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## The Impact of Critical Literacy on the Moral Reasoning of Adolescents

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THE IMPACT OF CRITICAL LITERACY ON  
THE MORAL REASONING OF ADOLESCENTS

by

Sierra Mae Gilbertson

A capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts in Literacy Education.

Hamline University

Saint Paul, MN

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## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

It was the end of the year and I was grading the last assignments before grades were due. My room had that lonely, quiet atmosphere that takes over the school once students leave with their built-up-for-summer energy and excitement with them. The sunlight and fresh air flowed tauntingly through my window, reminding me that others were already enjoying their vacation. I had just taken another swig of my coffee to pull myself together and get my grading done, when I stumbled upon something unexpected. It was the journal entries of one of my homebound students. This student had been expelled for a poor choice. I did not think of her as a bad student and thought that the action was uncharacteristic. However, I did often wonder if there was something more that I could have done to prevent this act. With all of this running through my mind for several months, I was surprised by what she had written.

She had thanked me for being her teacher and insisted that I did a great job. She also let me know that she would be moving away and going to a different school and would miss me. This news affected me quite a bit. All this time I thought that she would be coming back and I could talk to her and tell her that this one action did not define her, but now it was too late.

This note was an awakening for me. I realized that we do our best to positively influence our students, but we cannot blame ourselves for every error in judgment that may be made by them. I had been feeling guilt for a long time for not being able to prevent her from making her poor choice, but that did not affect the way she thought of me as a teacher. We are not perfect and neither are they, but we continue to work hard to minimize these errors so that the students do not have to face consequences that could possibly make a significant and negative impact on their lives. However, making a positive impact on our students by modeling moral behavior and providing support is becoming more and more difficult as the demands to produce perfect test takers is ever increasing.

So how can this be done? How can we teach our content, but still build in character education so that students are able to make positive choices when faced with moral dilemmas? A critical literacy approach in English may be the answer. In order to determine whether or not critical literacy will assist in this matter, this study aims at answering the question: “In what ways does the implementation of critical literacy impact the moral reasoning of adolescents?”

The journey to this question has occurred during most of my lifetime. Although I might not have known the terminology until recent years, my conceptual knowledge has been building up until the breaking point, which is now. This chapter walks you through my journey so that you can understand why this question has so much meaning for my past, present, and future students, and myself.

### Discovering the Message

My journey to the realization of this need and the development of my capstone question all begins in a town of fewer than 100 people. It was the type of town that only drew people in when there was a funeral or bingo. Located about an hour from any chain store or restaurant, it did not have a library. Instead, a library from a town a half hour away would bring books to us every two weeks in what they called a bookmobile. This was the place that my family had moved to when I was four-years-old after my mother found a house for us to rent for little cost.

The fact that it was an extremely small town was a bonus for my sisters, brother, and myself as it meant that we would be allowed more freedom than we had when we lived in our last place, a high-poverty area of a major city. Our lack of freedom in the city was in part due to her experience at a baby shower for an expecting mother in our apartment building. At the party, she was shocked to discover cocaine was being used by other party goers. My mom couldn't believe that narcotics were being used that close to us and felt that she didn't really know anyone in the building. Our move to this small town with less crime would be a fresh start. Since the house was located near the park, we had the opportunity to go over them as often as we wanted. Plus, our grandparents lived within a half hour of us and we could visit them much more frequently.

It is this town that was the stage for the beginning of my journey because it is where I grew up and where I discovered the power of reading. Books played an important role in my beliefs and values. My positive experiences with reading also impacted my life

in that they lead to my desire to pursue a career in teaching. If it was not for my encounters in reading, I would be a much different person than I am today.

One of the books that I remember specifically from my childhood is *Cooty-Doo*. In the story, a bug's father is the town's garbage man. While at school one day, his father drives by while his son is at recess. His son and two friends make fun of him and the boy's friends do not know that he is his dad. The truth comes out, the father and son have a heart-to-heart talk, and the son proudly waves to his dad the next time he sees him drive by during recess. My mom would read it to me at least twice every day for I don't know how long, her arms wrapped around me as she held the book in a way that we could both take in the dark, brilliant blues, greens, and reds that never ceased to draw me in.

Although I do not recall all of my reactions to *Cooty-Doo*, I do remember being saddened by the look on the dad's face when he realized that his son was embarrassed that he was a garbage man. This seemed so wrong to me. His father was kind and proud of him; he should be grateful and proud of him as well. The lesson stuck with me for a long time. My mother's reading of *Cooty-Doo* opened up the idea that books serve a larger purpose than to just entertain. They have messages. This knowledge is something that I would continue to take with me as I encountered more books.

As I got a bit older and learned how to read on my own, I started to read the Berenstain Bears books. My brothers and sisters and I checked out these books frequently and they always had some sort of message. These books helped teach me what is "right" and what is "wrong." It helped me to learn acceptable behavior. I tried to adapt and change misbehaviors so I could practice the positive values taught in the books. One

book in the series that really stood out to me was *The Berenstain Bears Trick or Treat*. In the book, Brother and Sister go trick or treating with some friends. Along the way, a few big kids dare them to go to Mizz McGrizz's house. All of the kids in town are terrified of her and believe that her "spooky house" is evidence of her being a witch. Brother and Sister end up going along with the dare and find out that Mizz McGrizz is really a sweet, old lady. After hearing this story a few times, I reflected on my own actions.

One of our neighbors was an elderly lady who had a canary yellow car that matched her house. My oldest sister and some of the other big kids in town would frequently swap stories about her within my range of hearing. They said that she watched us when we were at the park through her window with binoculars. They also said that she had kid traps in her backyard. This resulted in my feelings of terror towards her. After hearing *The Berenstain Bears Trick or Treat*, though, I realized that I might be misjudging this woman. I asked my mom if we could go see her. My mom was pretty surprised by my request, but took me nevertheless. The lady ended up being very kind-hearted and from then on would give me occasional gifts such as stamps, flag stickers, and old Tootsie Rolls and Cheetos which my mom assured me were given with the best intentions but probably should not be eaten.

Around the time I reached junior high, I became hooked on the works of Charles Dickens. *Great Expectations* captivated me and is still one of my favorite books. His works helped me understand that not everything is fair in the world. I became more aware of the challenges faced by people who live in poverty. His novels frequently include orphans who are oppressed by adults who see them as cheap labor. When a savior does

come and make the child feel as if all of his troubles were only a horrific memory, the demons arise again and take custody until the savior returned once again. The exceedingly dire situations that these characters were in also aided in the attention drawn to the plights of orphans. Many of them were sickly, underfed, and abused. Smyke from *Nicholas Nickleby* was one of the most unfortunate of the children in Charles Dickens' books. His mother died and his father sent him away to a boarding school and forgot him which resulted in horrendous treatment by his headmaster, illnesses, and deformities.

Reading these works opened my eyes to how bad other people have it or the travesties that others have endured in the past. These books made me realize how much worse things could have been. After all, I was not abused and my mother always made sure that we had food and a roof over our heads. The works of Charles Dickens made me want to take action to help all of the less fortunate that continue to be taken advantage of economically, socially, physically, and mentally.

*Great Expectations* also retaught the message of not being embarrassed by your family, especially when they have done so much for you. Although the relationship between Estella and Miss Havisham might call that interpretation into question, I was hooked on the relationship between Joe and Pip. In fact, I could connect with Pip because I had a very strong relationship with my step dad and credit much of my personality and successes to him. My mom met him when I was in kindergarten. He was always supportive of me and had a way of using humor to make any day a good day. He was laid back and did not really let things get to him. He also was instrumental in my learning how to read as I would sit on his lap in our olive green hand-me-down recliner and we

would read the Bible together. To this day, I still cry whenever I read the part in the book when Pip leaves Joe.

It was also around this time that my desire to teach was cemented. I had first become interested in teaching when I was in third grade. In science we had learned about the food chain and were instructed to make our own models with paper, magazine clippings, and glue. The project had filled me with a sense of supreme knowledge, and I felt the necessity to share it with my younger brother as he sat and listened in his crib. Although he was far too young to grasp the concepts, I loved the feeling of sharing information with others and knew that that was what I wanted to do.

Now I was positive of what I wanted to teach: English. This goal was based on my love of reading and my desire to spread that love with others. I was a teacher's assistant my senior year and taught mythology lessons to the 10th grade class. That experience added fuel to the fire of my passion to teach. I applied to college, was accepted, and waited for the next step of my journey to begin.

#### Discovering Missing Perspectives

When my mom brought me to college the next fall, I was excited, but nervous as our car came to a stop and became just one of many vehicles that packed the parking lot that was also full of fearful freshman, sobbing mothers, and no-nonsense upperclassmen. I was excited to have a fresh start and meet new people, but, being somewhat shy, this also worried me a bit. I was surprised to find that I made friends quite quickly while there, and still keep in touch with them despite transferring after my freshman year.

Going from a town of 100 to almost 300,000 was quite a change. I was finally exposed to a wide range of diversity, and I loved it. But, at the same time, I was self-conscious of all my actions around minorities or people who identified themselves as LGBTQ. I was afraid that I somehow might offend them and really did not want that to happen. While walking around campus I didn't want to seem like I was staring, but I didn't want it to seem like I was trying to ignore people either. I decided that if someone made eye contact with me on my way to or from class I would say, "Hi," or wave, even if I did not know them. This worked out pretty well.

This also was the time in which I read multicultural literature for the first time. I guess I had read Goodrich's *The Diary of Anne Frank*, but that was pretty much it. Now I was reading literature written by diverse authors around the globe. My eyes opened to all of the voices I had been missing for all of these years. I was thrown off kilter by Gwendolyn Brooks. *Trumpet* and *Beloved* took my breath away and made me cry.

My high school was mostly white and so was my community, which is why I had not realized that I was missing all of these voices. It was not that I was against multicultural literature; I just had not really noticed that I had not read any because there was not a gap between the people I knew and the characters I read. When my college reading made me aware of this, I was somewhat surprised and a little ashamed. I had not given attention to any of these voices, and that was wrong. Additionally, meeting and talking with fellow classmates also allowed me to realize that all of my perceptions of their cultures were based on books that they were not included in and television. That is a very scary thought.



Getting over my nervousness of offending my classmates and opening myself up to them was a big step for me. By being more relaxed, they began to open up to me and I learned so much about different cultures and values and beliefs. I learned about the cultures of students from Korea, Nepal, and Ghana and the struggles they faced in order to be able to study in America. I also learned what “vegan” means and talked with a few Native American classmates who believe in the Great Spirit. Everyone is so different, but in the end, we are all human.

### Realizing the Power of Young Adult Literature

After graduating from college, I moved halfway across the country with my husband and my two kids. Although some people might find this strange, it was all part of my master plan. I knew that I wanted to come back to the area I grew up in, but I also realized how hard it was to get a teaching job without experience. Since I only saw a few openings in my home state, we decided to move to where they were abundant. Then, after gaining some experience and more openings became available near my hometown, we would move back.

Luckily, I was able to obtain a job where I would teach for two years. Although my time at my first school was short, it made a lasting impact on me. I could guess that I would have students with difficulties at home since the school was located in an urban area with a high amount of poverty, but I could never have predicted the intensity and scope of the issues.

Having come from a relatively sheltered upbringing and being a late bloomer in multicultural literature, it was hard for me to find materials or frame instruction in a way

that students would relate to. I needed to find a book that did not pretend that everything is okay, because these students were aware that not everything is okay. Brothers being picked up by the cops, sisters being raped, and moms popping pills were just some of the realities that many of my students lived with.

One of my 8th graders recommended *Tears of a Tiger* because it was one of her favorites and she had just recently read *Forged by Fire*. This book was an important and influential read as an adult because it was a reminder of how hard many teens have it and that their lives are not as easy as we sometimes think. Students fell in love with this book. The writing was raw and powerful. The books dealt with issues that unfortunately were familiar to many of my students. In one book, the main character had a father who was an alcoholic and abusive. In the other, a person's poor choice lead to the death of a friend. The character was unable to cope with the loss and the guilt and ended up committing suicide. Students could relate to the devastating consequences of poor choices, but they also learned that grief can destroy people who try to keep it all to themselves.

Books by Walter Dean Myers were also a hit. Several of his books contain main characters who have a relative who is in jail or are in jail themselves. This was something that quite a few of my students were also familiar with as some of them had a father or mother who was in jail most of their lives. Some of the students had even had to go to a juvenile detention center periodically. What made these books so wonderful for these students was that it confirmed what they already felt in their hearts: just because someone is in jail for committing crime does not mean that they are a bad person.

While my experience working with these students was life changing, after two years it was time for me to go. Openings finally started popping up near my hometown. I applied for them all and landed a position teaching 5th-8th grade English. I talked with my husband about moving back home, and he agreed that it would be good for our kids to be near their grandparents. So I applied for every opening and he found a laboring job. In fact, he ended up moving up two months before us because the school year was not over yet. When it was, he came back to help the kids and I move and we went back to familiar territory. Nevertheless, I was scared because, despite completing a lot of applications, I had only one interview and did not get the job. I could only hope that I would be able to land a job in the few months before school started so that I would be able to provide for my family. After a long July, I got the call I desperately needed the first week in August and secured a position at a reservation school about an hour north of where we moved to.

#### Using Literature to Empower

My new school was only an hour or two from my hometown, but it was very different. It was located on a closed reservation and Anishinabe traditions were a major part of the day to day lives of the student. The town called themselves the home of the Ojibwe language and spirit houses that served as tombs were all along the shore and in some of the yards. In all honesty, this school was not my first choice. The drive was not very appealing as it was over an hour and roads were often covered in drifts in the winter. However, I was extremely grateful to have a job and was very curious about the school. Powwows were held at the school each spring, Ojibwe was taught, and storytellers would occasionally come in. Many students were raised by their grandparents and spoke Ojibwe

at home. Despite the ties to traditions, it was also apparent that they struggled with influences from media and pop culture. Some of the elders would express their concerns about how technology was impacting their youth and resented the school for its 1:1 initiative.

That first year, I decided to take my husband and kids with me to the Veteran's Day powwow. We were the only white people there. Although I had been teaching there several months, I felt like I was an alien. People were staring at me. I was an outsider. However, after we were there a while, some of my students would come up to me and talk to me along with their parents. This helped relieve the tension. Although the strong feelings of being an outsider and an intruder made me feel uncomfortable, it was worth it. The students appreciated my presence that day and brought it up periodically throughout the year. It made them believe that I really did care about their culture and wanted to learn more about it.

My experiences in college and my first years of teaching taught me the importance of multicultural literature, especially when it comes to finding texts that diverse students can connect with. Unfortunately, I did not really know of many Native American young adult books that were actually written by Native Americans. Luckily, I was able to find one.

I came across *Birchbark House* and thought I would give it a try. The plot was interesting and the characters were well developed. The book contained a lot of Ojibwe which I thought my students would appreciate since they know some of the language

from Ojibwe classes and their grandparents and parents. However, the main character was younger than them, so I was worried that that would be an issue for them.

The book was a hit. Sometimes I had a hard time pronouncing the Ojibwe words, and the students took pride in being able to help me out. They made great connections since many of the practices and traditions that were shown in the book that was set in the 1800s are still used today. Seeing the pride and engagement in these students who had previously told me that reading is stupid and that they hate it was very powerful for me. More than likely, all of the books that they had been exposed to with Native American characters were written by whites. This was the first time that they had read a book that was truly written from a Native American perspective.

Since the amount of young adult literature written by Native Americans does not come close to the amount written by most other minorities, I was painfully aware that students would be exposed to many more texts with biases. Although this would be avoided as much as possible, we cannot deny that every book has some sort of bias as every author has his own perspectives. I knew that I had to do something in order to prepare students for any biases yet maintain their pride and sense of self worth.

I started to also think about activism and pushed for students to become self advocates. I became very passionate about this. I realized that students needed more than just books with characters and situations they could relate to. They needed a chance to develop the skills that would help them overcome adversity. I knew that as a middle school teacher my time with each student was limited, so I began to look at texts as more than just a tool to teach content and to engage readers. I began to see them as a tool for

students to make sense of the world. By reading, students could learn from the experiences of characters and grow without taking the risks themselves.

My inspiration for the development of my new curriculum centered on grandfather's seven gifts. In Anishinabe culture, it is believed that they were given seven gifts: respect, love, truth, bravery, wisdom, generosity, and humility. I developed text sets around two of the gifts for each grade level. The text sets included informational and literary texts. After I found texts that centered on one of the gifts, I developed a unit that incorporated the common core standards and guiding questions related to the gift. This would allow me to make the class culturally relevant even if not all texts were about Native Americans. The use of culturally relevant themes increased the engagement of most of the students. They appreciated having the traditional values of their culture included as it made them understand that I really did respect them.

#### Using Literature to Transform

When my contract with the reservation school district was not renewed at the end of the year, I was devastated. I felt that I had failed my students and I was very worried about whether or not they would continue what we had started together. I cried often and was positive that I would never have a position in which I felt that I had such purpose. These kids had so many people leave them. I had promised I would never leave them, but now I had no choice. It was like leaving my own children out at sea.

I was fortunate enough to secure a position for the upcoming fall so that I could continue teaching. The position was at a typical Midwestern rural town in which 95% of the students are white and many are raised on farms by conservative parents. Although I

was grateful to have a job, I was still broken by my nonrenewal. I was sure that I would enjoy the kids, but I did not have the drive that I used to. In my last school I worked hard to motivate students to stand up for themselves and their community. I taught them that they would be the leaders one day and we worked on skills they would need in order to be successful and overcome adversity. For the most part, the needs of my new students do not come close to those of my past. Although some students have difficulties at home, the majority of them come from supportive families. So what would my purpose be now? How could I make the world a better place? Because, let's face it, I wanted to do more than just teach my content. I wanted to make a lasting impact.

Not long after teaching in my new district, I was reminded of some aspects of my own schooling in a town not so far away. Stereotyping of minorities and LGBTQ populations was a disease. A common attitude shown by students was that if someone is not related to you or a close friend, their problems do not matter. Of course not all students felt this way, but a discouraging number of students did.

Then came the behaviors. While the behavior in my classroom was generally positive with only occasional issues of disruptiveness or bullying that was squashed immediately, I began to notice that the students who were respectful and kind in my class were being rude and making poor choices in the hallways, lunchroom, buses, and outside of school. I am not sure why this surprised me. In both of my other schools, I had noticed that teens often acted differently around adults than with just their friends. But, for some reason, I thought it might be different here. Students were flicking each other off at pep fests and booing each other, items were stolen from lockers, drugs were brought to

school, bomb threats were scrawled on bathroom walls, and students drank alcohol in the hallway.

I was in desperate need to find a way to alter these values and behaviors, but the reality was that I only had a third of the students and only for 50 minutes a day. During that time I was expected to teach the standards. So what could be done? How could I impact the values and behavior of my students in a lasting way while still teaching my content? A possible solution came to mind during an online course through Hamline University: Critical Literacy. And so my capstone question was born: “In what ways does the implementation of critical literacy impact the moral reasoning of adolescents?” My research was centered on this question in hopes that I would find an effective way to positively impact the character of my students.

### Summary

The journey to this question has spanned years, cities, states, and cultures. I have shared with you my background, including books that have influenced me and my experiences related to teaching. The messages in the books that I read and my later awareness of the missing voices made me a critical reader and the person that I am today. I believe that learning how to read critically will have a positive impact on my students as well. It is this belief and my experiences that led to the development of my question: “In what ways does the implementation of critical literacy impact the moral reasoning of adolescents?”

In Chapter Two, literature related to moral development is presented. Several theories regarding moral reasoning and development and ways of assessing them are



discussed. Critical literacy is also defined in Chapter Two and the history of its development is explained. Ways to implement critical literacy in a middle school English classroom are also provided. In Chapter Three, the methods for the study are presented along with the reasoning behind the decisions. Procedures and tools are all explained. The process for analyzing the data is also discussed. Chapter Four includes the results of the study and an analysis of the data. The data shows the impact the implementation of critical literacy had on the moral reasoning of the students. Qualitative data, such as student work samples, is included to create a clearer picture of how the unit impacted students. Chapter Five is the conclusion. It includes my reflection on the effectiveness of this study. Implications and recommendations for future research are also discussed.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Literature Review

#### Introduction

Growing up, I became aware of the power of literature as a way to develop character. However, it was not until I became a college student in a diverse community that I became more aware of the importance of multicultural literature and the need to think critically about the narrow selection of texts that are often available for students in K-12 in rural schools. My experiences made me wish that I had been exposed to these experiences earlier. A class I took in graduate school helped me to become more aware of critical literacy and wonder about the impact it could make on the values of students.

