteem

"Self-esteem" is another discourse thread woven into multicultural children's literature. Just like "Otherness," the discourse of self-esteem assumes a fixed, unified, and stable self. The discourse of self-esteem implies that there is an inherent link between dominated cultural status and low self-esteem. This perspective privileges the dominant culture by defining it as the norm, setting it as the standard of high self-esteem toward which underrepresented groups should strive. P. 106

Invisibility

If we say that literature mirrors society through its text and images, then invisibility in children's literature requires a closer look. Patricia Alexander (1983) contends, "Invisibility is much like passing in front of a mirror and seeing only "nothingness." Indeed, invisibility is a powerful statement of value. The message transmitted may be that a culture you see of little value within the society of little consequence" (Alexander, 1983: 212). Invisibility in children's literature is a quiescent prejudice. The study of children's literature must question whose culture gets reflected, or not, and how often. P. 106

There are no monolithic cultural groups

The issue of invisibility demands cultural specificity, and historical and sociopolitical analysis. The cultural grouping of European Americans, for example, implies a common history and heritage that does not exist. (That can be said about any cultural group.) P. 106
In addition to the discursive threads of otherness and self-esteem, and the issue of invisibility, the literary category of multicultural children's literature distracts us from focusing on two social silences: how class and gender work with race.

(As a society, we have many silences around issues such as ageism, heterosexism, and ableism, to name a few. The interrogation of class alongside race and gender is a direct attack on U.S. power relations. P.109)

James Paul Gee (2001) defines discourse as a social practice comprised of ways of being in the world. Discourse is a "socially accepted association among ways of using language, of thinking, and of acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or 'social network'" (Gee, 2001: 1). The distinction between discourses and texts is that discourses are worldviews or ideologies, whereas texts, oral or written, contain discourses. Critical multicultural analysis makes the reader conscious of dominant discourses. P.109

Chris Weedon (1997) defines subjectivity as "the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of individuals, their sense of self, and their ways of understanding their relations to the world" (Weedon, 1997: 32). P.111

Power is an important element in any critical multicultural examination of text. Foucault (1978) maintains that power is exercised and not owned, with power circulating within what he calls fields of discourse, which he defines as the relationship among language and social institutions, subjectivity, and power. Power is important in our work because, as he argues, we create discourses as much as they create us.

- Who exercises power? How? On whom? Who makes decisions for me? Who is preventing me from doing this and telling me to do that? Who is programming my movements and activities?

- Foucault maintains that the question of "who exercises power?" is not resolved unless the other question "how does it happen?" is resolved at the same time (p. 45).

At the center of critical multicultural analysis, we must ask what cultural statements the author and illustrator are responding to.

- Texts and images are sites of sociopolitical struggle.

P.113
... education and social science research tend to focus on the "positives" of diversity and/or confute race with ethnicity and class. Reading race alone, class alone, or gender alone does not reveal how power is exercised. We agree with Ledene-Billings and Tate IV that we must keep in mind the impact of race on gender and social class.

- They propose untangling democracy and capitalism because, they claim, "tradational civil rights approaches to solving inequality have depended on the 'rightness' of democracy while ignoring the structural inequality of capitalism" (Ledene-Billings & Tate IV, 1990: 53). U.S. democracy was founded on capitalism. P.118

We must rethink power to disrupt it in children's literature, and by extension, in U.S. society. Maria Jose's teaching and research have led us to the following understandings:

- It is not useful to argue about a hierarchy of oppression (Lebov, 1983);
- It is important to identify ways in which these power relations are similar or different from each other, and how they work together;
- Class/race/gender are interconnected, and,
- It is important to remember that we all benefit from interrupting coercive power relations. P. 116

Critical multicultural analysis is reading power and exposing how power is concealed, circulated, negotiated, and reconstructed. Children's books are windows into society and the complicities of the power relations of class, race, and gender.

- Critical multiculturalism underpins this kind of analysis because it respects diversity and uses it as a resource for learning, by going beyond affirmation to solidarity and critique (Nieto & Bode, 2008), and by examining hegemony and issues of social power. P.117

Critical multicultural analysis is about opening a space for agency as readers make sense of texts. This space is where social constructions are challenged and new ways of being and organizing society are actively constructed and reconstructed. Our challenge as readers is not to reproduce dominant readings but to interrupt them. P118

They contend that the social problems experienced by racialized communities are not about "race" but rather about the intricate interplay between a variety of racisms and class" (Dardee & Torres, 1999: 186).

- Linking race to power reveals that "the distribution of resources in this society is racialized and that this racial hierarchy is then normalized and thereby made invisible" (Guinier & Torres, 2002: 18). P.114

Race, gender, and class are social constructions that establish sociopolitical and economic hierarchies or power relations among people.

- Children's literature is a microcosm of these ideologies. The construct of race was/is used to divide people into groups on the basis of particular hereditary characteristics. Gender was/is used to divide women and men in complex ways to render different degrees of social power. Race and gender are socially constructed differences, not biologically based. Class is also socially made. P.116

Agency is initiation and power. Agency ideally resides with all classes, genders, and ethnicities. Agency is all-inclusive and complex.

- An agent can be an agent as well as another subject position. Being able to read multiple discourses is part of agency, as well as holding contradictory discourses.
- Agency is understanding; it is the ultimate subjectivity. P.119

Self-reflexivity is when readers become aware of their constituted subjectivities and the subject positions offered by texts. This kind of reflexivity challenges discursive practices responsible for maintaining and perpetuating the power relations of class, race, and gender. P. 119
Critical Multicultural Analysis: Constructing a Multi-Layered Lens

- Critical multicultural analysis is a multi-layered lens (see Appendix D) that is focused and refined through a recursive process of analysis.
- At the center of this lens is the focalization of the story.
  - Whose story is this?
  - From what point of view?
  - Who sees/who is observed?
- We analyze the characters' language use and its role in the social processes among the characters, considering that language constitutes discourses, ideologies, and subject positions; the characters' social processes relate to US power relations of class, gender, and race. P.118-120

1. Focalization of story: Whose story is this?

2. Social processes of character: How are characters constructed?

- After examining the point of view of these texts, the social processes of the characters are considered.
- How is power exercised?
- Who has agency?
- Who resists and challenges domination and collusion?
- Who speaks and who is silenced?
- Who acts? And who is acted upon? Who waifs? P.120

3. Story closure: How is the story ended?

- The end or closure of these texts will be the next layer of analysis:
  - How did the writer close the story?
  - What are the assumptions imbedded in this closure?
  - Is the ending ideologically open or closed? P.120

Be a critical reader

- The reader challenges the ideologically raced, classed, and/or gendered text, exposing the processes whereby race, class, and gender are constructed and rendered natural in texts, and enabling alternative subject positions. Thus, the meaning of the text lies within the spaces between or among texts (Bakhtin, 1981) in interaction with the reader. P.122

Classroom applications

- Explore critical multicultural analysis through reading, shared reading, and mini-lessons. Select a children's book that is well known by the class.
- Analyze the focalization, social processes among characters, closure, and genre.
- Justwpose the story against sociopolitical and historical conditions.
- Locate the point of view of the story. What happens when the perspective is subverted with another viewpoint (e.g., rich character with a poor one or first-person with third-person narrative)?

Example: Applying the framework to the RSJ themed picture book "When Marian Sang"

Kirsten shares her thinking and analytic process...
Introduction

The main ideas that you should compare in this section include:

- Scene of focus:
- Deconstruction Power
- The intersections of Race and Class

Children’s books mirror the power relations and offer windows into society, critical multicultural analysis relates them in a way that is not straightforward. This is explored through a range of texts, including:

- Scene of focus
- Deconstruction Power
- The intersections of Race and Class

Essential to fully realizing and experiencing the agency inspired by this text, “When Marian Sang” is the application of the Critical Multicultural Lens to examine power in relation to race and class. My analysis will demonstrate how singer Marian Anderson was constructed by ...
Critical Reading for Agency

"Agency is initiation and power."

- Critical Multicultural Analysis is about opening a space for agency as an everyday moral means of life. This space is where social constructs are challenged and new ways of being and organizing are actively reconstructed and reconstructed.

Section 3 Connection to Teaching and Learning

Why do we need to TEACH with critical multicultural analysis framework?

It is important to highlight the implications of this kind of analysis for your future students, the goals of this analysis for your students, and connections.

Discuss one or two ways the book could be used in your individual classroom.

Teaching Ideas: Writing for Agency

"Agency is initiation and power."

- Study current events:
  - Teacher Rally on 11/19
  - Other protest movements
- Letter writing campaign
- Other ideas...

Premise: Share the importance/proposal:
- value of teaching with a critical multicultural lens
- What can we take away from the book?
- How does this work using the Critical Multicultural lens change your way of thinking about teaching with children’s literature?
- What does this work change your way of thinking about teaching and learning? What will you do for future classrooms?

Concluding scene...

- Marian’s strength and soul shines through, as she ultimately sings an integrated audience on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in 1939, fulfilling not only her dream, but making way for continued social movements for the dreams of those who follow.

Reading to Resist Writing for Agency

- Reading to expose the DOMINANCE “Critical multicultural analysis makes the reader conscious of dominant discourse.” p. 109
- Reading to expose POWER “Critical multicultural analysis is reading power and exposing how power is exercised, circulated, negotiated, and reconstructed.” p. 117
- Writing for AGENCY: Critical multicultural analysis is about opening a space for agency as a means of resistance. The space in which social constructs are challenged and new ways of being and organizing are actively reconstructed and reconstructed. Our challenge as educators is to not reproduce dominant readings but to interrupt them. P. 118

Continuing the conversation... Classroom applications

- Analyze the social processes among characters in the sociopolitical and hierarchical conditions and connect it to current events...
- Teaching idea: since segregation is now illegal, let’s look at our U.S. School Demographics...
Reading to Incite Voice:
A Critical Multicultural Analysis of *When Marian Sang*

*When Marian Sang: The True Recital of Marian Anderson, The Voice of a Century*
Written by: Pam Munoz Ryan
Illustrated by Brian Selznick
Published in 2002, by Scholastic

Kirsten Musetti Tivaringe
Dr. Bridget Dalton
*This paper was prepared for EDUC 2311: Children’s Literature and Literary Engagement in Elementary Schools, Spring 2020*

Authors Note: We prepared this paper to provide you all many examples of a Critical Multicultural Analysis. As stated in the CMA Paper Assignment Guide, your paper submission will be 4-5 pages in length. Embedded images and your reference page will not count toward the total page count.

Imagine that you have a dream, an incredible talent that is celebrated by your family, church, and local community. But, as a young African American woman growing up in the
United States in the early part of 20th century, opportunities to develop your talent and pursue your dream are blocked by systemic racism and everyday prejudices. Yet, you don’t give up. You pursue your dream and go on to become “the voice of a century”. In the remainder of this paper, I share the story of Marian Anderson and apply a critical multicultural lens to how her story is represented in the award winning picture book, *When Marian Sang*.

A critical engagement with the award winning children’s book *When Marian Sang: The True Recital of Marian Anderson: The Voice of a Century* encourages readers to be the voice of their century. Published in 2002, *When Marian Sang* was written by Pam Munoz Ryan and illustrated by Brian Selnick. The children’s book is a biographical account of the enduring legacy of Marian Anderson, the acclaimed African American opera singer. The story traces her journey from childhood, singing in front of local audiences in their South Philadelphia neighborhood church, to becoming a world renowned contralto. The non-fiction narrative showcases how Marian demonstrated courage, strength, and determination to overcome the racial discrimination and segregation prevalent in the U.S. in the pre-civil rights era. Marian’s strength and soul shines through, as she ultimately sings “*let freedom ring*” (p. 26) to an integrated audience on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in 1939 in Washington D.C., fulfilling not only her dreams, but making way for the dreams of those who would follow in her footsteps.

Essential to fully immersing yourself as a reader in the setting of the pre-civil rights era and crucial to being mobilized by this inspiring text, is the application of Botelho and Rudman’s (2009) Critical Multicultural lens to examine power in relation to race and class, and how it is expressed in a historical and socio political analysis. This paper will utilize this multi-layered lens and enact a recursive process of analysis to demonstrate how the singer Marian Anderson was constructed by 1. Interrogating whose story is being told? 2. Examining social processes of
character and 3. Attending to story closure (Dalton & Tivaringe, Lecture Slides, 03/10/20). I argue that the use of this Critical Multicultural lens is crucial in presenting America’s hard history. The lens allows a text analysis that reveals and interrogates America’s legacy of discrimination, segregation, and racism in order to incite voice, by creating resistant readers and agential writers. This type of analysis of children’s literature facilitates the pursuit of social justice by enabling a pathway for students to critically read text and to potentially become voices of their century.

Using the Critical Multicultural lens is to cultivate a critical eye when reading by “reading power and exposing how power is exercised, circulated, negotiated, and reconstructed” (Botelho & Rudman, 2009, p.117) The purpose of this lens is to read between the lines (Ladson-Billings, 1992) to bring the dominant discourses into consciousness (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). This analysis takes students beyond reading because after this unveiling of inequities in power, the Critical Multicultural perspective takes us a step further, into action, opening a space for agency. In this paper, I uncover “systems of meaning that perpetuate social inequities” (Botelho & Rudman, 2009, p. 264) in relation to race and class, and how it is expressed in a historical and sociopolitical analysis. Starting by interrogating whose story is being told, Critical multicultural analysis is enacted by unveiling how power is exercised in the microinteractions of characters, knowing that language is discourse and carries Discourses (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). By utilizing the Critical Multicultural lens, teachers can no longer adopt a colorblind approach to education, and must instead explicitly state the historical and contemporary oppressive mechanisms of hierarchies based on race and class. If we translate the above statement to an audience of elementary school students, we name the unfair ideas that have created the divisions solely based on socially constructed categories.
Critical Analysis

As an educator utilizing this lens, I would highlight this scene from *When Marian Sang* (2002), to highlight the overt racism Marian experienced:

“Since Father’s death, Marian worked at odd jobs, sang in concert programs in order to help support her family. It wasn’t until 1915, when Marian was eighteen, that she finally went to a music school and patiently waited in line for an application. But the girl behind her helped everyone except Marian. Was she invisible? Finally, the girl said, ‘We don’t take colored!’ Her voice sounded like a steel door clicking shut” (p. 8)
The lens requires resistant readers to relate this character’s construction as an individual to the social processes that construct race and class in the broader socio-political history. With a Critical Multicultural lens, we ask: “How is power exercised?”, “Who speaks and who is silenced?” (Dalton & Tivaringe Lecture Slides, 03/10/20). These questions guide students to see the dehumanization of not only Marian, but an entire race of people, by the external, systematic unequal distribution of power based on the socially constructed hierarchy that granted White people privilege over “coloreds” (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). During this time, it was commonplace for African Americans to be denied access to certain jobs, to be refused treatment in white hospitals, to be segregated into neighborhoods, schools, restaurants, and churches. In the text, the line, “We don’t take colored!” (p. 8), shows how white people were allowed to exercise their power in racist, discriminatory ways. The text and the image work together, with the symbol of the “steel door clicking shut”, depicting how society is literally shutting people out of their dreams and opportunities.
While students may more easily draw out the racial discrimination in this excerpt, a focus on race is not enough. A Critical Multicultural lens encourages readers to see the intersections, the interconnectedness among Race and Class, prompting us to ask: “How is her position in society marginalized in multiple ways?” (Dalton & Tivaringe Lecture Slides, 03/10/20). For example, readers should draw out the Marian’s social class status when reading “Marian worked at odd jobs, sang in concert programs in order to help support her family.” (p. 8) in order to uncover the intersections of Race and Class and how that functions in her life and society. A Critical Multicultural lens draws out these interconnections, resisting the social silences of how class is working within race (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). African Americans at this time were restricted primarily to low paying jobs, with few benefits and protections. Many families struggled to feed their families and pay rent. As in the case of Marian, youth often dropped out of school to help out their families financially. While poor white families struggled, the situation was much worse for African Americans who faced systemic and structural racism. To employ a Critical Multicultural lens is to not only attend to the written word, but to the illustrations as sites of power and struggle (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). This image from When Marian Sang (2002) is slipped into the beginning of the book, before words even appear on pages.
A teacher could easily bypass this image, skip over it, without calling students’ attention to it. If a teacher were on the rug with a classroom of students watching, the fine details of this illustration might be missed due to sheer inaccessibility of viewing. While there is a space for silence in a classroom, this wordless page should not stay silent. “For Derrida, the unsaid and the unwritten can be just as important as what is said and written” (Botelho & Rudman, 2009, p. 107). A Critical Multicultural analysis calls us to slow down, to unsilence this illustration, and encourages readers to interrogate the intersections between race and class. With this analysis, what becomes salient is the light emulated from the performer, who experts power and agency with the use of voice. We don’t know who this person is yet, but the illustration suggests a hopefulness that is tied to one’s talents, not one’s race.