While studies showed the benefits of critical literacy in allowing students to feel empowered and also to think of the perspectives of others, there has not been much research showing how critical literacy can impact the behavior and values of early adolescents in and out of class. This gap lead to my capstone question, “In what ways does the implementation of critical literacy impact the moral reasoning of adolescents?”

Critical literacy might make it possible for me to help my students avoid pitfalls that I had made growing up. It might allow them to gain a better understanding of multiple perspectives and to take action to stop and prevent the oppression that they see. In order for me to test out how effective the implementation of a critical literacy approach

could be, however, it was necessary to research the related components so that I could make sure that I was implementing the approach with as much fidelity as possible and accurately measuring what I hoped to measure.

To provide background on this research topic, this chapter discusses literature and research that has already been conducted. The major topics included are adolescent moral reasoning and development, the history of critical literacy, and how to implement critical literacy in the classroom.

The first section focuses on adolescent moral reasoning and development. As a member of a society, it is important to have morals and do what is right. But, what is considered right and what is considered wrong? Can the degree of morals a person has be evaluated objectively? Can people truly influence the morals of others? The research in this section addresses all of these questions. First, the definition of morals is discussed. Then theories regarding moral development are explained. These theories include the concept of prototypes and the stages theories of Kohlberg and Gilligan (Hardy, Walker, Olsen, Skalski, & Basinger, 2011; Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010).

The second section focuses on the methods that researchers have used to evaluate levels of morality. Next, methods that can promote moral development are described by providing the theory behind them and practical ways to implement them.

The third section focuses on the definition and theoretical foundations of critical literacy. This information clarifies the components of critical literacy so that the strategies and methods used in the study are done in a way that truly corresponds to the fundamentals of the theory. It also helps develop an understanding of how aspects of

other theories correlate with critical literacy. This can be helpful as some of the strategies of the others may be used when implementing critical literacy.

The fourth section discusses research regarding the implementation of critical literacy in a middle school setting. Different strategies, methods, and activities that can be used to implement critical literacy are shared. Guidelines for selecting texts are discussed along with lesson frameworks. This section includes all of the essential information needed to begin implementing this approach.

#### What is Moral Development?

The concept of morals and their development has changed over the centuries and can vary between different cultures. Thus, many theories have been developed to explain the development of values in order to help instill them in society's youth and also to better understand the values that people from cultures other than our own may have.

Terms related to this topic are explained in the first part of the section. As the words can be interpreted in multiple ways, each one is discussed rather than defined briefly. The terms that appear in this section are: morals, morality, moral code, moral development, and moral reasoning. After the terms are explained, several theories regarding moral development are presented. The first is in regards to moral prototypes (Hardy et al., 2011). This theory is followed by Kohlberg's stage theory and Gilligan's stage theory (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010; Rachels, 1999). Following the overview of different theories of moral development, ways of assessing the level of morality of adolescents are discussed. Finally, suggestions by researchers to promote moral development in adolescents are presented.

Explanation of terms. According to Merriam-Webster (2015), morals are related to behavior that is considered acceptable or right. However, it is interesting to note that there is a discrepancy between several of the definitions that they provide that has implications for the study. One of the definitions says that moral behavior is what is considered acceptable by most people. In contrast, another definition provided claims that it is based on what an individual person considers acceptable behavior. These differences might cause different interpretations in the analysis of research depending on the definition the researcher decides to use. For example, a researcher might deem a subject's response unethical if it does not coincide with his own values. However, when using a definition that includes society's norms, the analysis might be more objective but will not necessarily take into account the actions of people who go against the accepted moral behavior society and follow their individual values such as the actions of civil rights leaders.

Rachels (1999) points out that it is not easy to define morality. Many theories exist that attempt to define morality and the most ethical way to think and act. Some of the theories which are sometimes conflicting make it difficult to come up with a clear definition. However, he provides a brief explanation of the concept of morality and defines it as "the effort to guide one's conduct by reason -- that is, to do what there are the best reasons for doing -- while giving equal weight to the interests of each individual who will be affected by one's conduct" (p. 19). This seems to correspond more with the first definition provided by Merriam-Webster (2015) as it takes into account the values of the individual and the needs of others.

How are a person's individual values defined? Rachels (1999) explains that many people have their own form of a moral code. It is their way of deciding what is right and wrong. Before they make a decision regarding how to respond to a personal dilemma, the individual refers back to the code. An example of this is that if someone has a justice-based moral code, their decisions will be based on what they decide is the most just. If they have a caring-based code, their decisions will be based more on emotions and providing care for another person. While it might seem that the end results of either codes would be the same, it is not always the case. Rachels (1999) discusses an example given by Annette Baier (1995) in which she contrasts parents who follow a code that is based on obligation to parents who value caring. If a parent is focused on obligation, then they will treat parenting as a duty. Baier argues that parents should not view their job as solely a duty and that loving parents act upon other motivations such as caring. If a child realizes that his parents are only acting according to duty, he might feel unloved and resent them.

Several theories attempt to explain how a person develops morals and the concept of what is ethical. While theories vary in terms of what moral or principle they emphasize, they all suggest that morality improves as people age. According to the stage theories of development (Hart & Carlo, 2005; Kohlberg, 1975), this is because people become exposed to more moral problems as they get older and are required to evaluate and adjust their beliefs. The moral-person prototypes researchers (Hardy et al., 2011), however, believe that this development could be due to the fact that as people get older they are able to develop a better understanding of ideal behavior and values as they are

able to observe more people and evaluate them. As a result, they begin to adopt the morals and behaviors of role models.

Moral-person prototypes. Hardy et al. (2011) posited that moral development can best be understood by researching the moral person prototypes of adolescents. These prototypes are a representation of an individual's concept of moral maturity that is developed by consolidating the characteristics and qualities of people that they view as having strong morals. They also believed that these prototypes can be analyzed to determine the morals and values of individual adolescents and adolescents in general.

The research conducted by Hardy et al. (2011) consisted of three studies to determine what values adolescents had at different age groups and how they compared with one another. In the first study, the adolescents listed traits that they felt described a highly moral person which were then consolidated based on synonyms or similar traits such as generous and charitable. The most common traits listed by early adolescents were: kind, respectful, nice, caring, and honest. The most common traits listed by the late adolescents were: honest, trustworthy, kind, respectful, and loyal. While there is an overlap in some of the traits that were listed as most common for each age group, there was a discrepancy in the number of times traits appeared on the lists for each group. The traits listed by the late adolescents appeared twice as many times on their lists as did the traits listed by the early adolescents did on their lists. The researchers believed that although language development might have had something to do with the longer lists for the late adolescents, the true cause was most likely that they had access to more moral persons and were able to develop a more complex schema as a result.

The consolidated list of 106 traits from the first study by Hardy et al. (2011) was used in the second. In this study, adolescents had to rank the traits in terms of how much they felt each one described a moral person. The researchers identified 50 traits that each age group put as the most important. The analysis showed that there was an overlap of 80% of traits that both the early and late adolescents found as important. The differences with the other traits were that the early adolescents valued traits related to compliance and positivity, whereas the late adolescents seemed to find justice and caring as more important.

For the third study, Hardy et al. (2011) used the top 50 traits identified by the participants in the second study. They had to sort the traits into categories that they decided on. The early adolescents sorted the traits into four main categories: knows/chooses the right, has integrity, honest, and loving-caring. The older adolescents used all of these categories, but also added the category of virtuous. For both age groups, honesty was seen as the most important. However, the older adolescents found it even more so. Integrity came in second for both age groups.

The results of the studies led Hardy et al. (2011) to conclude that morals do develop over time. Their studies, along with research conducted on adults in previous studies by Lapsley and Lasky (2001), showed that as people age they are able to come up with more traits to describe a moral person. Furthermore, they are more capable of distinguishing between the different traits.

An analysis of a person's or group's moral prototypes can be beneficial as it may be an indicator of future moral action. If a person feels invested in the prototype and ties



it to his own identity, he will be more likely to behave in a moral manner that matches the prototype (Hardy et al., 2011). For example, if a person is in a dilemma and is unsure of how to act, he will think of a person who exhibits ideals that he respects and consider what that person would do if placed in the same situation. The “W.W.J.D?” (What Would Jesus Do?) (Habben, 2001) trend in the 1990s would be another example of the use of prototypes to influence the behavior and values of adolescents by having them recall a moralistic figure.

What is considered to be positive moral prototypes all depends on what people follow as a moral code, in other words, what value they think is the most important. The two most popular stage theories of moral development have a lot of similarities, but are centered on two different morals or principles.

Kohlberg’s stage theory. Lawrence Kohlberg is a familiar name to many educators, psychologists, and sociologists due to his theory concerning the moral development of people. His theory was created after studying the theories of John Dewey and Jean Piaget (Kohlberg, 1975).

Dewey (1939) developed his theory using a cognitive development approach with the aim of making it easier for teachers to provide moral guidance to students. Basically, he believed that improving a student’s ability to reason would result in an improvement in the student’s morals. The levels in Dewey’s theory in ascending order were: pre-moral/preconventional, conventional, and autonomous (Dewey, 1939; Kohlberg 1975). In the pre-moral or preconventional level, motivation for moral decisions is solely based on biological and social impulses. People do good things because it makes them

feel good and avoid bad things because they make them feel bad. In the conventional level, people accept the moral standards of their group without question. Dewey's final level, the autonomous level, is characterized by reflection and doing what is best, regardless of what others may think or the difficulty of the situation.

The concept of stages of moral development was also studied by Piaget (Kohlberg, 1975). He worked on defining moral stages through interviews and observations of children. His levels were heteronomous and autonomous. The heteronomous level was characterized by children following the rules of adults without question. Piaget called this "moral constraint" as the adults constrained children from making immoral choices. This level is also the beginning of the morality of right and duty as children begin to do things because they believe it is "right" as it is what the adults want and it is their duty to listen to the adults. In the autonomous level, children realize that rules can sometimes be broken depending on the situation. Piaget also believed that a child's ability to reason correlates with moral development and that children play an active rather than a passive part which was very different than other theories that suggested that moral development is solely a result of the direct teaching from adults. He believed that the ability to reason was directly related to moral behavior because people would be able to think about the consequences and implications of their actions and choices before making them.

In 1955, Kohlberg began his attempts to validate the stages developed by Piaget. His work started by examining longitudinal data and looking at cross-cultural data (Kohlberg, 1975) by positing a moral problem to his subjects and analyzing the reasoning

behind their choices. Kohlberg's observations and research resulted in his development of a stage theory that consisted of three levels with two stages for each (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010) (see Figure 1: Kohlberg's model of moral development). It is a modified version of Piaget's model as there are similarities between Piaget's levels and Kohlberg's levels. The main difference is that Kohlberg also split up the levels into stages which makes it easier to determine how much a person might have developed morally.

Levels	Stages
I. Preconventional	1. Punishment and Obedience Orientation
	2. Instrumental-Relativist Orientation
II. Conventional	3. Interpersonal Concordance "Good Boy - Nice Girl" Orientation
	4. Law and Order Orientation
III. Post-conventional/Autonomous	5. Social Contract Legalistic Orientation
	6. Universal-Ethical-Principle Orientation

*Figure 1:* Kohlberg's model of moral development. Adapted from Kakkori & Huttunen (2010).

The first level in Kohlberg's theory is the pre-conventional level and is where most children from birth to 9 are in their development. Kohlberg (1975) explains that children in this level do not have a moral code and their actions are based on what they think will happen to themselves. This level consists of two stages. The first stage centers on obedience and punishment. Children behave in the way adults want them to in order to

avoid punishment. During the second stage, instrumental-relativist orientation, children begin to act in a way that will benefit themselves.

The second level is conventional and is where most adolescents and adults are in their development. Kakkori and Huttunen (2010) explain that people in this level begin to adopt the values of role models and base their behavior on societal norm. A key difference between the preconventional level and the conventional level is the motivation for actions. While at the preconventional level, children act to either avoid punishment or to obtain a reward. At the conventional level, they follow the norms because they feel that it is right, not because of any regards to the personal consequences of the decision. The third stage, interpersonal concordance or good boy-nice girl orientation, is centered on relationships. Children follow expectations and act in a way that they feel pleases others. The fourth stage, law and order orientation, is centered on social order. Children follow the rules because it is their duty. They have respect for authority and believe in maintaining the social order.

The third level is post-conventional and is where only a minority of adults are, and typically nobody under their 30s. Rachels (1999) explains that people in this level base their judgment on their own principles. The principles are chosen by individuals and don't necessarily go along with what they have been told by authority figures. In other words, people at this stage develop their own principles. The fifth stage, social-contract or legalistic orientation, is centered on the acknowledgement of individual rights. People at this stage realize that sometimes laws should be broken in cases where they are interfering with individual rights. The sixth stage, universal-ethical-principle orientation,

is centered on universal principles. People in this stage believe that their ideas of what is right should apply to everyone and are not worried about the consequences of taking action to stand up for what they think is right (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010). Principles focused on justice, reciprocity, equality, and respect for humans as individual persons are prominent.

The selection of principles mentioned in the highest stage was not random. Instead, they were a result of Immanuel Kant's influence on Kohlberg (Kohlberg, 1975). Although Kant died in 1804, long before Kohlberg was born, his theories regarding morals led to Kohlberg's decision regarding the development of an ideal moral code. One aspect of Kant's theory that Kohlberg mentions specifically as influencing his stage theory of moral development is Kant's Categorical Imperative. Rachels (1999) defines the Categorical Imperative as: "Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law" (p. 124). For example, if you believe in the principle of honesty, you should always act upon it. If you do not feel that all people should use honesty all the time, then the principle needs to be modified by adding a qualifier to show that people should always be honest unless they are in a certain situation and might need to lie to save a person's life. Kohlberg (1975) saw justice as a universal principle and made it fundamental in his theory. In fact, he explains that at each stage there is a concern for justice (Kohlberg, 1975) (See Figure 2: Impact of justice on Kohlberg's stages).

Kohlberg's theory was very influential in the field of moral philosophy, but he also had critics. One of them, Carol Gilligan, went on to develop her own theory that was similar to Kohlberg's but with a few distinct differences.

Stage	Connection to Justice
1. Punishment-and-Obedience	Justice is seen as an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.
2. Instrumental-Relativist	Justice is seen as exchanging favors and goods equally.
3. Interpersonal Concordance	Justice is seen as treating people as they like according to standard rules.
4. Law and Order	Justice is seen as treating people as they like according to standard rules.
5. Social-Contract	All rules and laws are seen as a social contract between the government and the people to protect equal rights.
6. Universal-Ethical-Principle	Personally chosen moral principles are principles of justice.

*Figure 2: Impact of justice on Kohlberg's stages. Adapted from Kohlberg (1975).*

Gilligan's stage theory. Carol Gilligan is a feminist who taught in Harvard's School of Education during the time that Kohlberg was also a professor there (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010). While at Harvard she also helped Kohlberg conduct his research concerning moral development. Her observations and experience in assisting in his studies lead to the development of another theory regarding morals and ethics.

While Gilligan was on Kohlberg's research team, she had some concerns. She was bothered by the fact that all of the participants were white males (Rachels, 1999). She also disagreed with the research because it did not take into consideration the value of caring. Gilligan believed that women valued caring more than justice, so Kohlberg's

model that focused on justice as the ideal principle was biased against women. She argued that when girls are given the same scenarios and questions, their responses seem to indicate that they are less morally developed than their male peers when really they were just as developed if the principle of caring was taken into account rather than justice.

A case of this disparity happened when analyzing the results of two 11-year-olds, one female and one male to Heinz's dilemma (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010; Rachels, 1999). Kohlberg's Heinz dilemma involves the story of a man whose wife is dying. Her disease is treatable, but Heinz cannot afford it and the druggist will not reduce the price. Participants are asked whether or not Heinz should steal the medication. Jake, the boy described earlier, thought that Heinz should steal the medication because a human life is more important than money. Amy, the girl described earlier, responded that Heinz should take out a loan or come up with some plan with the druggist. She also explains that if Heinz stole the drug, he would be put in jail and then he would not be able to look after his sick wife. Since her response indicates that she values relationships most as she thinks that Heinz and the druggist need to work it out, her response would place her at a stage 2 on Kohlberg's model (see Figure 1: Kohlberg's model of moral development). However, Jake's response indicated impersonal principles that are independent of relationships, which would result in his placement as stage 4 on Kohlberg's model.

After noticing trends in data showing that girls seemed inferior in terms of moral development, Gilligan theorized that perhaps the girls simply gravitated toward a principle other than justice (Jorgenson, 2006; Rachels, 1999). She did believe that men

and women used both justice and care types of reasoning, but women were more prone to caring and men to justice. This led to her development of a different model for moral development that focuses on the principle of caring. Her model has three levels and two transitional periods.

Kakkori and Huttunen (2010) explain that the first level, caring for self, is centered on the desire to survive. The person only cares about himself. Decisions and actions are based on what the individual feels is in his best interest. When people begin to realize the value in helping others, instead of just themselves, they transition into the next level.

The second level, caring for others, is centered on self-sacrifice. Kakkori & Huttunen (2010) explain that in this level the person places others before himself. Although self-sacrifice is more admirable than selfishness, it can lead to burnout. When people begin to realize that it is unhealthy to only care about others, they transition into the next and last level in Gilligan's stages of moral development.

In the last level, understanding the connection between other and self, people lean towards self-sacrifice, but also acknowledge their own needs (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010). They are able to balance both their needs and the needs of others. They are also able to determine when it is appropriate to choose each one.

Although Gilligan disagreed with some aspects of Kohlberg's stages of development, she did not want to replace it. In fact, Jorgenson (2006) explains, she had respect for Kohlberg and believed in the progression of moral development too. She also believed that there was a correlation in a person's cognitive ability and his moral



reasoning. Gilligan's intent was to supplement Kohlberg's framework (Jorgenson, 2006; Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010). Figure 3 shows the correlation between the stages in Kohlberg's and Gilligan's models. Phase I represents the lowest level of moral development, phase II represents the middle range of moral development, and phase III represents the highest level of moral development.

Phase	Lawrence Kohlberg	Carol Gilligan's Supplement
I	Pre-conventional moral consciousness (Stages 1-2)	Caring for self (Transition I: From caring for self to responsibility to others)
II	Conventional moral consciousness (Stages 3-4)	Caring for others (Transition II: From inequality to caring for self and others)
III	Post-Conventional moral consciousness (Stages 5-6)	Understanding interconnection between other and self. Care becomes the self-chosen principle. No one should be hurt.

*Figure 3: Kohlberg and Gilligan correlation. Adapted from Kakkori & Huttunen (2010).*

The relationship between the frameworks makes sense. As Kakkori & Huttunen (2010) explain, in phase I, the corresponding stages for Kohlberg and Gilligan focus on how moral decisions are based on the person's desire to fulfill their own needs or avoid punishment. In phase II, the corresponding stages for Kohlberg and Gilligan focus on wanting to please others. Phase III focuses on owning the principle as one's own. This means that if Kohlberg's model is used, a person will base all of his actions on justice.

Decisions will not be made based on individual or society's wants, but on what is just. If the Gilligan model is used, the person would own the principle of caring as their own and base all of their actions on the desire to be caring.

Kohlberg's and Gilligan's theories (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010), along with the theory of prototypes (Hardy et al., 2011), are all helpful in understanding where our students are developmentally in terms of morals. We also have an idea of what their morals might have been like before and how they may develop in the future. However, in order to determine the moral levels of a specific student, there needs to be some sort of assessment.

#### How is Moral Development Assessed and Promoted?

Because morals differ from person to person depending on life experiences, cultural values, etc (Rachels, 1999) they can be difficult to assess. However, Kohlberg and Gilligan were able to create a method of assessing moral development (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010) using moral dilemmas. Surveys are another option (Malti et al., 2013). Once morals are assessed, parents and teachers might want to encourage further moral development in an adolescent. Kohlberg (1975) and Ostrovsky et al. (1992) provide some methods that can be implemented to promote the moral development of adolescents.

Methods of assessing morality. Even with a framework such as Kohlberg's or Gilligan's (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010), the level of morality of a person can be difficult to determine. Researchers may have their own biases and believe that one value is more important than another. However, several methods of assessment have been used to get a general idea of a person's level of moral development. One is to provide the participant

with a moral dilemma and analyze the reasoning evident in the response (Kohlberg, 1975; Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010). Another common method is to administer surveys to determine desired morals and common behavior (Eisenberg, 2000; Malti, Keller, & Buchmann, 2013). As with assessments in any subject or field, each one has its strengths and weaknesses.

Moral dilemmas are commonly used by researchers who believe in the work of Kohlberg or in the concept of cognitive moral development (Rachels, 1999; Turiel, 1974). This means that they emphasize moral reasoning over actions in determining the morality of participants. Moral dilemmas are short scenarios in which participants are asked what the character should do and explain their reasoning.

The most popular dilemma used is the Heinz dilemma mentioned earlier. Participants are asked whether or not Heinz should have stolen the medicine. The responses are evaluated based on the reasoning (Kohlberg, 1975; Turiel, 1977). Kohlberg developed a system of analyzing the responses objectively. This helped eliminate any biases the researcher might have. However, Kohlberg's use of dilemmas and the guide for analysis has received some criticism.

One issue with using the dilemmas developed by Kohlberg is that the main character in each scenario is male (Kohlberg, 1975; Malti et al., 2013). This can create a gender bias as female participants might have a tougher time putting themselves in the character's shoes. Yet, this potential pitfall can be avoided relatively easily. For example, Malti et al. modified the dilemmas so that the gender for each matched the gender of the participant it would be administered to.

Another issue that may arise when using dilemmas to determine the level of moral development of participants is that the analysis of responses might be biased depending on the researcher's emphasis on justice or caring (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010). As in the case mentioned earlier with Jake's and Amy's responses to the Heinz dilemma, Amy was shown as having a lower stage of development as John using only Kohlberg's framework (Rachels, 1999). However, if Amy's response was analyzed from the perspective of the ethic of care, her stage would be equivalent to Jake's. Understanding the commonalities between Gilligan's and Kohlberg's models can help prevent errors or bias in analyzing responses.

Surveys are another method used for assessing a person's morals (Malti et al., 2013). Participants assess their own actions or parents score the actions of their children. The surveys are used to gather information on the actions and values of participants and also how they feel after making certain decisions. Questions might ask participants to rank a list of common values based on what they think is most important. Questions might also ask participants how often they perform actions that are problem behaviors or moral behaviors. Additionally, participants may be asked how they feel after committing a moral or immoral act (Eisenberg, 2000).

Although this type of data can be convenient, Eisenberg (2000) has expressed concern about the accuracy because parents and children might try to make themselves appear to be more moralistic than they really are. However, Hart and Carlo (2005) argue that self-report measures, such as surveys, are "often valid and reliable indicators of attitudes, behavior, beliefs, and other psychological attributes" (p. 229). They explain that

this is the most useful method for collecting data on adolescents, as it will be difficult to gather valid data on adolescents through observation due to their tendency to act differently when adults are not around.

Moral development is not assessed for the sake of assessment. Sometimes it is used to determine if some morals, such as justice, are truly universal and valued to the same degree by all cultures (Rachels, 1999). It can also be used to determine the effectiveness of character education programs or practices (Narvaez & Lapsley, 2008). The influence of television on the morals of children has also been assessed (Attick, 2007). All of these, plus others, have been researched to determine what are the most widely believed morals around the world and what the best way is to get our children to the principled stage of development.

Methods to promote moral development. Many researchers (Kohlberg, 1975; Turiel 1977) agree that the best way to promote moral development is to give children and adolescents a dilemma that cannot be easily solved with their current system of morals. In theory, the dilemma will throw them off and they will be forced to modify their beliefs and develop to a higher level of moral development. The students can share their reasoning as to what would be the best action to solve the dilemma and a discussion would ensue. This discussion and exposure to other forms of reasoning would force students to reflect and analyze their own reasoning. This reflection and analysis might result in a student's dissatisfaction with his current level and promote his transition to the next. People transition to a higher level of morality when their current dilemmas cannot be resolved adequately with reasoning related to the current stage. This requires people to

reflect and reconsider their morals so that they reach a higher level (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010).

With Kohlberg's (1975) approach to promoting moral development, a teacher is allowed to share her opinion. However, it is only presented as one of several opinions rather than authoritatively. The students will also share their opinions. As the opinions of the students will inevitably vary as they will be at different stages of moral development, students will be exposed to the reasoning from the stage that is the next highest of their own which will promote transition and growth. While Kohlberg believes that the sharing of different opinions and logic is valuable and necessary, he also stresses the importance of teaching students that some judgments are more adequate than others. This means that all students should be encouraged to share their reasoning, but also be taught how to evaluate their logic and the logic of others.

Kohlberg (1975) did not believe teachers should provide direct instruction regarding values. Instead, he believed that teachers should promote moral development by encouraging students to analyze and explain their reasoning. Kohlberg believed that there was a correlation between cognitive ability and moral development (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010; Woolfolk, 2008). As mentioned previously, he was influenced heavily by Piaget. Piaget's model for cognitive development measured ability based on the degree of reasoning displayed by the person (Piaget, 1997). By improving cognitive ability, Kohlberg (1975) proposed, teachers would improve the ability of students to use reason to solve moral dilemmas which would lead to a stronger understanding of morals.

Kohlberg (1975) found that there was a 30% correlation between the level of a person's moral development using his model and the level of cognitive development using Piaget's model. Kohlberg believed that this was significant. He argued that they must be connected because a person cannot have a high degree of moral development without being able to reason well. His belief was supported by the fact that his participants did not obtain a moral level higher than the associated cognitive level. Thus, by promoting the ability of our students to use reasoning for any purpose, we will be promoting their ability to reason when placed in a moral dilemma.

Kohlberg also pointed out that a person's stage of moral development does not guarantee that his actions will correspond. While a person's actions usually are at their stage of development, a person occasionally acts in a way expected of a person at lower stage. Kohlberg believed that this could be due to several variables including complexity of the situation, emotions, motivation, pressure, and self-control (1975). This information has led some researchers to believe that people can regress in their level of moral development. However, Kohlberg (1975) and Turiel (1977) argued that although the actions might suggest slight regression, the person's level has not changed as proven through Kohlberg's longitudinal study. Once a person reaches a stage, the change is irreversible. The actions are a result of other variables or a person might be in the process of transitioning to a higher stage.

While Kohlberg (1975) saw success with using the discussion of moral dilemmas, there was not much action encouraged of students beyond discussion and restoring justice in the classroom setting. A focus on justice in a classroom setting might

make it difficult for students to transfer their developing morals and moral reasoning beyond the classroom (Ostrovsky, Parr, & Gradel, 1992).

Ostrovsky et al. (1992) suggest that students should not only discuss moral dilemmas but also participate in service-learning. In service-learning, students develop through participating actively in a service that supports the community, is coordinated with a school, helps foster civic responsibility, is integrated and enhances the academic curriculum, and allows time to reflect on the experience (Billig, 2000). By being involved with service learning, students will develop a sense of social interest. Adler (1939) believed that it was essential for people to develop social interest. If a person does not have a sense of social interest and concern for others, his family, work, and friendships will inevitably suffer and lead to his own unhappiness (Crandall, 1980). As Adler believed that people strive for perfection and fulfillment, they will receive pleasure from a sense of social interest as it will also positively influence other aspects of their lives (Adler, 1939). The increased awareness of social interest and the pleasure received from it will help students develop an ability to consider the care of others when using moral reasoning (Ostrovsky et al., 1992)

Kaye (2010) identified five stages of service-learning that show how students turn their ideas into action. Since quality service-learning should be integrated with the core curriculum (Billig, 2000), the first stage begins after students have learned the academic material. This will allow students to apply their knowledge to help others.

The first stage is investigation (Kaye, 2010). In this stage students find out the needs of the community through surveys, observations, and other means. Students also



assess their own skills and interests. This is important because students need to be able to identify their passions in order to use their related skills to create change (Wagner, 2012). After investigation, the next stage is preparation and planning. Students determine what they will do to meet the needs of the community, estimate costs, assign duties, and develop a plan for monitoring progress. The planning process helps build responsibility in students (Billig, 2000). The third stage is action and consists of the action being done to meet the needs of the community. The action can take a variety of forms (Grote, 2009). It could be anything from creating a display at the library to increase awareness of an issue to holding a carnival to collect money to alleviate a community member's medical expenses. The fourth stage is reflection. In this stage, students reflect on the experience. They consider their actions, their impacts, and what worked and what didn't (Kaye, 2010). Lastly, the final stage is demonstration/celebration. In this stage, students show evidence of their experience and learning.

While Kohlberg (1975) and Kaye (2010) were able to develop strategies to improve moral development, the amount of accountability teachers have today to make sure that all of their students achieve the standards can make it difficult to find the time to implement their techniques. However, some of their ideas are also present in critical literacy strategies. By implementing critical literacy it might be possible for English teachers to teach the standards and promote the moral development and reasoning of adolescents.

### What is Critical Literacy?

In order to conduct a study involving critical literacy, it is essential to have a firm understanding of what the theory consists of and how it was developed. As critical literacy is one of the newer theories regarding literacy, it is not surprising that there are multiple perspectives on it and not everyone interprets the theory the same way. In order to prevent any misunderstanding or misconception about I how I use the terms later in this study, I define critical literacy in this section. Afterwards, I discuss the theoretical foundation.

Definition of critical literacy. Critical literacy is an approach to teaching reading that is centered on the idea of readers being active participants in the reading process and are encouraged to question, examine, or dispute the power relationship between authors and readers. Not only is critical literacy concerned with the issue of power, it also promotes reflection, transformation, and action (Freire, 1970; DeVogd & McLaughlin, 2004b). Reflection, transformation, and action also appear to be steps involved with the promotion of moral development as a person must reflect when she cannot solve a moral dilemma (Turiel, 1977). When a person has to consider new ways of solving moral dilemmas, they begin to transfer to a higher level of development.

According to McLaughlin and DeVogd (2004), there are four main principles of critical literacy. The first principle is that critical literacy focuses on balancing an author's power through reflection, transformation, and action. This means that authors have power as it is their opinions and attitudes that are conveyed in the text; however, readers also have power. By reflecting on what is in the text and what may be left out,

readers are using their power. Through reflection, readers might become aware of issues with the text and missing voices. They then have the power to transform the text by adding a missing voice or changing the title. Finally, readers can then go even further by taking action to address the issue that is related to a misrepresentation of a culture or issue.

Those who follow critical literacy have agreed that simply reflecting on the text is not enough. Janks (2014) argues that some sort of action should occur after the reflection or analysis such as a project to promote awareness of the issue in the community. Luke and Woods (2009) believe that an analysis should result in action that will help transform social relations. Freire (1970) argued that reflection and action are equally important in order to truly transform society. Without action, reflection will lead to nothing. Without reflection, the action may be misguided. Freire calls the combination of reflection and action to cause transformation praxis.

The second principle provided by McLaughlin and DeVogd (2004a) is that critical literacy focuses on identifying a problem and examining different aspects of it to understand its complexity. When reading critically, readers use problematizing to look for possible problems or questions and consider alternative explanations or solutions. The process allows readers to understand that there are many factors that can contribute to a problem, but there are also multiple ways to help solve the problem. This can help students understand that major issues do not have quick fixes, but they can still take action to help alleviate the problem.

The third principle is that critical literacy strategies should be selected or changed to fit the situation in which they need to be used (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004a). McLaughlin and DeVogd (2004a) explain that different critical literacy strategies can be employed for different texts and purposes. Also, strategies will necessarily be adapted to fit the context in which they are being used. However, it is not only the strategies that are used by students that can be modified. The approach to critical literacy made by teachers may also be adapted to meet the needs of the students, instructional goals, etc.

The fourth principle is that critical literacy challenges common assumptions by examining multiple perspectives (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004a). Critical literacy requires readers to analyze the point of view used in the text and consider any other perspectives that are missing. This allows students to deepen their thinking and develop their understanding of the values and opinions of others.

Critical literacy is relatively new compared to other major theories of literacy (Tracey & Morrow, 2012). However, many of its components are borrowed or similar to those of other theories. Researchers had considered key ideas of the theory earlier, but the work of Freire and major events such as the Civil Rights Movement helped fully develop the theory and call attention to the necessity of its implementation.

Critical literacy's theoretical foundation. Critical literacy began drawing attention after the work of Freire (Tracey & Morrow, 2012). Perhaps the most widely known work of Freire's that was influential in the development of critical literacy is *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. In this book, Freire (1977) shares his personal experiences living in poverty in Brazil and later working with the poor in South America. He explains the struggles that

those who live in poverty face and he provides the necessary steps required in order for members of society to become more equal and for oppression to be eliminated. A common topic in the text is praxis. He defines praxis as the combination of reflection and action. This combination is essential, he argues, for true transformation to occur in society. This concept is connected to McLaughlin and DeVogd's first principle of critical literacy. Although Freire's work helped get the critical literacy movement started, aspects of other theories were combined with his approach towards teaching the oppressed to expand and deepen the concept of critical literacy (Tracey & Morrow, 2012).

Constructivism can also be connected to critical literacy. A constructivist theory specific to literacy is the reader response theory. The reader response theory, also known as the transactional theory, was started by Louise Rosenblatt (Tracey & Morrow, 2012). Rosenblatt argues that each reader brings his own background knowledge to a text which will unavoidably result in the possibility of multiple interpretations of a text. She brought attention to two main types of responses. The first she called efferent responses. Efferent responses are responses that occur after reading something factual. The other, aesthetic response, goes along with reading literature. As the material is different in nature, it can only be expected that their responses contain different types of information. However, there are some similarities between the two. The most noticeable of these is that each one requires readers to be active readers as they are making their own meaning rather than passively accepting the meaning provided by the teacher or another authoritative figure. This concept has a connection to critical literacy because it empowers the readers just as

critical literacy focuses on the power of both readers and authors. Readers are encouraged to construct their own ideas. This can be considered part of the reflection process of Freire's concept of praxis (Freire, 1970).

More and more teachers have begun implementing critical literacy, so tools and information for other teachers are increasing in supply. Teacher researchers (Appleman, 2015; Janks (2014); McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004a) have discovered ways to implement critical literacy effectively in a secondary English classroom and shared their knowledge through the writing of books and articles.

#### How is Critical Literacy Implemented?

Besides giving students an opportunity to analyze the word and the world in order to transform it, critical literacy can also give students an opportunity to express themselves in a way that shows their voices and expertise in a way that test scores cannot (Avila & Moore, 2012). One of the ways in which this happens is through the exposure to diverse voices and perspectives. When this occurs, students are able to shape their own identities and learn the role they have to play in society and in a democracy. And when we allow them to take social action as mentioned above, we give them the tools to help build a "literate and informed democracy" (Groenke, Maples, & Henderson, 2010, p. 30).

This is needed in today's society. With so many texts readily available due to the internet, it is especially important that adolescents learn how to analyze the purpose and message of what they read. By analyzing texts from multiple perspectives, students are able to learn more about the points of view of others and have a deeper understanding of

issues related gender, race, power, and social injustice (Linder, 2006). This knowledge and understanding will help spark the drive for action to promote social justice.

Critical literacy is an approach that can be very beneficial to students, but how can it be implemented? In this section I discuss what researchers have found to work well with the implementation of this approach. First, I discuss different methods and activities that can be used. Although strategies will likely need to be adapted, knowing how others have implemented the approach can serve as a starting point for teachers who are trying it out for the first time. Next, I present information regarding text selection. Then, several lesson frameworks are provided. Finally, possible complications in the implementation of critical literacy are discussed.

Methods and activities. One method that can be used when teaching critical literacy is juxtaposition. With juxtaposition, students read several texts that are connected by theme but present different perspectives. McLaughlin and DeVogd (2004a) suggest that students could read books in literature circles where each group has a different book that focuses on a theme that will be discussed as a class. That way each group gets to know one perspective in depth, but they will also have the opportunity to hear about many others.

There are other activities and strategies that teachers can implement to help students learn how to examine multiple perspectives. One is character perspective charting. In character perspective charting, students examine multiple perspectives using a type of story mapping (Shanahan & Shanahan, 1997). This mapping can be done with two characters simultaneously when students are reading a short selection (See Appendix

K: Character Perspective Chart). However, if longer works are being used such as novels, only one character should be mapped at a time. This activity can be modified by putting students into groups and having each group map a character. Afterwards, they can compare and contrast the characters. Linder (2006) argues that using groups is the best option because it involves more discussion. This allows students to be exposed to more opinions and interpretations.

McLaughlin and Allen (2002) have another activity that can be used to help students learn how to examine multiple perspectives. This activity is Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait. In this strategy, students are given a paper that is divided so that one side is for the Mind Portrait and the other is for the Alternative Mind Portrait. On the Mind Portrait side, students draw the character's head. Inside the drawing, or around it, students write words and phrases that describe what the characters are thinking. Then, students choose a person who has a different perspective on the situation. The students then draw that character's head on the Alternative Mind Portrait side and write descriptions of the characters thoughts, just like they did with the first character. After completing their work, students discuss and share it with one another so that students become aware of even more perspectives.

Alvermann (1991) created a graphic aid that can also help with the examination of multiple perspectives. The Discussion Web requires students to provide support for both sides of an issue, regardless of whether or not they agree with both. This is done in pairs or small groups with support coming from the reading material and from their own ideas. In order for this activity to be implemented effectively in order to maximize its benefits



on student learning, a process has been suggested and is a variation of the think-pair-share activity. First, pre-reading activities should be conducted in order to orientate the reader by helping them access prior knowledge, learn essential vocabulary, and set a purpose for reading. Next, a question should be posed based on the reading. While students read, they will write words and phrases in both the Yes and No columns, making sure that their number of responses are equal in each. Afterwards, two sets of the partners will talk with each other and share their work in order to come up with a conclusion and response to the question. These groups then pick the strongest reason that supports their conclusion. Each group's conclusion and reason is presented to the whole class and a discussion takes place. Finally, students have the opportunity to write their own responses. Linder (2009) points out that there are many ways in which the Discussion Web can be adapted or modified. She developed one herself which she called the Multiple Perspectives Web.

In the Multiple Perspectives Web, Linder (2006) expanded the Discussion Web so that three perspectives were included as opposed to just two. Another difference is that instead of posing a question, a key event in the story is selected to examine from multiple perspectives. After the event is selected, students choose three perspectives to examine it from. For each perspective, students are required to explain the point of view or conflict, and provide a reason. Then, students reach a conclusion about the event.

Problem posing is yet another method that can be used to teach critical literacy. Problem posing is different than alternative texts in that problem posing focuses on one text. Students analyze a text, looking for signs of stereotypes, inequality, etc. It is an

important skill, because the ability of adolescents to, “advocate on behalf of others is compromised if they are not taught to question the veracity of the information before them” (Groenke, Maples, & Henderson, 2010, p. 30). One way that this is done is by having students look at a text from the point of view of a perspective that is absent in the text (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004b). This can be eye-opening for students who have mostly just read books that include a main character with the same perspective as them. This method helps them realize the voices that they may not have heard before or truly acknowledged. Some of the questions that McLaughlin & DeVogd (2004b, p. 41) suggest are:

- Who is in the text/picture/situation? Who is missing?
- Whose voices are represented? Whose voices are represented? Whose voices are marginalized or discounted?
- What are the intentions of the author? What does the author want the reader to think?
- What would an alternative text/picture/situation say?
- How can the reader use this information to promote equity?