A Critical Analysis also attends to story closure. In the closing scene, Marian ultimately performs in 1939 to an integrated audience on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C as the ultimate act of resistance. It was not only Marian’s persistence, but the courageous acts of both Black activists and White allies together, marching in protests and sending letters to the newspapers, that contributed to the change in policy, finally allowing Marian’s
performance to an integrated audience. It is the role of the Critical Multicultural educator to draw out the significance of the geographical setting as we interrogate the reconstruction of power in the sociopolitical historical context (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). Furthermore, we’d want to interrogate even the symbolic lyrics that read:

“My country ’tis of thee
Sweet land of liberty
Let freedom ring” p. 26

Here, Marian’s journey reaches a climax, a turning point, a literal crescendo. With the Critical Multicultural lens, it is the educator’s imperative to facilitate students’ understanding of this historical turning point in history. Marian’s fierce performance let’s freedom ring, as finally she had the platform, a voice when she was once silenced. The audience is captivated by her strength and the soul in her song. With her voice, she carries the spirit of resistance.

When using a Critical Multicultural Analysis, we ask “What are the assumptions embedded in this closure?” With this lens, the teacher can facilitate the student’s social, historical, and political analysis of words like “liberty” and “freedom”. Without the critical attention to these lyrics, we risk a superficial sing along that celebrates this accomplishment but ignores that the fight for freedom is far from over. In 1939, segregation and racism was rampant, limiting life opportunities for all African Americans, and causing great harm, psychologically, economically, and in some cases, physically.

One final item I must address in this analysis is that of author and illustrator identities and perspectives. Pam Munoz Ryan is an award-winning children’s author; she is Latina and often writes stories about Latinx characters and cultural contexts. We know that insider perspectives matter, and that it is generally preferable to select books authored by insiders (Botelho and Rudman, 2009). At the same time, it is possible for an outsider of the culture to write other
people’s stories with great power and authenticity. In this case, the historical facts of Marian Anderson’s story are well documented and it is clear that Munoz Ryan drew heavily on published accounts to compose her biographical narrative. My analysis of her text indicates that it is true to the actual story, and is accurate in relation to the historical facts. It is also important to note that the Caldecott Award winning illustrator, Brian Selznick is also an outsider. The fact that the illustrator is tops in his field, and that this book earned awards, is testament to his successful illustration of Marian Anderson’s story. However, it does raise questions about why one of the many talented African American illustrators wasn’t given the opportunity to illustrate this important book about an African American icon. I think that would have been the wiser decision.

Teaching Ideas

The legacy of racial segregation can still be felt today. With the Critical Multicultural lens, teachers are encouraged to interrogate historic events and trace how power relations relate to the present day. While de jure segregation has since been made illegal, de facto segregation still exists in present day, in both residential and school segregation. One specific teaching idea I have is to bring in both historic and present day demographic data of Marian’s South Philadelphia neighborhood to have students interrogate the changes over 100 years and generate critical questions about similarities and differences. Are we still a segregated society? What about gentrification? I offer this activity to facilitate that while this story had a resolution, a happy ending, the critical multicultural lens pushes us to question assumptions embedded in closings.

Importantly, the Critical Multicultural lens inspires not only students’ resistant reading, but encourages agency. We can use *When Marian Sang* (2002) to teach children that courageous
acts of resistance can be done not only by the oppressed, but by allies as well. I would have students focus on this scene:

“enraged fans wrote letters to the newspapers…again they were denied. Now teachers were angry and marched in support of Marian in front of the Board of Education”. (p. 24)

For a second teaching idea, I would offer students the opportunity to take the perspective of one of Marian Anderson’s “enraged fans”, an activist character in the historical time period and write a letter to the politicians in power in the fight for integration. Enacting reading for resistance is locating power within the text in order to not only recognize injustice, but to see opportunities for transformation (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). This instructional activity serves as an opportunity to be an agent of change that can be applied to their own life outside of literacy class. Though I recognize there are risks to teaching with critical pedagogies, I urge teachers and administrators to consider the consequences of teaching without a critical approach. I argue, it’s crucial we prepare our students, even from an elementary age, to engage with texts as resistant readers in order to become agential writers, in the pursuit of social justice. Furthermore, this critical perspective should be carried into our everyday literacy instruction (Thomas, 2016) and into our everyday lives (Vasquez, Tate, & Harste, 2013, as cited in Vasquez, 2014).

Conclusion

Children's books are not only windows into society, but they are mirrors(Sims-Bishop, 1990), history staring back at you, layered with the complexities and construction of power relations of intersecting identities (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). The Critical Multicultural lens attends to the systems that structure that society, encouraging the unveiling of dominance and the interruption of coercive power relations (Botelho & Rudman, 2009) that maintain the status quo.
Reading multicultural texts that address historical struggle and strife are sometimes difficult, but necessary (McNair, 2018) and by reading these with a Critical Multicultural lens, we take “step(s) towards healing our nation and world through humanizing stories” (Thomas, 2016, p. 119).

In response, children’s literature also can be sliding glass doors to society that open an opportunity to step through and actively participate in our world (Sims-Bishop, 1990). The Critical Multicultural lens offers children opportunities to be resistant readers, to be conscious of injustices and activated to respond. The lens “opens a space for agency…where social constructions are challenged and new ways of being and organizing are actively constructed and reconstructed.” (p.116) This work reveals to me that, as educators, we cannot teach reading passively. Reading is no longer just for fluency and comprehension. Instead, we must see literacy instruction as an opportunity to invite students to be interrupters, as active agents in creating a new society as a voice for social justice. With the Critical Multicultural lens, teachers have the opportunity to offer resistant reading and writing for agency to welcome students to be voices of their own century. Critically reading When Marian Sang, is one step on this journey.

References:


**Appendix G: Instructor Feedback Form: Critical Multicultural Analysis Paper**

**Rubric for Reading for Social Justice Critical Analysis of a Picture Book**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Draft feedback (automatically earn points for submitting a draft)</th>
<th>Student self-check on final version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><strong>Introduction (3 points)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Introduction to picture book (title page, hook, book summary)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Introduction and central argument</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><strong>Application of a theoretical perspective and analytic frame (4 points)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Develop explanation and purpose of the Critical Multicultural perspective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Use of concepts &amp; application to the literature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Use of analytic structure offered in Chapter 5, Botelho and Rudman (note this intersects with use of concepts and application). Focalization of story, examination of social processes, story closure; personal connection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. Offers evidence from course materials to support thesis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part 3: Lesson Plan and Teaching Demonstration

Appendix H: Lesson Plan Template

READING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE PROJECT

Part 2. Lesson Plan Template
Due Dates: Draft is due 3/19; Final lesson plan & teaching due 4/2

Lesson Logistics

Team Members (w/emails):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book (title/author):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intended audience (grade levels):</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standards:
Standards in kid-friendly language”
Connection between the standards and the book:

Student Friendly Learning Goals (Objective, Main take-away for students, in plain words):

Link to video of read aloud (search on google and youtube for a good read aloud of your text for classmates to view in preparation for your session 2 lesson).