Appleman (2015) provides another approach that is centered on explicitly teaching literacy theory in order to help students develop the skills to analyze texts critically in order to challenge the ideology of the author and themselves. Different theories are presented as different lenses students can read with so that they gain a better understanding of how a text can be seen and interpreted differently. Some theories that Appleman explains as useful for this task and suitable for secondary students are:

archetypal, biographical, formalism, feminist, Marxist, psychological, postcolonial, and new historicism. This approach can be useful for students who have a hard time identifying missing or marginalized perspectives in a text because lenses can be assigned or suggested that represent the silenced or discounted voices.

One more method is the development of alternative texts. In this method, McLaughlin and DeVogd (2004a) explain, students create a text that represents a perspective that was either absent from what was read or misrepresented. For example, if students read a text about the civil war from a confederate soldier's perspective, they would then write a text from an alternative perspective such as that of a slave, a union soldier, or one of the soldier's family members. This activity works well in conjunction with problem posing as problem posing brings awareness to which perspectives are missing or misrepresented.

Text selection. All of the strategies and methods cannot work in isolation. In order for them to truly be effective, quality texts must be selected to use while teaching the methods and strategies. Groenke, Maples, and Henderson (2010) suggest that secondary teachers include young adult literature in the curriculum. A lot of young adult literature addresses societal issues that matter to adolescents. This means that students will be able to read about a situation they might have dealt with, such as an eating disorder.

If problem posing was implemented with a young adult text, students could think about the perspectives of all of the people involved with the situation. So, if the eating disorder example was used, students could think about the perspectives of an anorexic teen's parents, teachers, friends, peers, and herself. By reading about a relevant issue and

looking at it from multiple viewpoints, adolescents would get a better understanding of the complexity of the issue and would be better prepared to brainstorm possibilities of tackling the issue if it came up in their lives. Also, by doing this, “we can encourage our students to notice and stand up to injustice, question the stories they hear about others, and demand new stories when necessary” (Groenke, Maples, & Henderson, 2010, p. 30). In other words, by discussing young adult literature that addresses real societal issues, we are using critical literacy methods such as problem posing and taking action.

It is also important to include texts that represent multiple cultures in a curriculum. Ideally these texts should be written by an author who has had the same cultural experiences as the main character. This helps ensure that the texts are authentic and prevent the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes. Groenke, Maples, and Henderson (2010) explain that multicultural texts allow students to, “hear the voices of others” (p. 30). This develops an understanding in adolescents that they are part of a global society and that they can be involved with what happens beyond their hometown.

Instructional frameworks. After identifying a strategy that would be most beneficial to students and a text that would work well with it, teachers new to critical literacy will want to know how to conduct a critical literacy lesson. McLaughlin & DeVogd (2004b) present two different lesson frameworks. The first one is meant to be used to teach specific strategy. The second can be used when students are comfortable with several critical literacy strategies.

McLaughlin and DeVogd’s (2004b) framework that is used for the teaching of a specific strategy consists of five steps. Teachers start by explaining the strategy and how

it works. Then they demonstrate how to use the strategy by doing a think-aloud. Next, they guide students in small groups or partners. Afterwards, students practice individually or with partners. Finally, students reflect on how the strategy helps them think critically.

The second framework provided by McLaughlin & DeVogd (2004b) can be used after students have become more comfortable with using various critical literacy strategies. First, teachers engage students' thinking by activating background knowledge and setting a purpose for reading. Then, they guide students' thinking by prompting students as they read and engage in active reading strategies such as taking notes and making connections as they read. Next, teachers extend students' thinking by having students discuss the text critically and take action based on what was read. Finally, teachers reflect on the effectiveness of the lesson in terms of the ability of students to analyze the text critically at the end and their engagement.

### Summary

The literature on topics related to my question concerning the influence of critical literacy on the moral development of adolescents seems to suggest that it is possible to improve the moral development of adolescents by implementing critical literacy. For example, the analysis of texts from multiple perspectives might require students to challenge their preexisting thoughts and opinions. This possible conflict might result in an increased chance of transition to a more advanced level of moral development as Kohlberg (1975) and Turiel (1977) claimed happened when participants were presented with moral dilemmas that could not be solved with their previous thinking.

Not all researchers agree with research methods that involve assessing the level or stage of morality. This is because they do not think that moral development is linear. However, determining the moral stage of students according to Kohlberg's or Gilligan's theories can be useful in getting an idea of overall shifts in the moral development of a group (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010). Anecdotes, observations, and surveys could also be analyzed in conjunction with dilemma responses in order to develop a clearer picture of an individual's morals.

“Adolescence is an impressionable period when individuals are most open to social forces and socialization influences and when their values and worldviews undergo significant formation (Alwin & McCammon, 2003; Wray-Lake, 2010). Identities formed in adolescence are likely to inform values, attitudes, and behaviors throughout life.” It is for this reason that we as teachers need to find a way to influence our students in a positive way as much as possible. By encouraging and building strong, positive traits in adolescence, we are increasing the chances that these behaviors and values will stay with them throughout life.

The next chapter discusses the research methods, setting, and participants that were involved with the study that focused on the questions “In what ways does the implementation of critical literacy impact the moral reasoning of adolescents?” Chapter Four discusses and analyzes the results of the study. Chapter Five serves as a conclusion and presents the implications of this study for teachers and parents. It also includes a discussion of the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Methodology

#### Introduction

Adolescence can be a difficult time for students as they are trying to find themselves. As teachers, we spend many days with our students and end up caring for them a great deal. We want to help them as much as possibly not just in terms of academic learning, but also with social and emotional development. It is also important that we promote their moral development. It is this need of mine to prepare students for life by helping them develop a stronger understanding of themselves and of others that lead to my capstone question, “In what ways does the implementation of critical literacy impact the moral reasoning of adolescents?”

In Chapter Two, Kohlberg’s and Gilligan’s stage theories were discussed (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010; Kohlberg, 1975; Rachels, 1999). Although both theories have their differences, they both share the concept that moral development happens in stages and is linear. Teachers can promote the moral development of students by posing moral dilemmas in class and having students discuss their opinions about the best solution and their reasoning (Kohlberg, 1975). Critical literacy might also help in this area as students could read and consider multiple perspectives regarding a social issue (Appleman, 2015; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004b).

In this chapter, information regarding the research paradigm used for the study is presented along with elements of the design. The setting and participants are also described in order to provide context to the study. Then, an overview of the unit is provided along with the data collection methods and tools used. Afterwards the plans for analyzing the data are discussed. Finally, my plan to ensure that the study meets the requirements of the human subjects committee is shared.

### Research Paradigm

An action research design was used for this study. Action research is a type of research that allows teachers to identify a problem in their own classrooms and experiment with a possible solution to the problem in order to evaluate whether or not it is an effective solution (Mertler, 2013). The process is systematic and consists of four steps (Mills, 2014):

1. Identifying an area of focus
2. Collecting data
3. Analyzing and interpreting the data
4. Developing a plan of action

It is necessary for these steps to be followed in order to ensure that the best solution is identified for what will work best in the classroom. Mertler (2013) points out that teachers often ask advice from those considered experts or go along with what they think is common sense. While this advice might provide a good solution, we cannot assume that it always will. Action research requires the analysis of data collected while attempting a specific solution to determine if it effective. If the analysis shows that it is



not effective, than a plan for adjusting the methods or a plan to attempt another solution is made.

This design was selected because it allows me to recognize a concern in my classroom and explore the effects of an attempt to resolve the issues. My question was developed by what I saw in my own classroom and what I wanted to improve. Because of this, action research made the most sense to me. In addition, this design was selected as it is a form of qualitative research. This allowed me to use a narrative approach when reporting my results rather than focusing on strictly numerical data. It also meant that all of my students could be exposed to the critical literacy approach. If I had used a quantitative design, this would not have been possible because I would have needed a control group (Creswell, 2014).

### Setting

The study was conducted in a small, rural school that serves approximately 300 students in grades 7-12. Ninety-three percent of the students are white, 5% are American Indian, and 37% of the students receive free or reduced lunch. All of the teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators are white. Fifty-seven percent of the teachers have a master's degree. Eighty-eight percent of the teachers have been teaching for more than ten years. The school is public, but encourages religious lessons by allowing students to attend their local churches one hour a week for lessons during the school day.

### Participants

The participants in the study were 41 8th grade students between the ages of 13 and 14. Most of the students are white and have known each other almost all their lives.

Although they can sometimes succumb to peer pressure as is typical for that age group, they each are unique individuals (Woolfolk, 2008). Some of them can't wait to move out of the small town and others look forward to spending their lives farming. Some of them believe that not having their phones during a 50 minute class period is torture and others believe cell phones are pointless.

These outspoken students were split into two sections somewhat based on ability. All students receiving special education services, approximately 20% of the grade, were in one of the sections. This was because the paraprofessional was not available during the other class period. While this did help with differentiation, classroom discussions were not as meaningful as they were in the other class as many students receiving special education services were reluctant to participate.

A small sample of six students was also selected in order to collect focused data. Only six were selected to ensure that the amount of samples was manageable and could be analyzed in-depth. I selected students that met the following criteria:

- Average or above average reading level
- Good attendance
- History of completing work on time

I thought it was important for students to have an average or above average reading level as I was afraid that a large amount of support and explanation in assisting struggling readers with comprehension might lead to a bias as interpretations might not have been completely that of the students. It was also important that these participants

had good attendance and completed work in a timely manner so that missed instruction and missing work samples would not impact the data collection and analysis.

Case study participant #1 - David. David is a strong reader, but does not read for pleasure often. His strength is in nonfiction, but he usually reads fiction instead. Although he typically comprehends the text well and brings attention to specific aspects, his written work does not always reflect the comprehension. This is because David likes to discuss his thoughts and does not like to take a break from the discussion to put his thoughts down clearly on his paper.

The books David reads are often violent. He talks about the violence in his self-selected books in disbelief, but his discussions in class often demonstrate that he thinks goriness is humorous. He often needs prompting to be more appropriate with this language in class. He seems to make these comments to spark a reaction from classmates. While this can be problematic, his love of discussion can lead to some wonderful insights in class when it is channeled through a different avenue such as history, engineering, or the contributions to society his ancestors have made.

Case study participant #2 - Luke. Luke excels academically and scored an exceeds on the reading MCA last year. He reads a lot, but it seems that he reads out of obligation instead of for pleasure. He prefers math and science instead. He is typically respectful, a leader in the classroom, and a contributor to discussions. His dad is his role model and Luke tries to emulate his behavior. Although he earns high grades, he becomes frustrated if he does not perform well on a project or a test. Rather than holding himself accountable or seeking help, Luke blames others or comes up with excuses. These

reactions have been a concern as they interfere with academic growth and negatively impact the classroom environment.

Case study participant #3 - Mark. Mark is an avid reader and scored an exceeds on the reading MCA last year. He takes school seriously and pushes himself to achieve top scores and performance. While Mark's focus on academics is a valuable trait in a student, I am sometimes concerned that he is too focused on grades. If he does poorly on an assignment, he becomes visibly saddened. Although he does not blame others when this happens, I am worried that he is being too harsh on himself. His classmates look up to him as he treats everyone with respect and works well with anyone.

Case study participant #4 - Molly. Molly passed the reading MCA test last year. Her reading comprehension is good, but she has little motivation to read. Often she tries to do her work as quickly as possible just to be done. She prefers tasks that have one right answer. This makes her feel more secure, as she doubts herself when there might be more than one right answer or conclusion. Molly tends to earn high grades, although she does not put forth as much effort as she could. She is a leader and her peers, especially her friends, listen to her and agree with what she says. She is not afraid to say what she thinks. Sometimes this is an issue as she occasionally is rude to classmates.

Case study participant #5 -Laura. Laura is very goal oriented in academics and athletics. Although she is a strong reader, she has little interest in reading. Both of her parents work in math related fields and she seems to be interested more in math and science as well. Laura is respectful at all times and helps her classmates stay on track and be respectful. She does not contribute to class discussions often as she feels more

comfortable discussing issues with small groups that include her friends. However, Laura is always willing to help a peer who needs extra support.

Case study participant #6 -Amber. Amber does well in school and is proud of her grades. She has a strong reading comprehension, but like many of the other participants, does not find much pleasure in reading. Amber prefers subjects where concepts and ideas can be proven more easily. Amber is a leader and contributes to discussions. She is respectful and encourages her classmates to be respectful as well. The only time she strays from this is if she does poorly on a project or a test. When this happens, she tends to get frustrated and blames other people or circumstances. However, she always holds herself accountable in the end and works hard to improve her weaknesses.

#### Human Subjects Approval

All students received a curriculum that is based on critical literacy. However, they were not all required to participate in the dilemmas and collection of observation notes. Letters were sent to parents (see Appendix A: Consent form) informing them of the study and requesting permission to collect data on their child. Data was only collected for a student for the study if parental permission was obtained. Besides parental permission, permission from the principal, the school board, and the university's human research committee was obtained before the study began.

In order to ensure that students felt comfortable with being honest, I assigned them random numbers to use instead of their real names. An assistant kept the list in case a student forgot his or her number, so I had no personal knowledge of which student was assigned to which number. Students and parents could obtain their individual data if they

wished. If they wanted it, I asked my assistant for the student's number to ensure that they got their own materials.

### Unit Rationale and Overview

I wanted to create a unit that would involve critical literacy methods and allow students opportunities to discuss moral dilemmas and how they might solve them. By the end of the unit, I wanted students to be able to analyze and question an author's representation of different perspectives and events. I also wanted them to be able to consider different perspectives when deciding how to solve a moral dilemma. In order for this unit to be successful, I thought that I needed to start off by selecting the right text (Groenke et al., 2010).

When I began thinking of how I wanted to plan this unit, one text jumped out to me: *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012). The book is a nonfiction narrative about the race to build the atomic bomb during WWII. One aspect of this text that makes it work so well for a critical literacy unit is that it includes multiple perspectives which are juxtaposed such as American scientists, Soviet spies, etc. I also felt that the text was relevant as it mentions the arms race and the amount of nuclear weapons that still exist. Students might have been interested in knowing this as the Iran nuclear deal had been in the news along with nuclear threats from North Korea. In order to guide students to reading critically, I developed the guiding question, "Which is more important, duty or integrity?" Also, I supplemented *Bomb* (2012) with texts that represented additional perspectives (see Appendix E: Text Set).

### Data Collection Methods

As the study had an action research design, qualitative data was collected. The data included dilemmas administered to the entire class. It also included observation notes and work samples. These were only collected from the group of six students.

Pre and post reading questions. All of the 8th grade students were given a moral dilemma that is present in *Bomb* (2012) (see Appendix B: Bomb Unit Pre-Reading Questions, Appendix C: Bomb Unit Post-Reading Questions) and asked to write their responses to the associated questions. Students who received special education services due to a learning disability had the dilemma read to them and dictated their responses. Dilemmas that could be discussed from a justice based and caring based moral system were used in attempt to prevent gender bias (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010; Malti et al., 2013). Information about the nationalities associated with the moral dilemmas was not included in the pre-reading questions as I wanted students to consider the issue a possibility in any country. Specific names and places were used in the post reading questions as students would have known the context after reading *Bomb* (2012).

Observation. Observations during lessons were collected throughout the study. These included observations of behavior, reactions to lessons, and student contributions during discussions. These notes were taken using a template to ensure consistency (See Appendix D: Observation Notes). Notes about students were only made for students in the small group.

Work samples. Student work samples were collected from the group of six students during the study. Only work samples that conveyed the participant's values or

morals were collected as reading comprehension was not a focus of this study. The type of work samples collected are explained in more detail in the tools section.

Tools. Multiple methods were used in the implementation of critical literacy. Besides discussion, students completed several written assignments that required them to consider different perspectives represented in *Bomb* (2012) and consider which ones were missing. These tools were administered to all students, but samples will only be used for the six participants in the focus group.

- **Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait** (Appendix F). Students created Mind Portraits/Alternative Mind Portraits (McLaughlin & Allen, 2002). This allowed them to juxtapose the perspectives of two different perspectives that were represented in *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012) or were missing. Students completed this work with partners.
- **Discussion Web** (Appendix G). Students completed a Discussion Web (Alvermann, 1991). This was done to answer the guiding question, “Which is more important, duty or integrity?” Part of it was done individually and it was completed after discussion with a partner. Afterwards it was discussed with the whole class.
- **Multiple Perspectives Web** (Linder, 2006) (Appendix H). At one point in *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012), leading scientists from Germany’s bomb development team are kidnapped by American soldiers. I wanted students to consider this event from multiple perspectives as it would allow them to think about the opinions of scientists working for the Axis powers and compare them to those of the scientists working for the Allies. The Multiple Perspectives Web worked well for this purpose.



- **Problem-Posing Questions** (Appendix I). Although there are many perspectives present in *Bomb* (2012), some are missing. I wanted students to become aware of this, so I had them work with partners to answer Problem-Posing Questions (McLaughlin & DeVood, 2004b).

- **Alternative Text** (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004a). The responses to the Problem-Posing Questions were then used as a starting point to get students thinking about missing voices and how they could represent them. After students identified a missing voice they developed a Multi-Genre Paper (Romano, 2000) (See Appendix J: Multi-Genre Paper). They were allowed to blend a variety of genres in order to create an alternative text that would represent the missing perspective that they identified.

### Data Analysis

The moral reasoning present in student responses to dilemmas was analyzed by considering both Kohlberg's stages and Gilligan's stages of moral development (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010; Rachels, 1999). Trends in the reasoning and morals indicated in the responses were identified by also categorizing responses based on moral traits and gender. These categories were analyzed in terms of reasoning and the number of students whose responses fell in each category (see Appendix Q: Pre and Post Reading Questions Analysis Template). When the post-reading questions were administered, the responses were analyzed in the same way. Then the last results were compared to the first.

Work samples were analyzed based on how students presented different perspectives and the decisions regarding moral dilemmas made by various individuals. Evidence regarding which moral traits students focused on was looked for as well as

whether the student seemed to be focused on the lowest levels of moral development that were based on self, or if a higher level was shown by considering others or consequences besides individual punishment when using moral reasoning.

### Summary

This chapter presented the procedures and methods for the actual study. Since an action research approach was implemented, the study was designed to be conducted in my own classroom to address a concern. The setting of my school was described along with the participants. A variety of data was collected in order to gain a good idea of how critical literacy impacts moral development.

The next chapter describes the design of the curriculum. It also provides an analysis of the results told in a narrative form. Work samples and tables are included to assist in the analysis. The implementation of each critical literacy method is included after the description and analysis of the results. Also, the information gained from the study is synthesized into key findings. Chapter Five presents major learnings from my capstone. It also includes implications and limitations of the study and recommendations for future research. The connections to Hamline University's School of Education's Framework are also explained.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Results

#### Introduction

After reflecting on some of the behavior I have witnessed so far in my teaching career, I wanted to find a way to promote more ethical behavior by enhance the moral development of students. This was also important to me because I want my students to be successful in life and in order for that to happen students need to learn how to think about their actions and consider what moral trait they would be demonstrating before they complete the act. This is important because impulsivity can lead to poor decisions. Research regarding critical literacy provided information that corresponded with recommended methods for promoting the moral development of adolescents. This brought me to my question “In what ways does the implementation of critical literacy impact the moral reasoning of adolescents?”

In Chapter Two I presented research related to moral development and critical literacy. In Chapter Three, I explained the research paradigm I selected for this study, action research. Then, I described the setting and participants, including the members of my focus group: David, Luke, Mark, Molly, Laura, and Amber. Afterwards, I explained my unit rationale and presented a general overview of the unit. The methods used to

collect data and the tools were also described. Following the description of the materials, I discussed my plan for analyzing the data. An explanation of the procedures I took in order to receive permission from the human subjects committee, administration, and parents was also provided.

This chapter describes the design of the curriculum I created for the study. It also explains how components of the curriculum for this unit that focused on critical literacy methods were conducted. The results are presented in chronological order to create a narrative of the process and changes that were observed during the length of the study. The work samples related to the critical literacy tasks are included with a description of how each method was implemented and an analysis of the results. In addition, the implementation of each critical literacy task is evaluated in a reflection sub-section.

### Curriculum Design

The unit for this study lasted approximately seven weeks. This included the introduction to the unit, the reading of *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012), and the reading of supplemental texts (see Appendix E: Text Set). In addition to tasks that involved analyzing the texts, students had also created an alternative text during this time frame (see Appendix J: Multi-Genre Paper).

Reading phase. Multiple reading and writing standards were focused on during this unit. The informational reading standards (Minnesota Department of Education, 2014) that were focused on while reading *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012) and the supplemental texts (see Appendix E: Text Set) were:

- 8.5.3.3 - Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events.
- 8.5.5.5 - Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.
- 8.5.6.6 - Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.
- 8.5.9.9 - Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.

The standards focusing on the connections among individuals, ideas, or events; author's point of view and purpose; and different interpretations of similar evidence were chosen because I felt that they naturally correlated with critical literacy. For example, when answering problem-posing questions (McLaughlin, & DeVogd, 2004b), students consider what perspectives and point of views are given power, and which ones are marginalized. This task would require students to analyze the author's purpose and point of view; identify marginalized voices or conflicting viewpoints and analyze how the author addresses them; and analyze how the author shows the connections between different individuals and the same events or ideas. The standard focusing on text structure was included as it had not been taught yet.

Since there were multiple reading standards that were emphasized during this unit, each of them was reviewed and practiced every week. Some received more attention

than others in terms of instructional days depending on whether or not students had grasped the concepts. A typical week during the reading of *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012) phase for the unit had two days that focused on purpose and point of view and the connections between ideas, events, and people using discussion. One day a week would focus on the same standards using critical literacy tasks described in Chapter Three. Another day would focus on text structure. Fridays were designated for independent reading of self-selected texts. After *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012) and the supplemental texts (see Appendix E: Text Set) were read and analyzed, students created an alternative text.

Writing phase. The standards (Minnesota Department of Education, 2014) that were focused on while developing an alternative text (see Appendix J: Multi-Genre Paper) were:

- 8.5.7.7 - Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums to present a particular topic or idea.
- 8.7.5.5 - With some guidance and support from peers and adults, use a writing process to develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, drafting, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
- 8.7.7.7 - Conduct short research projects to answer a self-generated question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

The standards focusing on the evaluation of mediums, writing process, and questioning were selected as they are all necessary in order for students to complete a

quality multi-genre paper. As the focus was a missing or marginalized perspective, it was important for students to know how to conduct research on the perspective. Students were taught how to develop general questions and more specific questions so that their writing would be accurate and convincing so that the selected perspective was represented judicially.

When students had finished reading *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012) and the supplemental texts (see Appendix E: Text Set), problem posing was reviewed and implemented in order for students to identify a missing or marginalized perspective to explore. Then students conducted research on the perspective they chose to explore. The information gained was used to give voice to the perspective by the development of an alternate text. Freire (1970) believed that it was essential that action occur to right injustices. While the creation of multi-genre papers as alternate texts might not be a major action to right injustices, they still are an action as they give voice to the missing and marginalized voices.

#### Introduction Lesson on Critical Literacy and Moral Development

The study started with my introduction of the concepts of moral development and critical literacy to my students. This was done so that students would be fully aware of what the study would involve. Moral development was explained to the students through the use of a Prezi I created. It focused primarily on Kohlberg's and Gilligan's theories (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010; Kohlberg, 1975). Students were told about the stages of each and how they corresponded with the ability to think critically. The students seemed

interested in the concepts and we discussed different morals such as duty, integrity, and caring. I asked students what value they thought was more important: justice or caring. In the first section, the majority of students chose justice and only one student chose caring. A few students could not choose.

In the second section, the class was split almost evenly between justice, caring, and undecided. I found the differences between the two sections to be interesting. I did not notice any differences between genders in terms of selections which was contradictory to Gilligan's belief that females were more concerned with caring (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010). However, most of the students who were undecided were students who typically demonstrate higher order thinking in class. This seemed to show that the students were aware that different values are given different levels of importance depending on the situation.

After discussing moral development, I explained the concept of critical literacy. Problem-posing questions (see Appendix I: Problem-Posing Questions) were also explained and I told students to think about them as we watched the Hyundai commercial "First Date" (2016) (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004b). In the commercial, a father follows his daughter while she is on a first date. The boy sees the father, but the girl does not. The ad tries to send the message that the car can track your child, so you do not need to worry when they go out. When we discussed the problem-posing questions with this commercial, the female students had a much easier time identifying marginalized and



missing voices and the hidden message. They said the dad was too controlling and should have trusted that his daughter would be able to protect herself.

Next we watched the Doritos commercial “Ultrasound” (2016). In the commercial, a woman is having an ultrasound done and her husband seems to not be too excited about it because he is just eating chips. The nurse is a female so the husband is outnumbered as the only male and receives criticism for not being excited and could be argued as being a marginalized voice. The male students recognized this and identified a hidden message for this commercial more easily than the female students did.

The discussions from these two commercials suggest that students had difficulty thinking from or about perspectives besides their own. They might not have been able to identify the marginalized voice because they did not realize that the voice was not presented fairly or accurately, because it is unlike their own. After we discussed the marginalized voices and hidden messages, both genders equally contributed to ideas of what might be included in an alternate text (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004a).

### Bomb Unit Pre-Reading Questions

The first type of data that was collected for the study was the Bomb Pre-Reading Questions (see Appendix B: Bomb Unit Pre-Reading Questions). The purpose of the questions in terms of this study was explained to students. They were reassured that there was not a right or wrong answer and that I would not know the identity of the respondents. They were told to be as honest and thorough as possible so that I could analyze the reasoning behind their decisions. The questions were administered to all of

the 8th grade students, not just the group of six so that I could get a baseline of the moral reasoning of the grade as a whole.

Question 1. The first question that students were asked focused on whether or not a country should have used a powerful weapon to end a war even though many innocent civilians on the enemy's side would be killed (see Appendix B: Bomb Unit Pre-Reading Questions). Student responses to the question were sorted out by gender, yes or no, and the reason for the decision. Then, the responses were split into female and male categories again. Finally, I sorted them out by whether the reasoning showed a higher level of moral development (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010) by focusing on whether the reasons showed concern for all lives or only the attacking country's lives.

The main reasons why students thought that the bomb should have been dropped were that it resulted in less deaths on both sides; it resulted in fewer deaths on the attacking country's side; and that all is fair in war. A few students felt that the bomb should only have been used if the civilians were warned first. The main reasons why students thought that the bomb should not have been dropped were that it would result in the deaths of innocent civilians who were not actively involved with the war; there might have been repercussions for the attacking country such as being charged with a war crime; and others had come up with alternate solutions such as a peace treaty or a demonstration of the bomb's power to be used as a threat (See Table 1: Responses to Question 1 on Pre-Reading Questions).

Table 1 <i>Responses to Question 1 on Pre-Reading Questions</i>			
<u>Yes</u>	<u>Male %</u>	<u>Female %</u>	<u>Total %</u>
Save lives on both sides	8	25	15
Save lives of attacking country	28	19	24
All's fair in war	12	6	10
Conditional	4	6	5
Total	52	56	54
<u>No</u>	<u>Male %</u>	<u>Female %</u>	<u>Total %</u>
Innocent are killed	28	38	32
Attacking country will receive repercussions	8	6	7
Alternate Solution	12	0	7
Total	48	44	46
<u>Focus of Response</u>	<u>Male %</u>	<u>Female %</u>	<u>Total %</u>
Saving lives on both sides	52	69	59
Saving lives for attacker	48	31	41
<i>Note.</i> 61% of the participants were male and 39% were female.			

When analyzing the student responses, it is important to look at the reasoning for their decisions. This is because it might seem the most ethical decision to not drop the bomb, but by reading the explanation, we might see that a student wrote “no” out of fear for their own country as opposed to uphold a universal principle. For example, a student wrote “no” because he thought the enemy might retaliate and the war would be worse. Another example would be a student who believed the bomb should be dropped because by ending the war more lives would be saved on both sides including civilians as civilians might have been dying already from low rations, disease, etc. This line of reasoning would show that the student values all lives, but realizes sometimes sacrifices need to be made. By analyzing the responses in this way, the results show that 59% of the

participants made their decisions based on a desire to save as many lives as possible or protect the lives of those who were innocent. Forty-two percent of the participants made their decisions based on a desire to protect the attacking country which they interpreted as their own. Since the pre-conventional stages in Kohlberg's and Gilligan's models of moral development (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010; Rachels, 1999) are characterized by an individual's focus on themselves and the consequences of moral decisions on their own safety and well-being, the focus on saving lives only for the attacking country demonstrates pre-conventional reasoning. A concern for others is a characteristic of levels in the conventional and post-conventional stages.

Twenty-five percent of the females cared about saving lives on both sides compared to 8% of the males. This shows that the value for life is more of a moral principle for the females than it is for the males since their responses showed a greater concern for American lives than lives of Americans and the enemy. However, males proposed alternative possibilities. Also, more males believed that it was okay to use the weapon because death is part of war. This might show an early formation of the concept of justice as they are thinking that both sides are at war so it is fair to attack the enemy (Rachels, 1999).

Question 2. The second question that students were asked focused on whether or not a scientist should leak information about the weapon he is creating for his country because he is worried his country will become too powerful. However, if he is caught, he will be severely punished (see Appendix B: Bomb Unit Pre-Reading Questions). Student responses to the question were sorted out by gender, yes or no, and the reason for their

decision. Then, the responses were split into female and male categories again. Finally, I sorted them out by which moral students were focusing on in their responses.

The main reasons why students thought that the scientist should have leaked the information were that we cannot trust our own country; it would not be fair to withhold the information from an ally; and the scientist would experience guilt if his country abused power later (see Table 2: Responses to Question 2 on Pre-Reading Questions).

Table 2 <i>Responses to Question 2 on Pre-Reading Questions</i>			
<u>Yes</u>	<u>Male %</u>	<u>Female %</u>	<u>Total %</u>
It would be fair	0	19	7
Too much power for one country	32	19	27
Avoid guilt	4	0	2
Total	36	38	37
<u>No</u>	<u>Male %</u>	<u>Female %</u>	<u>Total %</u>
We should have all power	8	0	5
Puts scientist's life at risk	28	31	29
Can't trust ally	16	13	15
Need to do duty	8	13	10
Ally might get punished	0	6	2
Alternate action	4	0	2
Total	64	63	63
<u>Focus of Response</u>	<u>Male %</u>	<u>Female %</u>	<u>Total %</u>
Ambition	8	0	5
Caution	76	63	71
Duty	8	13	10
Friendship	0	25	9
Integrity	4	0	2
Serenity	4	0	2
<i>Note.</i> 61% of the participants were male and 39% were female.			

There was a much larger variety of responses for why students thought the scientist should not have leaked the information. The main reasons were that it would put the scientist's own life at risk; we can't trust an ally; the scientist needs to do his duty so he doesn't let others down; and we should be the most powerful. One student suggested that the scientist destroy the evidence so that neither country would have the weapon.

Based on the results, the females were more concerned about protecting relationships as 19% said it wouldn't be fair to the ally if the information was not given, compared to 0% of the males. This conclusion is also supported by the fact that 6% of the females were worried about the ally getting in trouble for receiving the information. This was another concept that the males had not considered.

The males had a larger number of participants who felt that one country could not be trusted with the weapon and felt that the country would become corrupt with 32% responding in that way compared to 19% of the females. Sixteen percent of the males responded that the allies could not be trusted compared to 13% of the females. This in conjunction with previously discussed data shows that the females are more trusting and want to maintain relationships. However, it also shows that more males are concerned about what could happen to others because of this bomb. In fact, one male had even said that the scientist should not leak the information, but should destroy it. That way nobody would have to worry about the weapon being owned by a corrupt government.

As with the first pre-reading question, the second question responses were also analyzed in terms of the focus of the response. The categories that were identified for this

were a focus on ambition, caution, duty, friendship, integrity, and serenity. The males had a larger variety of morals than the females did with five compared to three. However, the percentage of male students who based their decision off of a desire to exercise caution far exceeded the percentage of male students who focused on other morals. Caution was also the most prevalent moral for the female students followed by friendship. It was not surprising that most of the students based their decision on caution because the dilemma mentioned that the scientist could be punished and it also mentioned a highly dangerous weapon. Yet, I was surprised by the variety of morals that were used when making the decisions.

#### Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait

After reading the first 30 pages of *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012), students created Mind Portraits/Alternative Mind Portraits (McLaughlin & Allen, 2002) (see Appendix F: Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait). First, they were introduced to the method by my modeling of the strategy using Hansel and Gretel. The story of Hansel and Gretel was used as it was a story that most of my students were familiar with and could be explained quickly and clearly to students who did not know about it.

After the method was modeled, a guided mind portrait/alternative mind portrait was done with Gretel and the witch (McLaughlin & Allen, 2002). The students needed some prompting for this, because it was hard for them to think from the perspective of the antagonist of a story. So I told them, “Put yourself in the witch’s shoes. What would you think or how might you feel? What did she do and why do you think she did it?” This

prompting led students to add that she might have been upset that they were eating her house. They also commented that she might have been starving as she might have only been able to live off of children.

After I knew students understood the concepts of Mind Portraits/Alternative Mind Portraits (McLaughlin & Allen, 2002), I told them that we would be creating ones based on what we had read so far from *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012). We brainstormed a list of individuals and perspectives that were mentioned in the book or might have been impacted by events and ideas in the book. I asked students to choose two perspectives that seemed quite different and had them create Mind portraits/alternative mind portraits.

Results. David and Luke had chosen Oppenheimer and Hitler for their mind portraits/alternative mind portraits (McLaughlin & Allen, 2002). This was interesting because these students did not work together and our brainstorming list had eight different perspectives or individuals. Oppenheimer was one of the most talked about people in the book up to this point which is why he was most likely chosen by each of them for the mind portrait portion. Both of them knew about Hitler and that he was an enemy of Oppenheimer which was likely part of their reasoning for choosing him for the alternative mind portrait side. However, David also picked Hitler because he thought it was funny to make jokes about him and what he did. Some of his comments made light of the Holocaust. This behavior was typical of David's speech used to provoke people. A class discussion about the issue was held as a few other male students were talking the same way. When I reminded students about the horrors of the Holocaust, they no longer



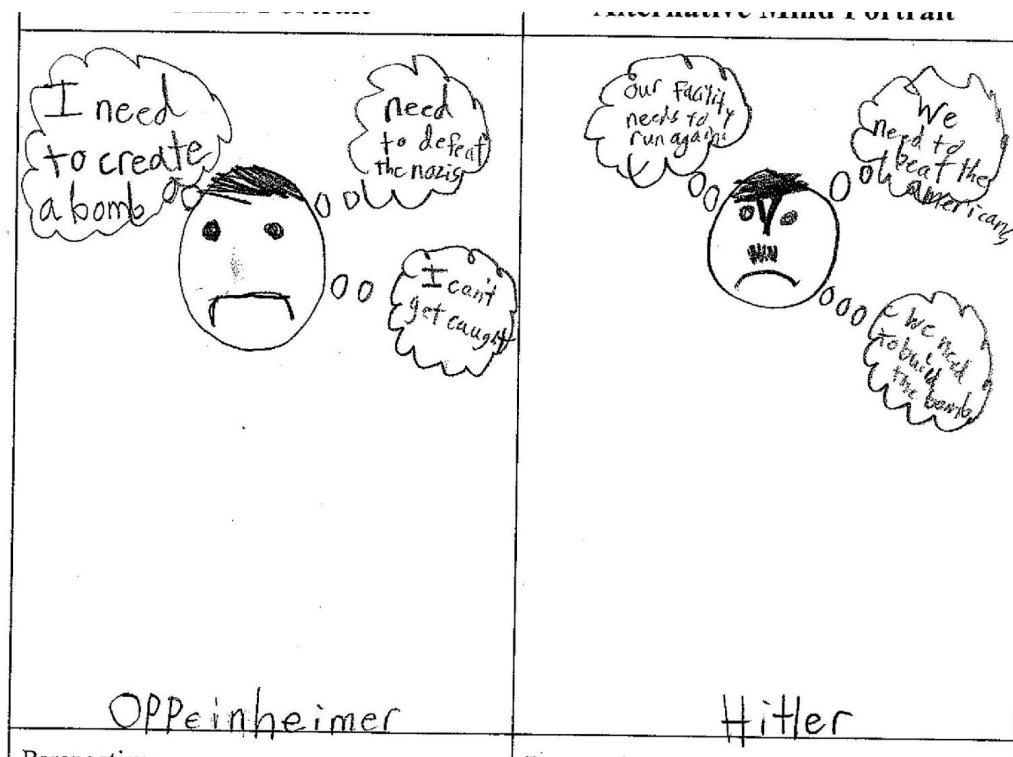


Figure 4. David's mind portrait/alternative mind portrait.

talked lightly about the subject. David's Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait (see Figure 4: David's Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait) appeared to have Oppenheimer and Hitler as equals. Both wanted to attack the other's country, had some worries, and felt the need to create the bomb first. However, Luke's Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait (see Figure 5: Luke's Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait) differed in that it shows Hitler's prejudice against the Jews and his greed for land. It also shows that Oppenheimer might have been more interested in the science of the building of the bomb than the actual use of one. Luke's might also suggest that both of them are driven. His work seems to show that Oppenheimer is driven to make scientific

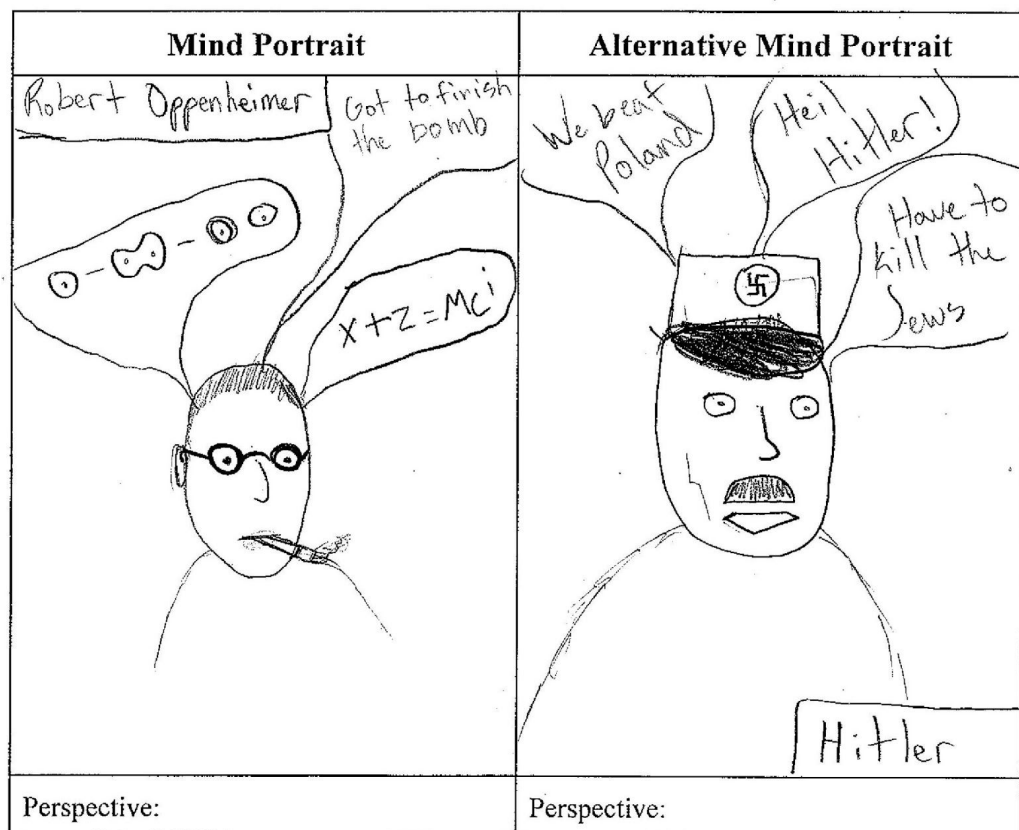


Figure 5. Luke's mind portrait/alternative mind portrait.

discoveries while Hitler is driven by greed and power. While both showed the moral trait of ambition, Oppenheimer's is more acceptable as he is not intending to kill innocent people like Hitler is.