Background: Previously, the teacher read the book aloud to students in session 1. The following lesson is designed for session 2.

I. Book Selection and lesson plan:
   a. Why did you choose this book? How does it address a social justice theme or goal?
   b. Why does this lesson matter? Why do I want students to engage in this experience, with this book as the base? Revisit your Critical Multicultural Analysis paper, specifically, where you’ve detailed:
Why is it worth engaging critically with the chosen text?
How are you welcoming students to understand, value, and apply a critical multicultural perspective to the analysis of this social-justice themed picture book?
What is the importance/purpose/value of teaching with a critical multicultural lens? What can we take away from this form of analysis?

II. Instructional Strategies:
You will describe your plan to engage and prepare children before you begin reading, support them during the reading, and extend their understanding after the reading experience.

Before Reading

How will you introduce the text, elicit and connect to children’s ideas and knowledge, spark interest and engagement, and set a purpose for reading?

Please fill out each column of the table below to detail your instruction Before Reading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions or Ideas the teacher will ask to support students’ understanding in preparation for reading: How will you introduce the text and prepare students for reading?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Introduce the title, topic, and objective of the lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What is your hook to generate interest?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the teacher doing? Saying? Will you offer a picture walk? Will you be pointing to the book/text at certain points? Will you introduce the historical context? Are you using any visuals or other materials or media to introduce the text? Script your language and actions.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What might the students be saying/doing? What are your hopes and expectations for what students will be doing at this point in the read aloud?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How will you know you have allowed children opportunities to actively engage their experiences and knowledge in anticipation of the text? (e.g., students will respond to questions with...; students will be paying attention to the text and the questions/ideas I raise; students will raise thumbs to show whether they have seen [x]; one or two students will share where and when they saw [x]).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How will you introduce the text and prepare students for reading?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What we will say/do:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What might the students be doing/saying?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During Reading
What will you do to support children’s understanding and application of a critical perspective in pursuit of your social justice goal during the reading of this book?

Things to think about as you plan: Think about and specifically indicate below your stopping places in the text and your reasons for pausing, as well as what you will do at that point in the text (e.g., discuss or clarify unfamiliar or particularly important ideas, concepts, or potentially new vocabulary; to ask questions or raise an issue for brief discussion) to **emphasize your social justice goal in the reading as the text progresses**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions or Ideas teacher will ask to support students’ understanding <strong>through</strong> the text (plan a minimum of three stopping places, max. of six) to support students’ engagement and understanding during reading.</th>
<th><strong>What is the teacher doing?</strong></th>
<th><strong>What might the students be doing/saying?</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What will you do to support children’s understanding and application of a critical perspective in pursuit of your social justice goal during the reading of this book?</strong> Remember to be developmentally appropriate!!! Script student friendly language</td>
<td><strong>What is the teacher doing?</strong> <strong>Saying?</strong> What will you do to support children’s understanding and application of a critical perspective <strong>in pursuit of your social justice goal</strong> during the reading of this book? Remember to be developmentally appropriate!!! Script student friendly language</td>
<td><strong>What might the students be doing/saying?</strong> What are your hopes and expectations for what students will be doing at this point in the read aloud? Consider how you as the teacher are learning FROM children. Ensure at least one stopping point allows for student to student engagement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#1 Stopping place in text</strong> (page number: )</td>
<td><strong>What we will say/do</strong> (indicate which partner is saying/doing what):</td>
<td><strong>What might the students be doing/saying?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reason for stopping, related to the social justice goal/objective of the lesson:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#2 Stopping place in text</strong> (page number: )</td>
<td><strong>What we will say/do:</strong></td>
<td><strong>What might the students be doing/saying?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reason for stopping, related to the social justice goal/objective of the lesson:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>#3 Stopping place in text</strong> (page number: )</td>
<td><strong>What we will say/do:</strong></td>
<td><strong>What might the students be doing/saying?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reason for stopping, related to the social justice goal/objective of the lesson: 

#4 (optional)
#5 (optional)
#6 (optional)

After Reading
This is the portion of the lesson that will provide opportunities for students to respond to the book and expand on the book through questions/discussion and potentially, activities. This is also the time when you will be able to listen closely and learn from students about their connections and understandings related to the book. Describe how you will help students understand ideas they’ve encountered and relate those ideas to other ideas and to their own experiences.

**Things to think about as you plan:** What happens after you read the last page of the book? Will you pass out resources or materials for the activity/discussion? What questions will you ask to allow students to share their responses to the text? What ideas have you decided to emphasize (keep in mind your goals here!)?

**Opportunity for Student Response:** How will you support students in responding to and extending their understanding of the text in pursuit of your social justice goals? (include two questions and/or an activity you can pose to students after reading to accomplish the objective of the lesson).

**Restate your Learning Goal:**

**Discussion Questions/Activity:**

**Student Artifacts/Evidence of Understanding** (What will you do to extend the reading experience in a way that is both engaging for students and allows you to access evidence of their understanding and response to what you’ve read?) How will you know that they CARE about the person and or issue that you explored in your book? Note that their talk can be considered evidence.

Appendix I: Model Lesson Plan for *When Marian Sang*

**Reading for Social Justice Project**

Part 2. Lesson Plan Template

**Due Dates:** Draft is due 4/2; Final lesson plan due & teach on Zoom 4/14

**Lesson Logistics**

**Team Members (w/emails):**
Kirsten Tivaringe, kirsten.tivaringe@colorado.edu

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**Book (title/author):**
*When Marian Sang: The True Recital of Marian Anderson: The Voice of a Century*

**Intended audience (grade levels):**
4th grade

**Social Justice Goal:**
*(Social Justice Anchor Standards and Domain, from p. 5 TeachingTolerance.org)*


Justice, Standards: 12. Students will recognize unfairness on the individual level (e.g., biased speech) and injustice at the institutional or systemic level (e.g., discrimination).

**Standards in kid-friendly language:**

I know when people are treated unfairly, and I can give examples of prejudiced words, pictures and rules.

I know that words, behaviors, rules and laws that treat people unfairly based on their group identities cause real harm.

I know about people who helped stop unfairness and worked to make life better for many people.

I know about the actions of people and groups who have worked throughout history to bring more justice and fairness to the world.

**Connection between the standards and the book:**

Through trials and tribulations, Marian demonstrated courage, strength, and determination to overcome the racial discrimination and segregation present in the in a pre-civil rights era in the United States. Furthermore, there are important moments where White allies and anti-racist activists engaged in acts of resistance that ultimately lead to the ability of Marian to sing to an integrated audience on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. in 1939.

**Student Friendly Learning Goals (Objective, Main take-away for students, in plain words):**

Students will be able to recognize historical injustice and identify actions of resistance.

**Link to video of read aloud (search on google and youtube for a good read aloud of your text for classmates to view in preparation for your session 2 lesson).**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0NAa1TwjtSk

Background: Previously, the teacher read the book aloud to students in session 1. The following lesson is designed for session 2.

**I. Book Selection and lesson plan:**

a. Why did you choose this book? How does it address a social justice theme or goal?

I have chosen this historical text to read with students because it draws out what life was like before integration laws were put in place. This text showcases the power of activism, both at the individual and systemic level. I particularly want to draw out how it is not only the burden of the oppressed to fight for equal rights, it also can and should involve privileged allies as activists.
together in the pursuit of justice. I want students to feel inspired by the group organizing and rallying of white activists in this text as allies in the fight against systemic injustices.

b. Why does this lesson matter? Why do I want students to engage in this experience, with this book as the base? Revisit your Critical Multicultural Analysis paper, specifically, where you’ve detailed:
- Why is it worth engaging critically with the chosen text?
- How are you welcoming students to understand, value, and apply a critical multicultural perspective to the analysis of this social-justice themed picture book?
- What is the importance/purpose/value of teaching with a critical multicultural lens? What can we take away from this form of analysis?