Unlike David and Luke, Mark did not write about Hitler. Instead, he focused on American scientists and American soldiers (See Figure 6: Mark's Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait). Based on what is written in the speech bubbles, both perspectives were worried about Germany winning the war. However, the soldier seems more concerned about the consequences for himself than the scientist which suggests that

the scientist has a higher level of moral development as he understands how the invention will impact others.

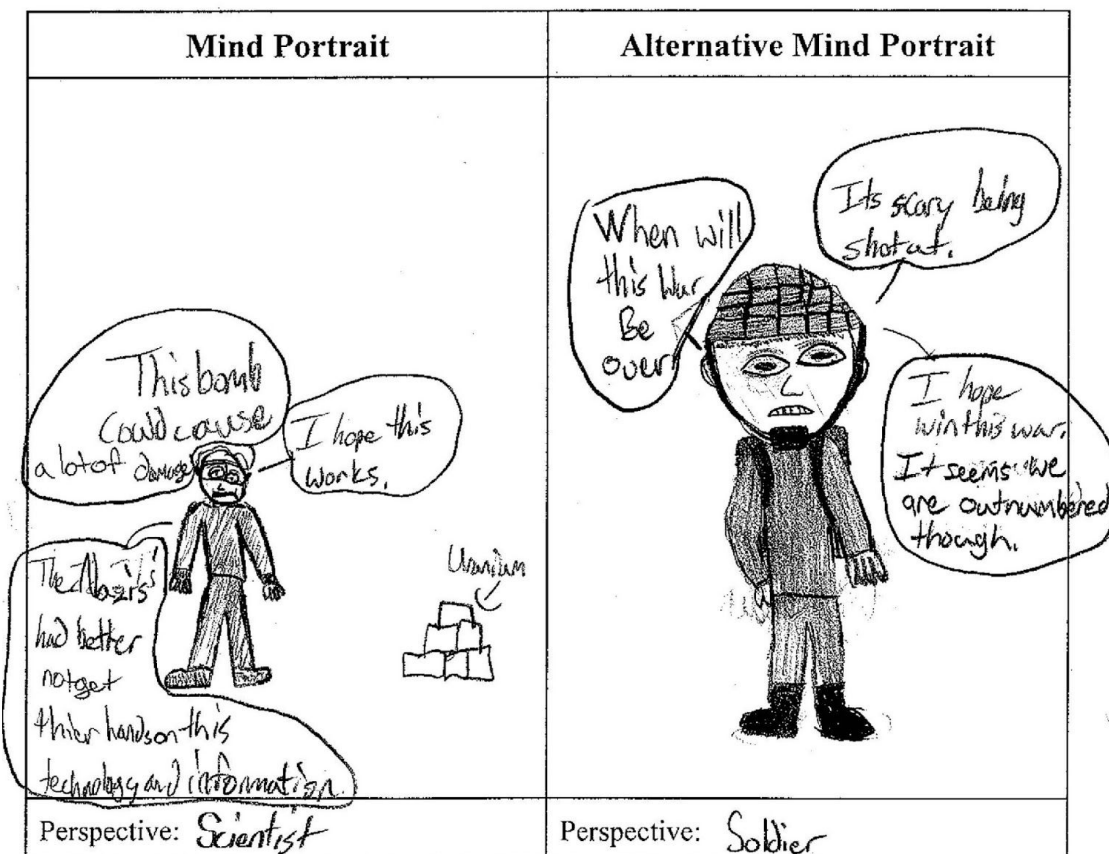


Figure 6: Mark's mind portrait/ alternative mind portrait.

The female participants had a few more perspectives chosen between themselves than the male participants. Molly chose the Norwegian resistance fighter Knut Haukelid and Oppenheimer. Laura chose American scientists and American soldiers. Amber chose Harry Gold who was an American scientist who leaked information to the KGB and Albert Einstein. The speech bubbles on Molly's Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait

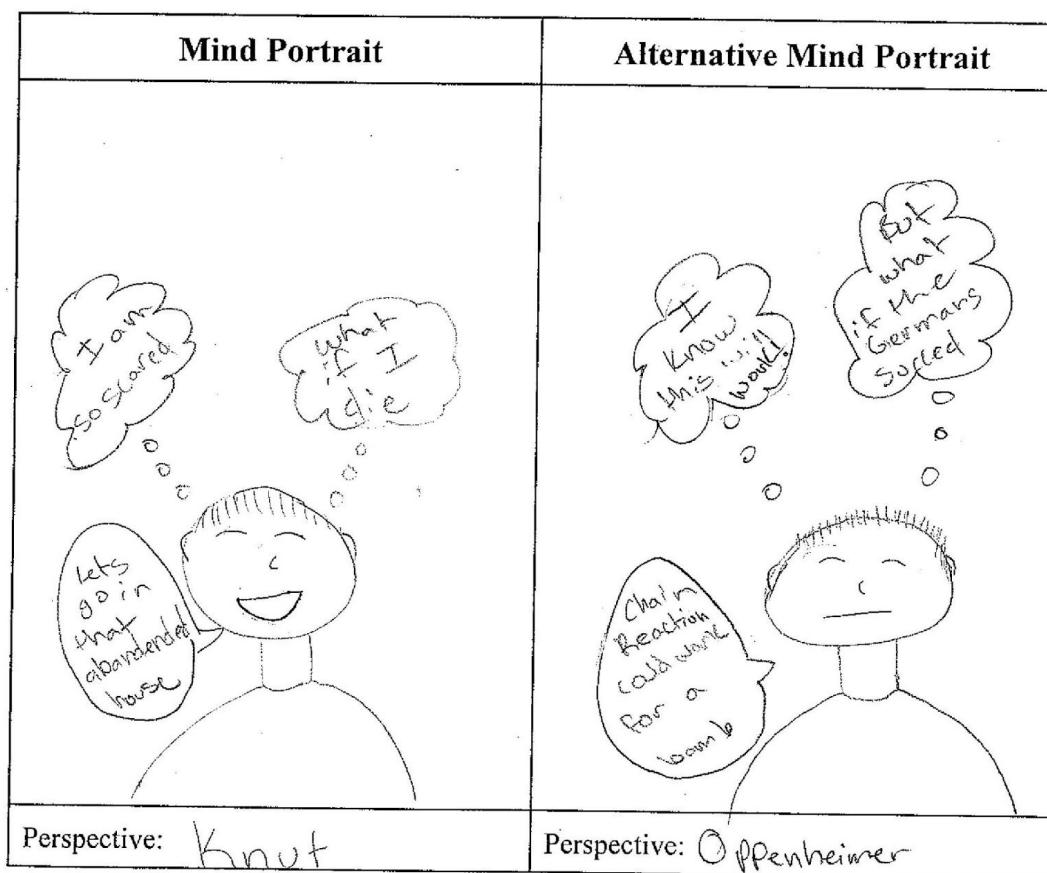


Figure 7: Molly's mind portrait/alternative mind portrait

(see Figure 7: Molly's Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait) both suggest that both individuals were concerned about themselves with the focus on "I" and/or their own interests (McLaughlin & Allen, 2002). This suggests that Molly was at a low stage in Kohlberg's or Gilligan's models of moral development as that is what she would be thinking if she was in the shoes of the characters she wrote about (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010). *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012) makes it clear that both individuals wanted to protect their country and were willing to make sacrifices, so I think that if she was at a higher stage according to Kohlberg and Gilligan, she would have put different words in the thought bubbles that would represent more selfless thoughts. The focus on "I" is also evident in

Amber's mind portrait/alternative mind portrait (see Figure 8: Amber's Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait).

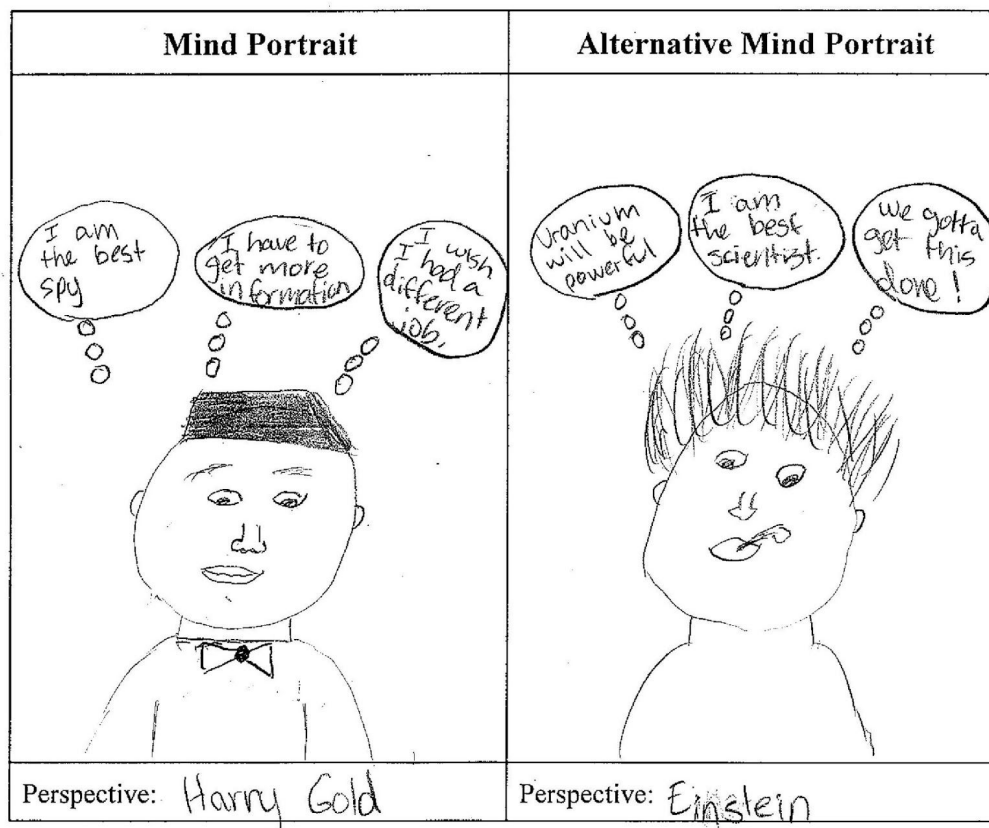


Figure 8. Amber's mind portrait/alternative mind portrait.

Laura's Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait (see Figure 9: Laura's Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait) is different than Molly's and Amber's in terms of text in that she uses mostly "we" instead of "I" (McLaughlin & Allen, 2002). This suggests that she understands that with dilemmas, more people are involved than just one. Laura pointed out to me that both perspectives on her paper were worried, but were focused on completing their assigned task and realized it was necessary for the country to be safe.


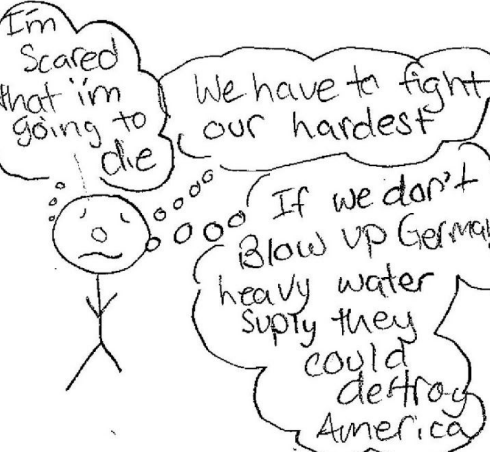
Mind Portrait	Alternative Mind Portrait
 <p>Thoughts from the Scientist (American):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We finally did it We made a chain reaction</li> <li>This is going to be bad if we don't win</li> <li>We need to win this bomb making contest</li> </ul>	 <p>Thoughts from the Soldiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I'm scared that i'm going to die</li> <li>We have to fight our hardest</li> <li>If we don't Blow up Germany's heavy water suply they could destroy America</li> </ul>
Perspective: Scientist (American)	Perspective: Soldiers

Figure 9. Laura's mind portrait/alternative mind portrait.

After students had completed their mind portraits/alternate mind portraits, they shared them with partners and then we discussed them as a class (McLaughlin & Allen, 2002). The discussion focused on identifying similar thoughts between both perspectives presented on the page and what it implied. This was difficult for many students at first, but the more we discussed it, the better they understood it.

Reflection. The mind portrait/alternative mind portrait task was implemented in an approach that combined steps recommended by McLaughlin and DeVogd (2004) and Linder (2006) to ensure students understood the purpose and the process (McLaughlin & Allen, 2002). This was done because I found that McLaughlin and DeVogd's steps were

focused on actions for the teacher and Linder's was focused on directions for students. The result was a mixture of modeling and explanation, brainstorming of perspectives that could be used, followed by independent student work, and culminating with discussion.

This approach seemed to work well. All of the students were able to complete the activity with few questions. In addition, they were able to explain to me the purpose of the task and were heavily engaged while completing it. However, while many students could explain to me the purposes when I asked them, a lot of the Mind Portraits/Alternative Mind Portraits showed shallow understanding (McLaughlin & Allen, 2002). The students did reach a deeper level of comprehension when we discussed the work as a class, but I would have preferred that they accomplished this sooner.

I modified the Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait in order to promote a better understanding of connections between the perspectives the next time I utilize the activity (McLaughlin & Allen, 2002) (see Appendix L: Updated Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait). A Venn diagram was added. This way students will be prompted to consider the differences and similarities between the perspectives. As a result, students should be more prepared to participate in a meaningful discussion about the implications of the similarities and differences on the situations and dilemmas faced by the individuals.

### Discussion Web

When students had read the first half of *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012), they completed a discussion web that focused on the question, "Which is more important: duty or integrity?" (Alvermann, 1991). I thought that this was a good point to discuss this question as multiple perspectives had been presented in-depth and many individuals had

to make the choice between following orders or doing what they thought was right. I explained each term and we also discussed that some actions might demonstrate a value in both duty and integrity. Students were allowed to work on their own or with a partner to identify actions by individuals in the book that demonstrated duty or integrity. After students identified examples of each, they answered the question based off of which actions seemed to be the most important and what value was demonstrated by them.

Results. Luke seemed to really struggle with this task. His comprehension of the text was not an issue, but he could not decide what examples to put where because he believed that all the ones he found showed both duty and integrity. This suggests that he sees both as important and that they are more important than most other values. For example, if duty was seen as an important value, a person with integrity would demonstrate it at all times (Rachels, 1999).

One response on his web (see Figure 10: Luke's Discussion Web) that stood out to me in particular was that under "Integrity" he had included, "Haukelid and his team taking pill if caught." This was referring to the fact that Norwegian resistance fighters trained by the British were given cyanide pills to take if captured in order to prevent the leaking of secrets. This surprised me because Luke had said in a later discussion that he would not have taken the pill because it would be committing suicide and he would end up in hell. He said that he would rather die from torture than spend an eternity in hell and said that regardless of what degree of torture he was put under, he would not have



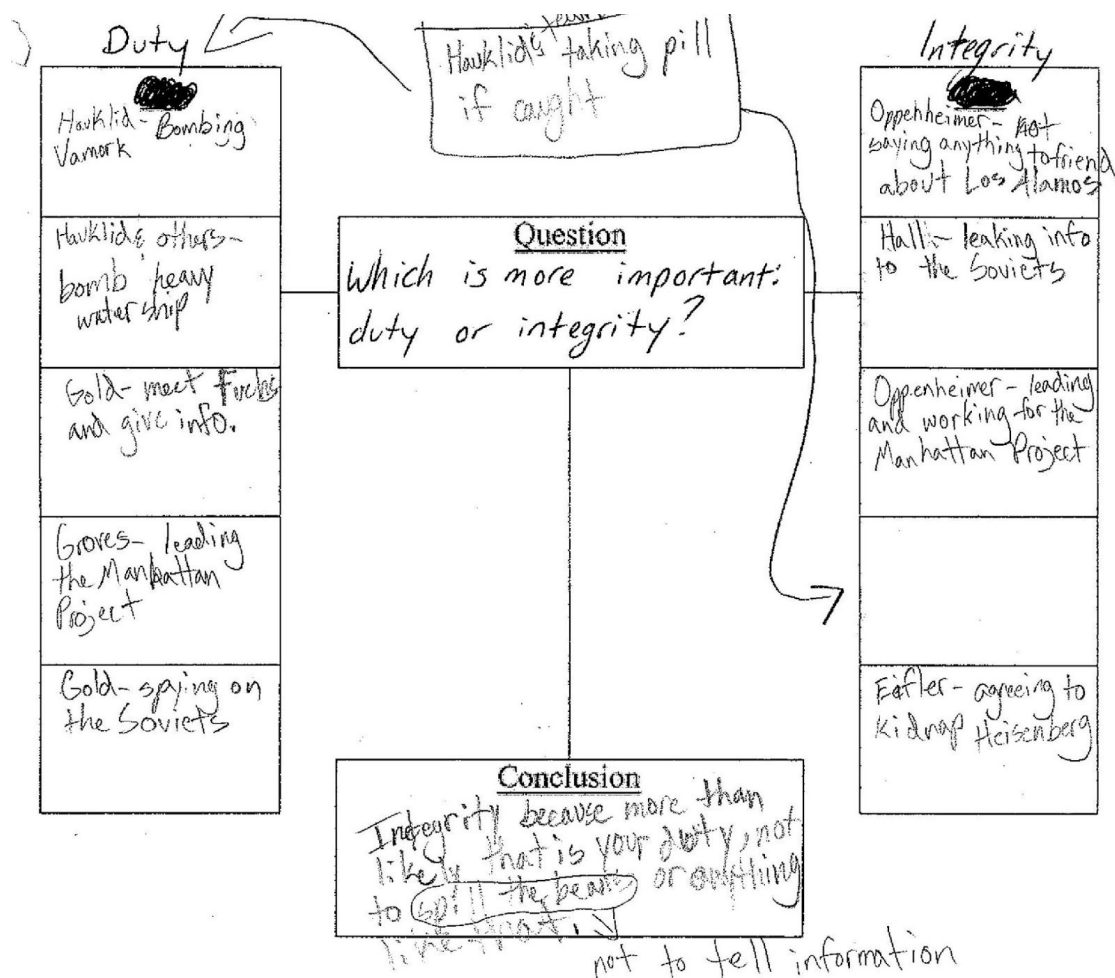


Figure 10. Luke's discussion web.

revealed secrets. Despite this difference of what he would do compared with what he listed as showing integrity on his discussion web, this still shows somewhat that he values duty and integrity equally (Alvermann, 1991). The difference is that he thought that the Norwegian fighters felt it was important to do their duty as resistance fighters and Luke felt it would be important to do his duty as a Christian and follow God's expectations. With Luke's difficulty in separating actions into the different columns, it is not surprising that he wrote integrity as more important "because more than likely that is

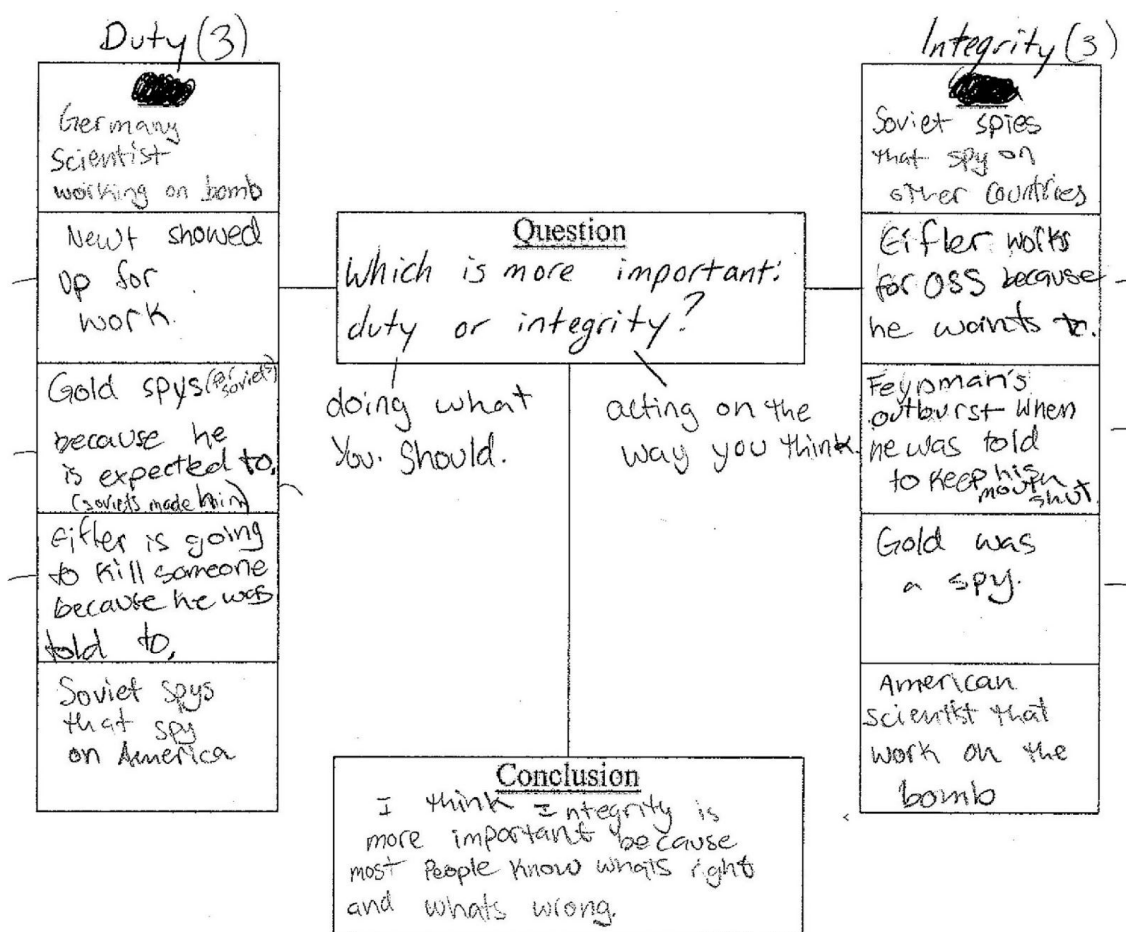


Figure 11. Laura's discussion web.

your duty.” This suggests that he has faith that people will always be given good orders from their commanders. It also suggests that he has a moral prototype as his reasoning was related to what someone else would do (Hardy et al., 2011).

Laura and Molly also believed that integrity was more important than duty.

Laura's reasoning was somewhat similar to Luke's in that it showed that she had faith in people. Her explanation was that, “most people know what's right and what's wrong.” She felt that since most people know what is right and what is wrong, integrity is important so that people act on those morals (see Figure 11: Laura's Discussion Web).

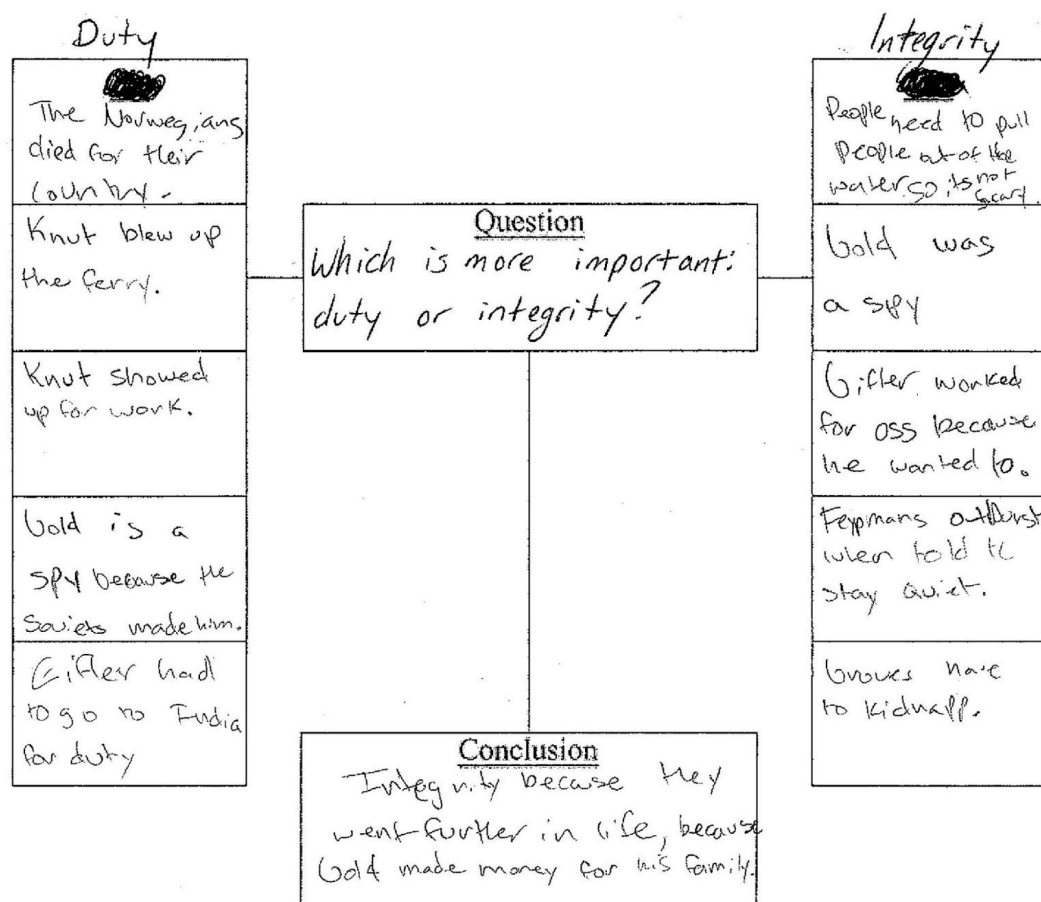


Figure 12. Molly's discussion web.

Molly's reason for choosing integrity was that Harry Gold had made money for his family (see Figure 12: Molly's Discussion Web). Out of context this response might make it seem that Molly is showing a lower level of moral development because she is focusing on an unnecessary positive outcome for Gold by completing the act (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010). However, Gold had begun spying in order to provide for his family because they were struggling to buy necessities at the time (Sheinkin, 2012). By spying, Gold was showing both duty and integrity by doing whatever it took to feed his family, even though he was risking his life and freedom. Laura's web also includes information about Gold. However, under duty, she wrote about Gold following the orders from KGB.

Under integrity, she had written about him being a spy. I asked her if this meant that he thought everyone should be a spy. Laura explained that she didn't think so, but she still felt Gold was a bad person. He might have thought he was doing the right thing to get money for his family, but he wasn't.

David, Mark, and Amber believed that duty was more important. Mark and Amber both chose duty because they focused on the context of war and argued that duty is more important in war so that it can be over. However, Mark added that integrity is also important outside of war if that person has other good values to live up to. David chose duty because he believed that the individuals in *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012) were doing their duty and showing integrity at the same time. This was similar to Luke's thinking.

After students had completed their Discussion Webs and discussed them with a partner, we talked about our findings as a class (Alvermann, 1991). The students were split somewhat evenly in terms of whether they sided with duty and integrity. When they shared their reasoning, it became clear that one aspect of the reading stood out to them as they were completing their webs: the Norwegian resistance fighters using cyanide pills. As a result, we had a conversation about it.

We discussed whether or not taking a cyanide pill if captured would be showing integrity for the resistance fighters and what other morals would they be showing. Luke immediately made his opinion clear and said that it would be a bad idea for them because it would be committing suicide which would result in them going to hell. This comment led to a heated discussion. Some students originally thought that it would be wise for the resistance fighters to use the pills to avoid torture. However, after listening to Luke, they

changed their minds because they figured some torture on earth would be better than torture for eternity in hell. Other students were quick to disagree with Luke saying that God would show forgiveness as the resistance fighters would be saving lives by killing themselves rather than risking the chance of leaking secrets when tortured. Some students tried to come up with an alternative by saying that they would escape, but through discussion students came to the consensus that it would be an unlikely possibility. In the end, more students chose to go with a decision that would save lives by keeping the secret than others who made their decision based on what would be the most beneficial to them. The transition that most of the students made from prioritizing what is best for them to what is best for thousands of people shows a shift from a pre-conventional level to a conventional or post-conventional level (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010).

The discussion about this dilemma faced by the Norwegian resistance fighters tied in with recommendations by Kohlberg (1975) to promote moral development. As he and Turiel (1977) said, students are able to arrive at higher stages of moral development through the discussion of moral dilemmas with other students. That seemed to hold true in this instance as some students became persuaded to agree that it would be better to act in a way that would go beyond caring for one's own safety.

Reflection. Alvermann's (1991) discussion web was modified so that the focus would be on analyzing how the characters in *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012) showed the morals of duty and integrity. Instead of having students write reasons why they might say yes or no to a question, students wrote examples of how characters showed duty or integrity. This was done in order to see which moral students would agree with more. I was also

curious if these would result in students discussing morals based on moral prototypes. In some ways this modification was effective, in other ways it wasn't.

The changes were effective in that it did lead to a discussion regarding the morals of the characters. Students were able to evaluate the moral decisions of the characters such as Harry Gold and Knut Haukelid. Plus, they were able to extend the conversation beyond what they had written on their web. Through this discussion it became apparent that some of the students were basing their morals off of prototypes in that they considered God when making their decisions. However, the implementation of Discussion Webs was not as effective as I hoped (Alvermann, 1991).

Unlike with the Mind Portraits/Alternative Mind Portraits, many students struggled with this task and were confused (McLaughlin & Allen, 2002). A lot of this seemed to be as a result of not having a clear understanding of "duty" and "integrity." Because of this, students had a hard time deciding what actions by the characters showed duty and which ones showed integrity and became frustrated when attempting to classify the actions.

As I would like to use a Discussion Web again in the future, but still want to include a component focused on morals, I modified the discussion web again (Alvermann, 1991) (see Appendix M: Updated Discussion Web). There are blanks in the question so students can pick a character and an important action the character made. The students would next come up with reasons why and why not the character should have acted in that way. Afterwards, the students decide overall if they think the action should or should not have been made. They also reflect on the morals shown by the character.

This Discussion Web should help encourage a discussion that not only analyzes a character and his actions, but also involves an exploration of morals.

### Multiple Perspectives Web

When we got to the part of *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012) in which the scientist in charge of the German bomb project was captured, students completed a Multiple Perspectives Web on the event (Linder, 2006). Before students had begun working on the task, the concept and purpose of multiple perspectives webs was explained. We discussed how things can be biased if we only hear one side of a story and that it is important to look at multiple perspectives before making a judgment. For an example we discussed *The Outsiders* (Hinton, 1967), which students had read earlier in the year. The event we focused on was Bob's death. I modeled completing the task by considering the perspectives of Johnny, Ponyboy, and Cheri. Students were able to grasp this concept as we had discussed the complexity of this plot event and its impact on characters earlier in the school year.

Results. All of the students except for Amber had believed that the capture of Heisenberg, the lead German scientist, was justified. David did not have a clear reason written for why he believed this, but when I discussed it with him he explained that he felt it needed to be done so that the German scientists did not make the bomb. Despite the fact that the kidnapping had occurred after Germany's surrender, Laura and Luke also believed that the scientists might have found a way to continue working on the bomb for their government. Luke's conclusion mentioned that it was not immoral to capture Heisenberg and Hahn, because it meant that we would no longer need to worry about the

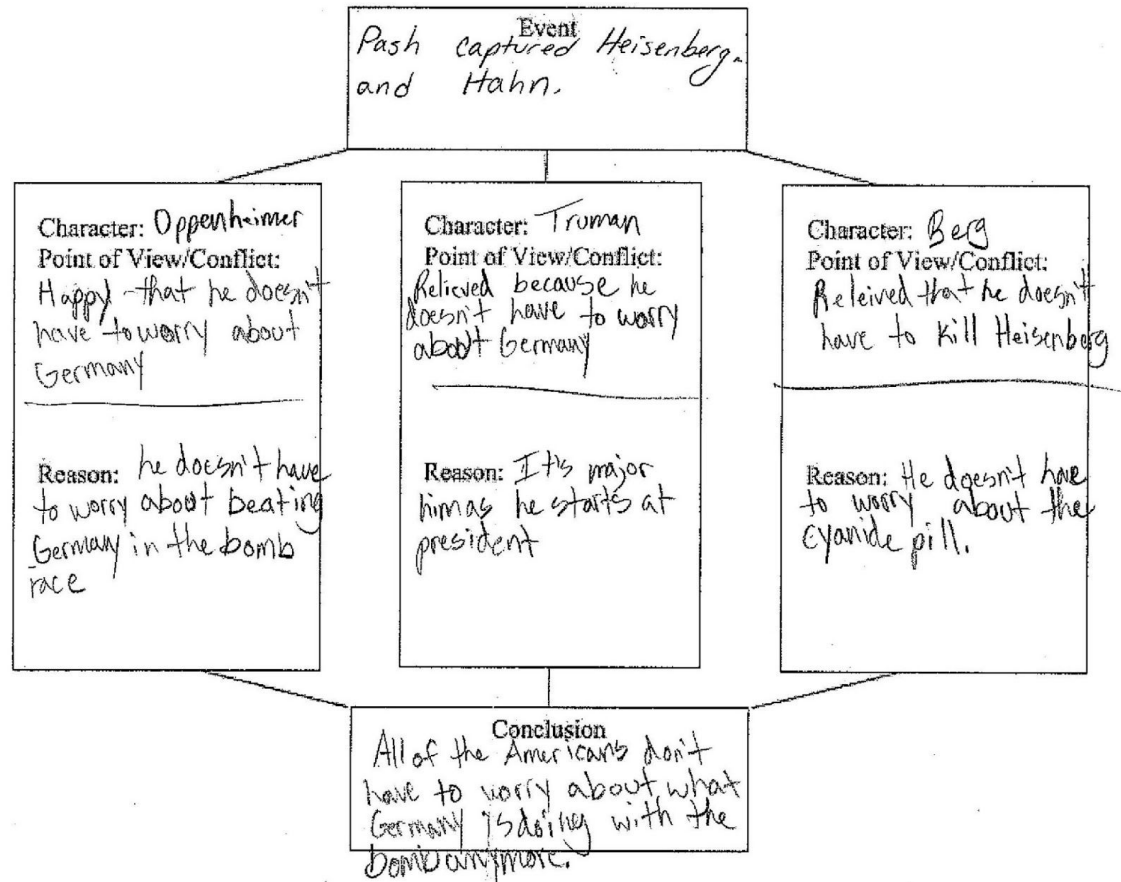


Figure 13. Luke's multiple perspectives web.

development of the bomb (see Figure 13: Luke's Multiple Perspectives Web). Something I found interesting with his web was that the reasons for each of the individuals he included focused on the individual people, yet the conclusion involved the country as a whole. This shows a shift from pre-conventional moral development to at least conventional because his conclusion shows evidence that he has considered the impact of a choice on more than the individual that completes the actions (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010; Rachels, 1999).



Mark and Molly, however, did not think that the Germans would have continued making the bomb for their country. Instead, they thought it was possible that Heisenberg and the other scientists would have assisted Japan in the development of nuclear

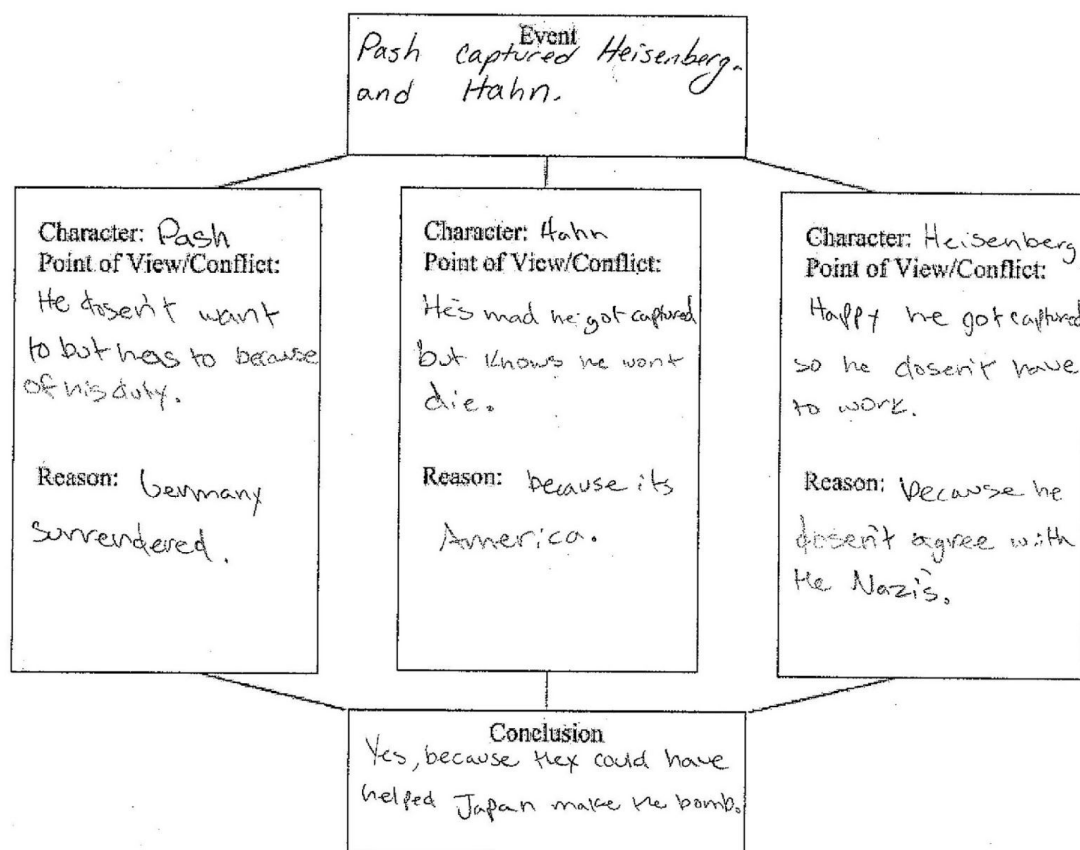


Figure 14. Molly's multiple perspectives web.

weapons. Molly's conclusion (see Figure 14: Molly's Multiple Perspectives Web) suggests that the scientists might have willingly helped the Japanese make a bomb if they had not been captured by the Americans. However, Mark's conclusion (see Figure 15: Mark's Multiple Perspectives Web) suggests that if the Americans had not captured the German scientists, the Japanese might have and forced them to work on the development

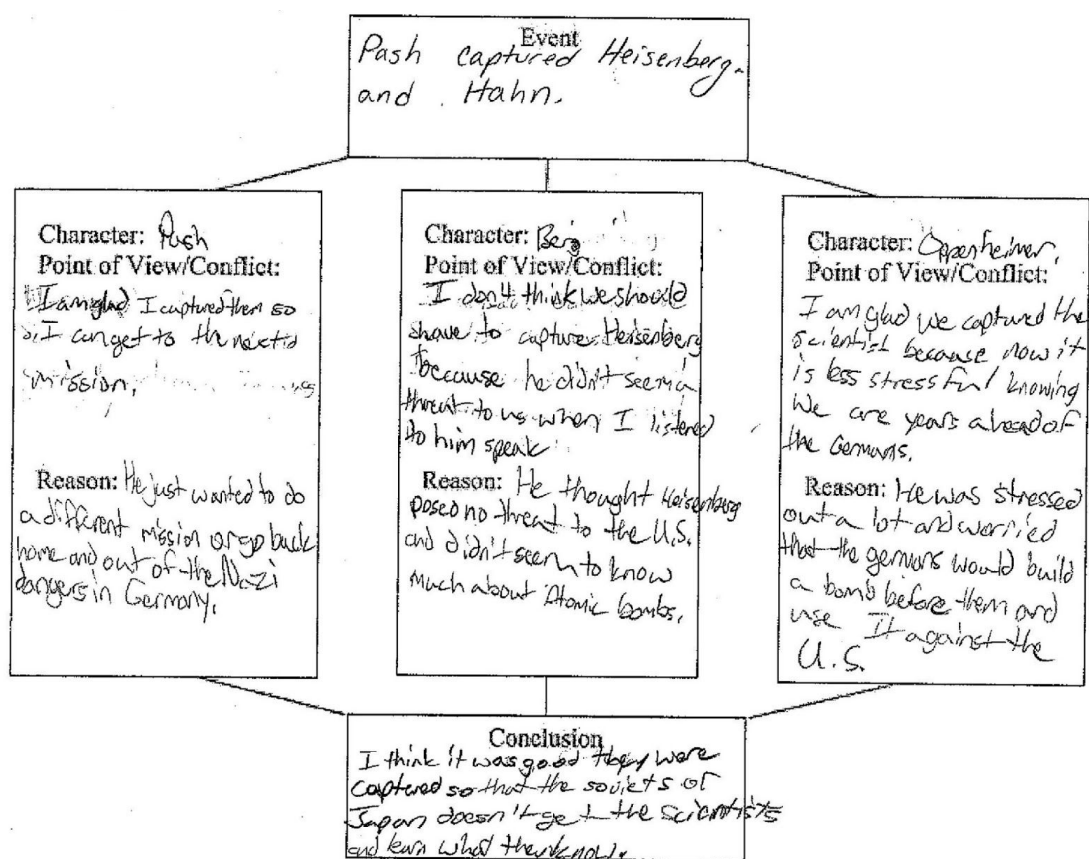


Figure 15. Mark's multiple perspectives web.

of a bomb to be used by the Japanese. Despite selecting several perspectives, David, Luke, and Mark only selected American individuals to write about on their charts.