Reading narratives with characters that showcase real life histories puts a face to the injustices of the past. With the Critical Multicultural analysis I’ve applied to this text, I use When Marian Sang (2002) to offer students an example of courageous acts of resistance by activists and allies in response to injustice. It’s crucial we prepare our students, even from an elementary age, to engage with texts as resistant readers in order to become agential writers, in the pursuit of social justice. This book has the potential to illuminate how resistant reading and writing for agency in order to take an active stance for social justice aims to be a courageous “Voice of the Century”.

II. Instructional Strategies: You will describe your plan to engage and prepare children before you begin reading, support them during the reading, and extend their understanding after the reading experience.

Before Reading

How will you introduce the text, elicit and connect to children’s ideas and knowledge, spark interest and engagement, and set a purpose for reading?

Please fill out each column of the table below to detail your instruction Before Reading:

| Questions or Ideas the teacher will ask to support students’ understanding in preparation for reading: How will you introduce the text and prepare students for reading? | What is the teacher doing? Saying? Will you offer a picture walk? Will you be pointing to the book/text at certain points? Will you introduce the historical context? Are you using any visuals or other materials or media to introduce the text? Script your language and actions. | What might the students be saying/doing? What are your hopes and expectations for what students will be doing at this point in the read aloud? How will you know you have allowed children opportunities to actively engage their experiences and knowledge in anticipation of the text? (e.g., students will... |
### How will you introduce the text and prepare students for reading?
Teacher: “Good morning 4th graders. Yesterday we started reading an important historical informational text called “*When Marian Sang*”. We talked about how the genre of this book is a biography. Does anyone remember what a biography is?”

Teacher: “A biography has real, true information about someone’s life. That’s important here as we learn about some challenging experiences Marian overcame in real life. Marian was an African American girl who grew up in the early 1900’s, so over 100 years ago, when there were still laws that kept white people separate from people of color. Marian demonstrated courage, strength, and determination to overcome this unfair racial discrimination and segregation.”

So I have posted on the board the focus of our second reading. I will read it first, then we’ll read it together:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we will say/do:</th>
<th>What might the students be doing/saying?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher is showing the cover page.</td>
<td>Have students recall yesterday’s lesson. Students raise hands to answer, to recall the genre of biography.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are offered time to respond.</td>
<td>Students read the words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher has prewritten these words on board: <strong>unfairness, discrimination, segregation</strong></td>
<td>Students choral read: Students will be able to: recognize historical injustice and identify actions of resistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher refers to posted objective and politics choral reading. “Students will be able to: recognize historical injustice and identify actions of resistance.” Teacher explains what the objective means in student</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**“Students will be able to: recognize historical injustice and identify actions of resistance.”**

**friendly terms: “Our goal is to identify when in this book that words, behaviors, rules and laws treat Marian unfairly based on her race. We will trace the real harm this caused, and see who helped stop unfairness and worked to make life better for many people in order to bring more justice and fairness to the world.”**

**During Reading**

What will you do to support children’s understanding and application of a critical perspective in pursuit of your social justice goal during the reading of this book?

**Things to think about as you plan:** Think about and specifically indicate below your stopping places in the text and your reasons for pausing, as well as what you will do at that point in the text (e.g., discuss or clarify unfamiliar or particularly important ideas, concepts, or potentially new vocabulary; to ask questions or raise an issue for brief discussion) to **emphasize your social justice goal in the reading as the text progresses.**

| Questions or Ideas the teacher will ask to support students’ understanding through the text (plan a minimum of three stopping places, max. of six) to support students’ engagement and understanding during reading. | **What is the teacher doing?** **Saying?** What will you do to support children’s understanding and application of a critical perspective in **pursuit of your social justice goal** during the reading of this book? Remember to be developmentally appropriate!!! Script student friendly language. | **What might the students be doing/saying?** What are your hopes and expectations for what students will be doing at this point in the read aloud? Consider how you as the teacher are learning FROM children. **Ensure at least one stopping point allows for student to student engagement.** |
---|---|---|
| #1 Stopping place in text (page number: ) 1 “Everyone wanted to hear Marian sing.”. | **What we will say/do** (indicate which partner is saying/doing what): Teacher points to the word “everyone”, writes it on board. | **What might the students be doing/saying?** Students are listening. Students |

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**Reason for stopping, related to the social justice goal/objective of the lesson:**

I will emphasize a word that the author included “everyone” to highlight the definition and history of segregation, crucial to understanding the historical context of the racial segregation at that time.

“...and her bath was in the kitchen sink. It was for her parents to use, not her. It was the African American’s right to be in there, too. It was the law in the time. Is this fair?”

You’re right, it’s unfair. Unjust. This separation of people is what we call segregation. This is an example of injustice that Marian faced.

Teacher writes

Segregation = unfair, unjust

“Now, when we read Marian’s story, remember this is a true story, a nonfiction text. This happened in the history of our country. We are no longer segregated because of the work of everyday people who fought against this injustice. We’ll learn about those actions of resistance as we read on…”

**#2 Stopping place in text (page number: 8)**

8

“Since Father’s death, Marian worked at odd jobs, sang in concert programs in order to help support her family. It wasn’t until 1915, when Marian was eighteen, that she finally went to a music school and patiently waited in line for an application. But the girl...”

What we will say/do:

“Here the author has given us two details about how Marian came from a poor family. Because her family didn’t have money, this impacted her access, or her ability to pay for special music lessons until she was able to work and make money on her own. This is another obstacle she faced because of the unfairness in the world.”

Teacher reads on and stops again....

What might the students be doing/saying?

Students are listening
behind her helped everyone except Marian. Was she invisible? Finally the girl said, ‘We don’t take colored!’ Her voice sounded like a steel door clicking shut” (p. 8)

**Reason for stopping, related to the social justice goal/objective of the lesson:**

Here I stop to highlight the intersection of class and race. This detail may slip by students as this book focuses more on the overt racism, rather than class differences, so I want to be sure I explicitly name that intersection and highlight the injustice and unfairness in classism and how that impacted access to education.

One goal I have is to have students begin to understand how this could make them feel, even if they haven’t experienced discrimination in their own lives.

Here I again name the racial discrimination, and now I offer students an opportunity to also name the racial discrimination and use our vocabulary words.

---

Teacher re-reads: *Finally the girl said, ‘We don’t take colored!’ Her voice sounded like a steel door clicking shut’* (p. 8)

*Teacher emphasizes by making a sound with his hand on the table slamming the door SHUT!* Teacher: “Imagine you were just trying to go to school to learn, or you wanted to check out a book from the library, but were DENIED access, or not allowed to, just because of the way you looked. How would that make you feel?”

Teacher: “During this time, it was commonplace for African Americans to be denied access to certain jobs, to be refused treatment in White hospitals, to be segregated into neighborhoods, schools, restaurants, and churches. In the text, the line, *‘We don’t take colored!’* (p. 8), shows the racism and discrimination Marian faced.

“Rockstar readers make connections between illustrations and text, the pictures and the words. Let’s take a look at this illustration, how does this illustration show inequality and injustice? *Teacher probes for the door slamming shut literally and as a metaphor.*

Teacher: “Here the words and the picture together, with the symbol of the “steel door clicking shut”, depicting how in those times, people were shut out of opportunities to fulfil their dreams and reach their...”

---

Students can raise their hands to share out examples. Have multiple students share out to class

Students look at the image displayed and share out what they notice and how that shows injustice and inequality.
“With unwavering faith, Marian told her mother that there would be another way to accomplish what would have been done at school.”

**Reason for stopping, related to the social justice goal/objective of the lesson:**
Here I explicitly name the persistence in order for students to begin to see activism and agency in the fight against segregation.

**#3 Stopping place in text (page number: 10)**

**What we will say/do:**

**Teacher:** “Here Marian demonstrated strength and determination in the fight against unfair systems. She resisted and persisted.”

*Teacher wrote the words resisted and persisted on board.*

**What might the students be doing/saying?**
Here students are listening to the resistance/action piece of the text.

“When she arrived at his studio, Mr. Boghetti announced that he didn’t have time or room for new students. Too afraid to even look at him, Marian took a deep breath. Slowly, with great emotion, she sang.”

**#4 Stopping place in text (page number: 16)**

**What we will say/do:**

**Teacher:** Let’s look back at our objective. Can I have a reader remind me of our purpose of reading today?”

**Teacher:** “In this scene, can you turn to a partner and recognize the unfairness and injustice?”

**What might the students be doing/saying?**
Student volunteers read the objective: “Students will be able to recognize historical injustice and identify actions of resistance.”
**Reason for stopping, related to the social justice goal/objective of the lesson:**

Here students now are asked to demonstrate their understanding of the objective. It’s their turn to identify when in this book where words, behaviors, rules and laws treat Marian unfairly based on her race. Here we move to see how injustice is met with action. How activists and allies helped stop unfairness in order to bring more justice and fairness to the world.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#5 Stopping place in text (page number: )</th>
<th>Teacher says: Teacher (re)reads: “enraged fans wrote letters to the newspapers...again they were denied. Now teachers were angry and marched in support of Marian in front of the Board of Education”. (p. 24)</th>
<th>What might the students be doing/saying?</th>
<th>Reason for stopping, related to the social justice goal/objective of the lesson: I stopped here to engage in the end of reading activity to teach children that courageous acts of resistance can be done not only by the oppressed, but by allies as well. It's crucial we prepare our students, even from an elementary age, to engage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Teacher: “Again, to accomplish our important learning goal, to be able to recognize historical injustice and identify actions of resistance, what injustice is occurring AND how did activists the injustice of segregation?”</td>
<td>Students are listening to the rereading.</td>
<td>Students share out whole group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“enraged fans wrote letters to the newspapers...again they were denied. Now teachers were angry and marched in support of Marian in front of the Board of Education”. (p. 24)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
with texts as resistant readers in order to become agential writers, in the pursuit of social justice.

**After Reading**

This is the portion of the lesson that will provide opportunities for students to respond to the book and expand on the book through questions/discussion and potentially, activities. This is also the time when you will be able to listen closely and learn from students about their connections and understandings related to the book. Describe how you will help students understand ideas they’ve encountered and relate those ideas to other ideas and to their own experiences.

**Things to think about as you plan:** What happens after you read the last page of the book? Will you pass out resources or materials for the activity/discussion? What questions will you ask to allow students to share their responses to the text? What ideas have you decided to emphasize (keep in mind your goals here!)?

**Opportunity for Student Response:** How will you support students in responding to and extending their understanding of the text in pursuit of your social justice goals? (include two questions and/or an activity you can pose to students after reading to accomplish the objective of the lesson).

**Restate your Learning Goal:** Students will be able to recognize historical injustice and identify actions of resistance.

**Discussion Questions/Activity:**

Writing Activity, (see print out below) Perspective taking: If you were to take the perspective of an activist fighting against segregation, what would your letter to lawmakers say? Write at least one paragraph that:

1. names the injustices from “When Marian Sang”,
2. identifies the actions (in the book and in real life) that have already been taking place in the fight against this injustice, and
3. offers an idea towards a more just future.

**Student Artifacts/Evidence of Understanding** (What will you do to extend the reading experience in a way that is both engaging for students and allows you to access evidence of their understanding and response to what you’ve read?) How will you know that they CARE about the person and or issue that you explored in your book? Note that their talk can be considered evidence.

Students will take the perspective of an activist/ally in order to empathize with people who have experienced racial discrimination. Students will explicitly have to name the historic injustices. Furthermore, students will become agents of change as they are offered the opportunity to write a letter to a lawmaker in the pursuit of systemic change of the unjust segregation policies. Students can then take this idea and write a letter to their current day politicians to be a voice of their own century.

PRINT OUT STUDENT WORKSHEET:
Name:________________

Writing Activity, Historical Perspective taking

**TAKING ACTION**

If you were to take the perspective of an activist fighting against segregation in “When Marian Sang”, what would your letter to lawmakers say? Write at least one paragraph that:

1. Names the injustices from “When Marian Sang”
2. Identifies the actions (in the book and in real life) that have already been taking place in the fight against this injustice and
3. Offers an idea towards a more just future

Appendix J: Instructor Feedback Form: Lesson Plan

**READING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE PROJECT**

**FEEDBACK RUBRIC**

Part 2. Lesson Plan Template (20 minute session)
Due Dates: Draft is due 4/2; Final lesson plan & teaching due 4/4

Team Members

Book

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Feedback</th>
<th>Team self-check</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience/grade level</strong> – Lesson is appropriate for the ages/grade levels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goals</strong> – Strong RSJ goal for this book? Lesson achieves the goal?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standards</strong> – Lesson addresses the standards? Appropriate focus (not too many standards)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instructional Plan</strong> – What are students learning, and how are they learning? What do they read, view, say, do?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Are students’ feelings and emotions addressed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Formative Assessment:**
How will the teacher know what students are learning and feeling? Observation, artifacts,

**Comments**

---

**Appendix K: Partner Lesson Plan Conference Protocol**

Date
Team names
Zoom recording (ask permission)

Touch base with the team members – how are they doing?

We’ve read your lesson plan.
How are you feeling about how you’re achieving your social justice goal through your lesson design?
What would you most like help with? (one person takes notes - make sure to address students’ needs).
Use the rubric that is attached to guide feedback.

Terrific conference. Based on our conversation, what are your action items to revise your lesson plan before Thursday’s zoom session.

(take notes on action items and add to it, if something important has been overlooked).

Good luck! Please feel free to email either of us if you have any questions before Thursday’s lesson.
Appendix L: Student Note-catcher-Teaching Demonstration Day

Reading for Social Justice Project
Teaching Demonstration Notetaker, 4/14/20

Your name: 

Partner Name: 

Your book: 

Partner Team book: 

Before class checklist:

- Upload YouTube Read Aloud to (Link to spreadsheet.)
- Upload your final lesson plan to canvas
- Find your partner team
- Email lesson plan to partner team
- Watch partner team’s read aloud

On Tuesday 4/14, synchronous class agenda:

12:30-12:40 Connect and check in

BREAKOUT GROUPS

12:40-1:00 Group A lesson teach

1:00-1:10 Lesson reflection debrief (using guiding questions provided below)

1:10-1:30 Group B lesson teach

1:30-1:40 Lesson reflection debrief (using guiding questions provided below)

1:40-1:45 Reconnect

Guiding Questions for Lesson Observation & Feedback

Reflection Prompts for presenters:

What would you say is your biggest success in teaching this lesson?

What would you say has been most challenging about teaching this lesson?

What would you say is your biggest takeaway after teaching this lesson?
What changes would you make if you were to teach this lesson again?

Reflection Prompts for “students” (participants/listeners):

- Glow (point of success of the lesson, in relation to the social justice goal)
- Grow (point of precise, constructive feedback)
- We’ve talked a lot about our work as teachers in using a critical multicultural approach when teaching with children's literature. How did this approach come through in the lesson plan?
- What would you say is your biggest takeaway after participating in your partner team’s lesson?

After Class:

1. UPLOAD Zoom recording & share with Bridget and Kirsten (via google drive or email)

2. Post project individual written reflection on the project, due 4/21, soon to be posted on Canvas.

Appendix M: Project Reflection Form
EDUC 2311 Reading for Social Justice Project Reflection

In this form, you will have the opportunity to reflect on the experiences in the Reading for Social Justice Project as a whole, addressing the text selection, Critical Multicultural Analysis, CMA paper, and the process of planning, co-teaching, and enacting your lesson plan. You’ll also have the opportunity to reflect on the feedback from instructors and peers throughout the project, the online experiences, and how your thinking and practice has changed.

We anticipate that this reflection will take about 20-30 minutes to complete.

If you’d like to save this work and come back to it, submit the form and you may come back to this form and make changes after submitting. To save your work as you go, do feel free to write your long answer responses in a word doc and copy and paste.

This reflection is due Wednesday, 11/25. (Before you leave for break)

IMPORTANT***You will receive a "Response receipt" via email to upload to digication***

The respondent’s email (null) was recorded on submission of this form.

* Required

1. Email *

2. Student Name *

3. Major and Year *

4. Picture Book Title *
5. Topic(s) of the text (select all that apply) *

Check all that apply.

☐ Civil Rights Era of the 50s and 60s
☐ Environmental Justice
☐ Women's rights
☐ International Changemakers
☐ Slavery/Abolitionist
Other: ☐

6. Age/grade level of your lesson's "audience" *


7. Before this project... *

Mark only one oval per row.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not familiar</th>
<th>Somewhat familiar</th>
<th>Familiar</th>
<th>Very Familiar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before this project, what was your prior experience with lesson planning?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before this project, what was your experience teaching multicultural literature?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. **After this project...**

*Mark only one oval per row.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not prepared</th>
<th>Somewhat prepared</th>
<th>Prepared</th>
<th>Very prepared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After this project, how prepared do you feel you are to select and analyze multicultural literature for social justice purposes?</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not prepared</th>
<th>Somewhat prepared</th>
<th>Prepared</th>
<th>Very prepared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After this project, how prepared do you feel to design and teach multicultural literature for social justice purposes?</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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</table>

9. **Why did you select your book for a social justice project? Explain, with supporting examples from the book (text and illustrations).**


10. **What does teaching children’s literature with a critical multicultural perspective for social justice mean to you?**
11. What is your biggest takeaway after completing your critical paper? *

12. What is your biggest takeaway after teaching and reflecting on your lesson? *

13. If you were to create a week-long unit plan for this book, what would you want to teach, and why? *
14. The Reading for Social Justice Project engaged you in a series of collaborative workshops and class activities with opportunities for feedback from your instructors and peers. Which experiences were most helpful to you to learn and develop skills as a critical educator with goals for social justice? *

*Mark only one oval per row.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Not helpful at all</th>
<th>Not Very Helpful</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat helpful</th>
<th>Very Helpful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Botelho and Rudman chapters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Analysis workshop using Critical Multicultural Analysis perspective</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Critical Multicultural Analysis paper and feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lesson planning with your partner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lesson conferencing with instructors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enacting the co-taught lesson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lesson Reflection Session with a small group</td>
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</table>

15. In thinking about these experiences above, describe a light bulb moment, a significant moment of teacher learning. *
16. What has been your greatest success with the Reading for Social Justice project as a whole? *

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

17. What has been your greatest challenge? Is there something the instructors could do to support you in relation to this challenge? *

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

18. If you were describing this project to another university student in education, what would you say are the three most important things you learned? *

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________
19. How might you apply lessons learned from this project to future teaching? What do you think might be the benefits for your future students? *


20. Would you recommend that we keep this Reading for Social Justice project in the future? *

Mark only one oval.

1  2  3  4

Do not recommend  Recommend strongly

21. Optional comments -- Anything else that you would like to share with us?


Thank you for participating! IMPORTANT***You will receive a “Response receipt” via email to upload to digication***

Appendix N: IRB Recruitment Script
Title of Research Study: **Developing Preservice Teachers' Critical Perspectives and Practices Teaching Multicultural Literature**

IRB Protocol Number: 19-0839

Investigator: Kirsten Musetti Tivaringe

Dear Students of *EDUC 2311- Children’s Literature and Literary Engagement in Elementary Schools*,

My name is Kirsten Musetti Tivaringe and I am a former elementary teacher and instructor of Children’s Literature, and Dr. Dalton’s advisee. I will serve as a guest instructor and researcher for a unit in this class, entitled, “Reading for Social Justice” that will take place over four class sessions. As a member of this class, you are invited to participate in this research project exploring how preservice teachers employ a critical multicultural perspective as an analytic tool in planning, teaching, and reflecting on teaching multicultural literature. The findings from this research should contribute to our understanding of how to better prepare future educators to teach multicultural literature.

You can be in the course and not be part of the research. Or you can be in the course and join the research component if you are interested. You may also withdraw from participating in the research study at any time. All research activities are part of regularly scheduled class assignments and activities with the exception of an optional interview. Your participation will be voluntary, and in no way will it affect your grade or assignment requirements in this course. It is important to know that Dr. Dalton will not have access to the research consent forms and will not know whether you have agreed to participate in this study until after all final grades have been posted. Your consent form will be distributed and collected by me, who has no grading role in the course. Thus, you can be sure that this study will have absolutely no bearing on your course grades or performance evaluation.

As part of the Reading for Social Justice class activities and assignments, I will collect the following data from research participants:

- A critical multicultural book analysis paper, draft and final versions
- A lesson plan draft and final versions
- A project reflection

You may also be asked to participate in an optional 30-minute interview at the end of the project, to take place outside of class. I will video and audio-record the 4 class sessions, take photos, and collect instructional materials for research analysis purposes. You may agree to share none, some, or all of your student project work.

The consent letter is attached to this form. After I’m finished answering all of your questions, Dr. Dalton will leave the classroom and I will collect the signed consent forms today and also return next class to collect any additional forms. Please let me know if you have questions. I am available to talk with you in person or by cell phone (847-409-1870).

I am happy to be teaching and learning alongside you this semester! Thank you for considering participation!

Kirsten Musetti Tivaringe, *Kirsten.Tivaringe@colorado.edu*

Literacy Studies Doctoral Candidate
Appendix O: IRB Consent Form

Title of research study: Developing Preservice Teachers' Critical Perspectives and Practices Teaching Multicultural Literature

IRB Protocol Number: 19-0839

Investigator: Kirsten Musetti Tivaringe

Purpose of the Study

This purpose of this study is to prepare preservice teachers with critical perspectives and practices to apply to multicultural literature. The coursework and research is designed to guide preservice teachers to explore methods of lesson planning, lesson enactment, and reflection in using multicultural children’s literature as a tool to enact principles and practices of critical, equity-oriented teaching. This study seeks to learn from your participation in and collect documents from your EDUC 2311-Children’s Literature and Literary Engagement in Elementary Schools course.

The aims of this study is to support preservice teachers in using children’s literature critically to enact lessons for elementary students. This research will advance the knowledge of the field as I search for insights into preservice teachers’ text selection, instructional decisions, lesson planning, lesson enactment, and reflection all in the service of goals for equity and social justice. This research will provide insight into preservice teacher learning by providing data that offers insight into the questions, tensions, and discursive shifts in teacher learning by studying preservice teachers’ critical perspectives and practices teaching multicultural literature.

This research project lasts throughout the duration of the four-class session unit. All students enrolled in the course will participate in the activities and assignments outlined in our course syllabus. All research activities, besides an optional end of project interview, are part of regularly scheduled class assignments. Those students who agree to participate in the research study will be asked to participate in an optional, approximately 30-45-minute interview after the coursework is completed. Additionally, you will be asked if you’d be willing to share course assignments (such as lesson plans and reflection) and audio/video recording of selected class activities for research analysis purposes. You can agree to none, some, or all of the research activities.

I expect about 28 people will be in this research. Typically, School of Education Children’s Literature courses contain about 30 students enrolled. I anticipate most students will provide consent to participate in the research study.

Explanation of Procedures

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You do not have to participate if you do not want to. You may also leave the study at any time. If you leave the study before it is finished, there will be no penalty to you, and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled as a student at the University of XXX. Analysis of course materials for research purposes will only occur after the semester has ended and final grades have been posted. As you will see
in this consent form, you may agree to participate in some aspects of this research and not others.

Description of Procedures

1. Transcription of video and audio-recorded classroom interactions: I would like to audio record four of the class discussions during the semester in the EDUC 2311 Children’s Literature course in order to revisit and learn about students’ experiences in the course, how students make sense of the information presented in the course, and the teaching of the course. With your permission, I would like to transcribe your comments in these audio recordings of class discussions for research purposes. If you choose not to participate in the video and audio recordings, your comments will not be transcribed. The recordings will include small and whole group discussions that will occur as a regular part of the course. Your instructor will not have access to the audio or video recordings until after the semester has concluded and final grades have been submitted.

2. Individual exit interview: I may ask if you are willing to be interviewed about your experience in the course. If you volunteer to participate in an optional, 30-45 minute interview. In this interview, I will ask questions such as “What do you think is a point of success in the lesson?” and “What did you learn from reflecting on your own instruction?” You do not have to answer every question. With your permission, I will video record (or audio, if preferred) the interviews. These recordings will be used for research purposes only. I will assign pseudonyms to your interview responses. It is not necessary to volunteer to be interviewed in order to participate in this study. I may wish to use video clips as illustrations in presentations to professional audiences. You can indicate below, in the signature section, the use of course videos to which you agree in relation to this study.

3. Collect and Analyze written course assignments and in-class writing: If you choose to participate in this study, I would like to analyze written work course assignments that you will produce in the context of course requirements. For example, I would like to collect the Critical Multicultural paper, lesson plans, and reflective writing completed as a regular part of the course. You do not have to give permission for the researcher to access every document requested.

Duration

Because this study takes place in EDUC 2311-Children’s Literature and Literary Engagement in Elementary Schools, it will begin in January of 2020. Your involvement would end in May 2020, when the semester ends. Because Dr. Dalton has a grading role in the course, she will not analyze course materials or interviews as research data until after the conclusion of the semester, in May 2020. If you volunteer to be interviewed, this interview will take place in April of 2020. Data collection will end in April of 2020. Students may be contacted to discuss interpretations.

All four classes that are a part of this unit will be audio and video recorded. Classes are one hour and fifteen minutes long. There will be one class that will be focused on learning about the Critical Multicultural perspective, as well as the three classes in which teachers are engaged in the lesson plan project’s text selection, lesson planning, and two days of video analysis feedback sessions. Both whole class and small group observations will be audio and video recorded. Course assignments that will be used for analysis include the Critical Multicultural paper, the Lesson Plan project lesson plan draft and final, and the lesson plan reflection. You will
be asked to participate in an optional approximately 30-45 minute interview after the project is completed in April of 2020.

**Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal**

Whether or not you take part in this research is your choice. Refusing to participate in this study will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You have the right to withdraw your consent or stop participating at any time. You can leave the research at any time and it will not be held against you. You have the right to refuse to answer any question(s) or refuse to participate in any procedure for any reason. Refusing to participate in this study will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. As a CU-Boulder student, taking part in this research is not part of your class work or duties. You can refuse to enroll, or withdraw after enrolling at any time, with no effect on your class standing or grades at CU-Boulder. You will not be offered or receive any special compensation or consideration if you take part in this research.

Additionally, it is important to know that your course instructor will not know whether you have agreed to participate in this study until all final grades have been posted. Your consent form will be distributed and collected by me, who has no grading role in the course. Thus, you can be sure that this study will have absolutely no bearing on your course grades or performance evaluation.

If you decide not to participate, I will exclude your data from any transcriptions of this data, and will not reference you in audio or video analysis. Should you choose to participate initially, but feel later that you would prefer to have your data withdrawn before it is used for any analysis by the researchers, you will have the opportunity to do so.

**Risks and Discomforts**

There are no foreseeable risks for participating in this study. It is important that you tell the Principal Investigator, Kirsten Musetti Tivaringe, if you think you have been injured as a result of taking part in this study. You can call her at 847-409-1870.

**Potential Benefits**

I cannot promise any benefits to you or others from your taking part in this research. However, the possible benefits of participation in this study include support for teacher educators in using children’s literature critically to enact lessons for elementary students. This research will advance the knowledge of the field as I search for insights into preservice teachers’ text selection, instructional decisions based on text analysis, lesson planning, and reflection on the enactment of a lesson, all in service of goals for equity and social justice. This research will allow attention to preservice teacher learning through the ways they interrogate their own practice to enact principles and practices of critical, equity-oriented teaching. Also, this study offers participants the opportunity to contribute to the improvement and development of this course and better understanding of how to provide effective and supportive experiences at the CU School of Education and in teacher education more generally, particularly in preservice teacher education.
Confidentiality  
Information obtained about you for this study will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law. Research information that identifies you may be shared with the University of XXX Institutional Review Board (IRB) and others who are responsible for ensuring compliance with laws and regulations related to research, including people on behalf of the Office for Human Research Protections. The information from this research may be published for scientific purposes;

I will make every effort to maintain the privacy of your data. Before any analysis begins, your name will be replaced with an alpha-numeric designation throughout the research collection and analysis process. Following data collection and in all published reports, these designations will be replaced with a pseudonym, and other identifying information will be removed from the data files.  

These are some reasons that I may need to share the information you give us with others:

- If it is required by law.
- If I think you or someone else could be harmed.
- Sponsors, government agencies or research staff sometimes look at forms like this and other study records. They do this to make sure the research is done safely and legally. Organizations that may look at study records include:
  - i. Office for Human Research Protections or other federal, state, or international regulatory agencies
  - ii. The University of XXX Institutional Review Board
  - iii. The sponsor or agency supporting the study: University of XXX – School of Education

There are three exceptions to this promise of confidentiality:
1. If I see or are told information that makes us reasonably suspect that a child or at-risk adult is being or has been abused, mistreated, or neglected, I will immediately report that information to the county department of social services or a local law enforcement agency.
2. If I learn of a serious threat of imminent physical violence against a person, I will report that information to the appropriate legal authorities and make reasonable and timely efforts to notify the potential victim.
3. This promise of confidentiality does not include information I may learn about future criminal conduct.

Ensuring Privacy and Anonymity in Audio and Video Recordings

All recordings will be stored and analyzed on password-protected hard drives stored in a locked office of the School of Education. The course materials and documents and any interview data will be preserved indefinitely so I can learn about the course over time.

Only those individuals who are members of the research team will have access to these recordings. If you agree to the use of video clips for sharing with audiences for professional
purposes, your name and other identifying information will not be shared with audiences (though your image will be visible).

**Payment for Participation**

There are no monetary or financial incentives, only the promise of contributing to the continued improvement of the program offerings at the School of Education.

**Questions**

For questions, concerns, or complaints about this study, email Kirsten.Tivaringe@colorado.edu or call (847) 409-1870.

This research has been reviewed and approved by an IRB. If you have questions about your rights as a research study participant, you can call the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB is independent from the research team. You can contact the IRB if you have concerns or complaints that you do not want to talk to the study team about. You may talk to them at (303) 735-3702 or irbadmin@XXX.edu if:

- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research subject.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

**Signatures**

I have read (or someone has read to me) this form. I have had a chance to ask all the questions I have at this time. I have had my questions answered in a way that is clear. I understand that by authorizing this, I am agreeing to the procedures described above, to have qualitative data collected through course documents, materials and my participation in project activities. I understand that my course instructor will not know whether I have consented to this study until after my final grade has been posted. I understand the researcher team will analyze this data after my final grade is posted and that they may be sharing conclusions from this analysis with various public bodies. I understand that this analysis will involve every possible attempt to ensure confidentiality. I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. I will be given a copy of this form.

Your signature documents your permission to take part in this research.

Signature of subject ____________________________ Date __________

Printed name of subject ____________________________

Signature of person obtaining consent ____________________________ Date __________
Printed name of person obtaining consent

**Analysis of Written Classwork and Course Assignments**
I agree to having my written classwork and course assignments used in analysis.
YES NO

**Audio Recording of Class Sessions**
I agree to having my voice included in the analysis of audio recording of the course.
YES NO

**Video Recording of Class Session**
I agree to the researchers using my course videos as data.
YES NO

I agree to the researchers sharing clips of my course videos for professional purposes.
YES NO

**Interview**
I am willing to be asked to participate in a 30-45 minute interview.
YES NO

I agree to the use of audio equipment during interview
YES NO

I agree to the use of video equipment during interview
YES NO