Amber was the only person who believed that the capture of Heisenberg was unnecessary (see Figure 16: Amber's Multiple Perspectives Web). She explained that she thought the German scientists might be angry about being captured because they would not have had a chance to win the war as they would not have access to supplies. She also thought that the person in charge of the capture did it to look like a hero more than because he saw them as a threat at that point.

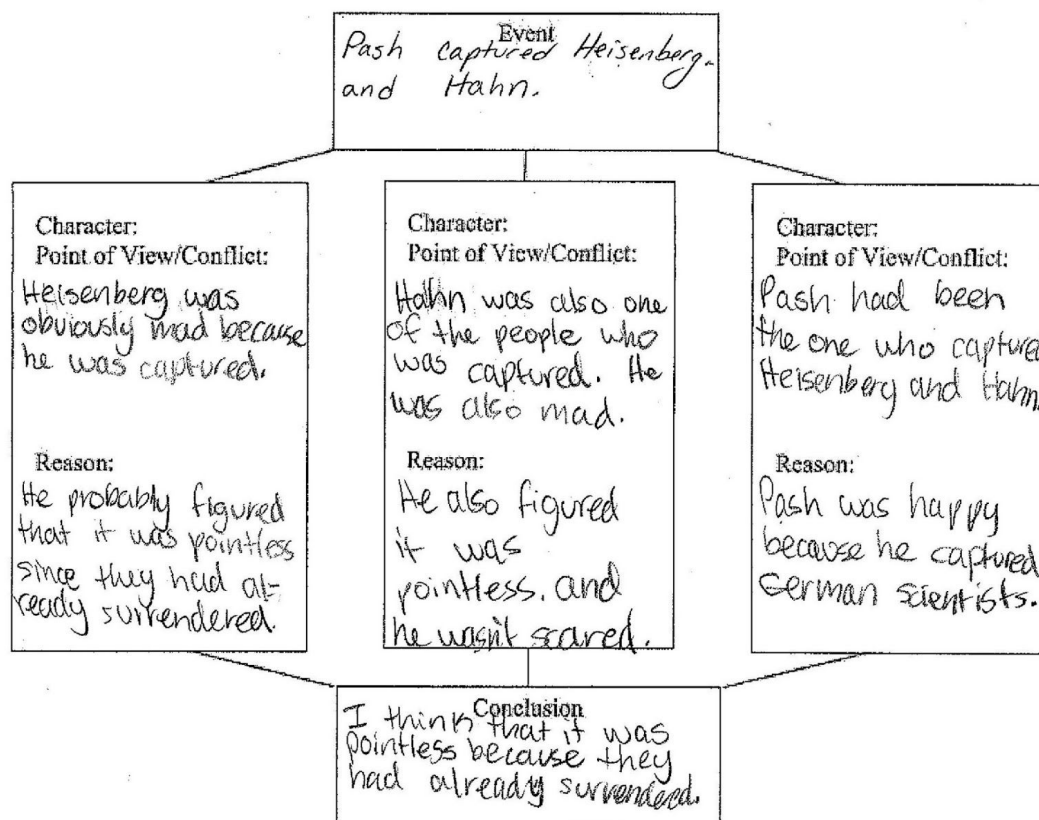


Figure 16. Amber's multiple perspectives web.

After students had completed their Multiple Perspectives Webs, they shared them with a partner (Linder, 2006). Through the sharing, it became apparent that some students had misinterpreted Sheinkin's (2012) description of Hahn's and Heisenberg's reactions when captured. Some students had interpreted the text as saying that the two scientists were scared or angry about being captured. This might have impacted the reasoning behind the conclusions on some of the Multiple Perspectives Webs.

Reflection. The implementation of the Multiple Perspectives Web did not go as well as I had hoped. One reason for this might have been that students were allowed to choose any three perspectives. As a result, some of them were choosing perspectives that

were similar which defeated the purpose of having students analyze an event from multiple perspectives. Next time I have students complete Multiple Perspective Webs, we will categorize the perspectives together that students come up with during brainstorming. Then students will be required to not choose more than one perspective from a category. This should result in a wider range of perspectives analyzed.

Another reason I was not satisfied was that a whole class discussion did not take place after the completion of the Multiple Perspectives Webs (Linder, 2006). I had intended to have a discussion at the end of class, but that changed after I noted some misconceptions on the webs and felt that they needed to be addressed. So the time that would have been used in a discussion ended up being a review on making inferences. The discussion could have taken place the next day, but it didn't. Next time, I will review inferencing as I model how to complete a multiple perspectives web. I will also make sure that a discussion takes place, even if it ends up being on the next day.

### Alternative Text

Students were introduced to Problem-Posing Questions (see Appendix I: Problem-Posing Questions) when we viewed commercials through a critical lens earlier in the unit (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004). We reviewed the questions, read texts representing other perspectives (see Appendix E: Text Set), and answered Problem-Posing Questions regarding them. After students had ample practice with answering Problem-Posing Questions and identifying missing and marginalized voices, they answered the Problem-Posing Questions with *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012). The purpose

was to identify a missing or marginalized perspective to give voice to through the creation of an alternative text (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004).

The alternative texts created were multi-genre papers (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004; Romano, 2000). Multi-genre papers combine multiple types of writing that work together to portray a topic in-depth. Students used a variety of types of writing in order to give voice to the missing or marginalized perspective. Although the inclusion of such genres as Snapchat, Twitter, and dialogue allowed students to be creative, they were also required to base their writing on facts and/or accurate context. This required a lot of research to ensure that the texts sounded as authentic as possible and did not contribute to marginalization or misrepresentation of a perspective.

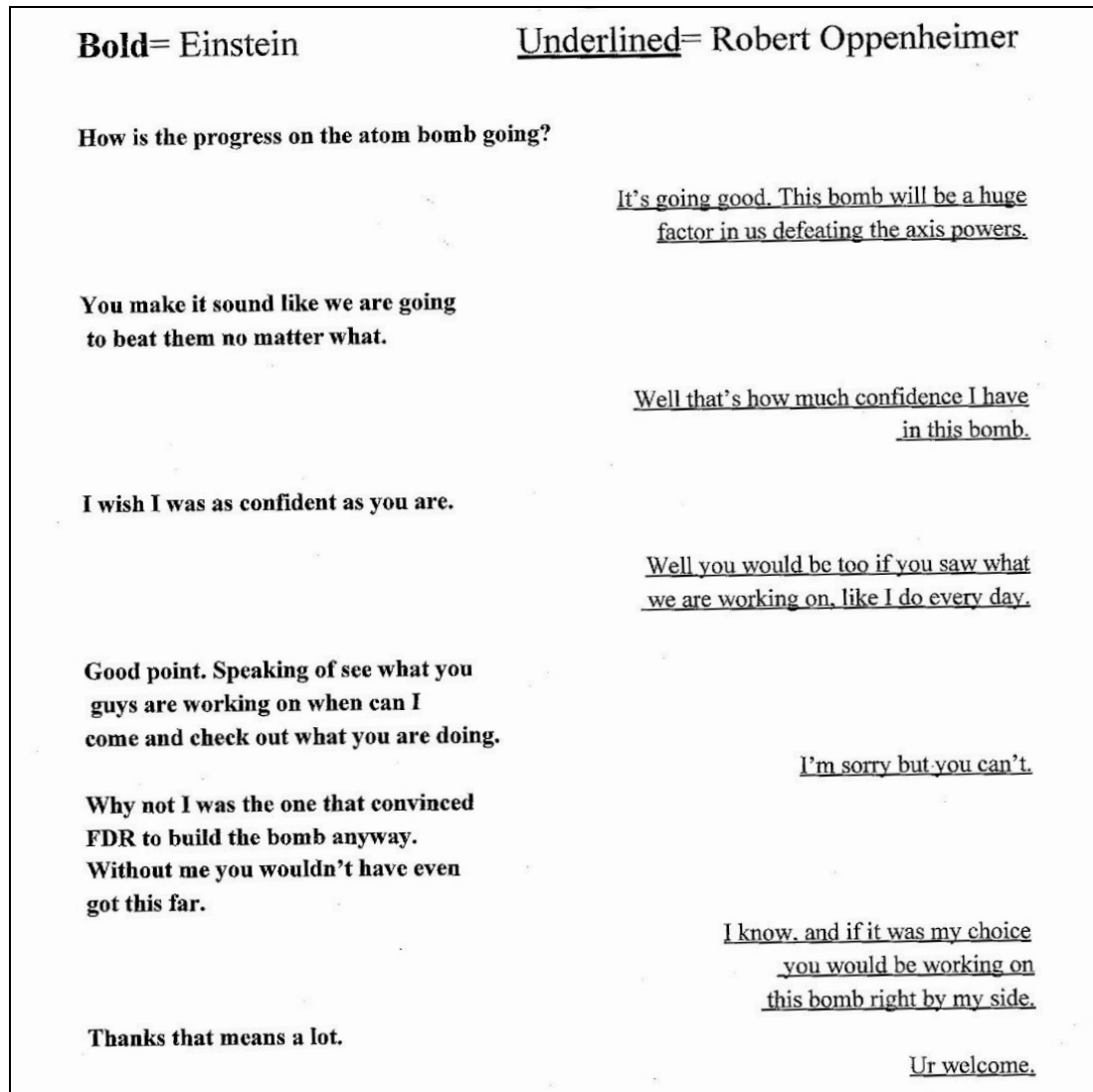
Results. David decided to use one of his relatives as an inspiration for the perspective chosen for his alternative text. One of David's ancestors served during World War II and fought in several major battles in Europe including the Battle of Normandy. His interest in his ancestors lead him to want to give voice to American soldiers as their voices were absent in *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012). This was an important gap to identify as the soldiers would have been impacted by the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as it led to the end of the war. Because of this, there was potential for David to describe how the bombings affected the soldiers. However, his project did not shed light on these feelings. Instead, it focused more on factual information such as what the soldiers were doing and what weapons were used. David had some absences during this time that might have affected his ability to delve deeper into this perspective and consider the moral

implications of the decision by the American government to bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Luke decided to focus on Einstein. Although Einstein was mentioned in *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012) and was not presented in a negative manner, he still wanted to write about him because he felt that his minimal inclusion led to some misunderstandings. For example, Einstein had written a letter to FDR requesting him to fund research regarding nuclear weapons as he was certain that Germany was already working on developing them. Because of this action to secure support and that Einstein is a well-known scientist, many students thought that Einstein was involved with the actual creation of the bomb, which he was not. His involvement included the writing of the letter and the creation of an equation for fission. During the development of the bomb, Einstein wanted to make contributions as he was worried about Germany winning the war, but the American government did not allow him to because they thought he could not be trusted.

Luke's project showed a variety of emotions that Einstein might have felt about not being allowed to contribute. In one part, (see Appendix N: Einstein Snapchats) Einstein appears to be okay with not being an official member of the Manhattan Project and tries to contribute anyway. In another part, (see Figure 17: Einstein iMessages) Einstein shows more frustration with the situation. The inclusion of both of these texts makes Einstein seem more of a real person than in *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012) because we are seeing various emotions from him. Luke said that the project helped him understand what it was like to have mixed emotions regarding winning a war as Einstein was glad the war was over, but regretted writing the letter to FDR as the Germans ended up not developing

a bomb which was his concern that lead him to write the letter. Luke also commented that he learned that Einstein struggled with the conflict of helping his home country,



*Figure 17: Einstein iMessages.*

Germany, or fighting against Hitler. He was able to identify a moral dilemma that Einstein had faced and look deeply at the individual and world-wide consequences of his decisions regarding the dilemma.

Laura also chose to complete her project on Einstein. She included to convey Einstein's request for FDR to put together a group to develop the bomb, in the form of

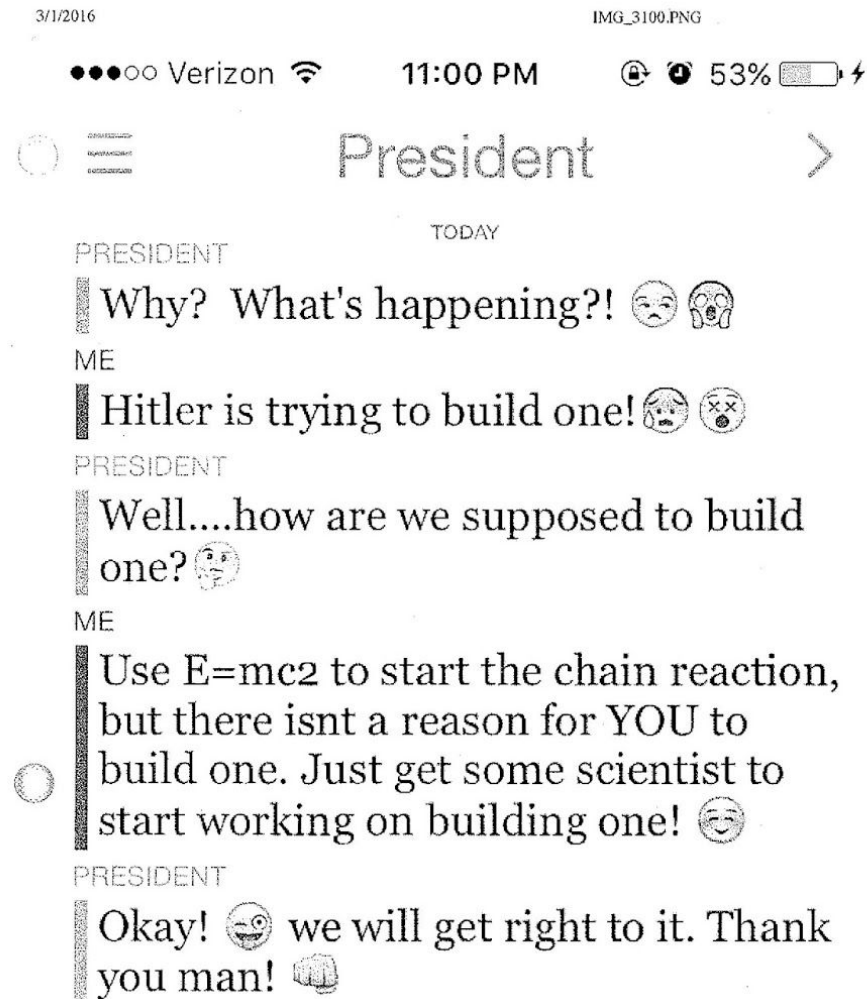


Figure 18: Einstein chat.

Snapchats and chat messages (see Figure 18: Einstein chat). The chat includes emoticons to help portray a certain tone. It shows that while they are worried, they have confidence in American scientists. It also shows that they are not creating the bomb with the intention of mass destruction, but more out of a need to be prepared against the Nazis.



This intention is also evident in Laura's tweets (see Appendix O: Einstein Twitter). This reasoning based on the desire to deter an action that would have dire consequences beyond endangering the life and well-being of an individual would be at the conventional level (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010; Kohlberg, 1975).

In the Twitter conversation we see Einstein's regret that the one action he took led to so much destruction. We also see evidence of the blame that was directed at him for many years even though he was not a member of the Manhattan Project. Although the tone of the conversation might not accurately portray Einstein's and Groves's personalities, we can see two different reactions to the consequences of choices made to solve a moral dilemma.

Mark decided to create an alternative text for Emperor Hirohito of Japan. Hirohito was only mentioned a few times in *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012). What was included about him made it sound as if he did not have much authority regarding war decisions and that his hands were tied regarding the possibility of surrendering. However, Sheinkin does say that he was able to make the final decision to surrender after the bombing of Nagasaki. By creating an alternative text, Mark had the opportunity to give voice to Hirohito and convey how much control he had and information about his family life.

Mark created dialogue of the big six meeting that took place after the bombing of Nagasaki to decide whether or not to surrender to the United States (see Appendix P: Big Six dialogue). The dialogue was based on detailed research and even includes the title of the actual song that was on the radio when Hirohito made his announcement. In the alternative text, he is shown as more powerful than in *Bomb* (McLaughlin & DeVogd,


2004) (Sheinkin, 2012). The members were discussing the situation and were having a difficult time reaching a consensus. Hirohito only had to make a short statement on the radio, and all of the members decided to go with his decision.

Amber decided to focus on women of the bomb project. This included female scientists and the wives of male scientists. She chose this because only three women were mentioned at all in the book and two of them were only on a few pages. Amber wanted to give voice to these women who might not have had any say in their moving to Los Alamos and had to accept that their husbands could not tell them what was going on. Amber conveyed the lack of power the women had in their own lives with an ad (see Figure 19: Help wanted ad for women). Although the ad is rather simplistic, it shows how few options women had for jobs to occupy their time. Also, all of the jobs are related to service. This demonstrates that the men did not think the women were capable or deserved an intellectually challenging job.

Amber's multi-genre paper project also showed how the women handled the dilemma of not knowing what was going on. She included a letter that she wrote as Oppenheimer's secretary Dorothy McKibbin to her mother. In her letter, she shows her nervousness about the situation and regret for taking the position. Snapchats were also included that showed tension between husbands and wives and the wives were concerned about their husbands, but were not allowed to know what they were working on for so long.

# **JOB FOR WOMEN IN LOS ALAMOS**

- **Housekeeping**
- **Secretary**
- **Waitress**
- **Cashier**


**Call the city office for a bigger list of jobs and  
more information on jobs**

Jobs are not guaranteed

**City office # (1412-692-9136)**

*Figure 19.* Help wanted ad for women.

These projects, along with those made by other student, were presented in class when completed. A large variety of perspectives were discussed which gave the students insight on how many people were impacted by the development and use of the bombs. Although students were not asked during their development of the alternative texts what their opinion was regarding the moral dilemmas their chosen perspectives faced, they still

had to place themselves in the shoes of that perspective (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004). This allowed them to better understand how complicated the decision to bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki was and that decisions made to deal with a complicated moral dilemma might have a negative impact, but it is important to choose the action that will do the most good.

Reflection. The creation of an alternative text in the form of a multi-genre paper was difficult for some students, but most students did well (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004; Romano, 200). They had practice thinking from different perspectives when completing Mind Portraits/Alternative Mind Portraits and the Multiple Perspective Webs (Linder, 2006). The multi-genre paper required them to think from another perspective again, but more in-depth. This allowed students to gain a better understanding of the outcomes of the decisions made to solve the moral dilemmas in *Bomb* (Sheinkin, 2012). The research involved also allowed students to find information missing from *Bomb*, some of which lead to a different representation of specific individuals.

Although the students were not prompted to consider what morals their chosen perspectives exhibited or to form their own opinion of the events during the research and writing, a clear change was evident in the behavior and attitudes of the students. Prior to and at the beginning of this project, some students were occasionally making hateful comments about different genders, cultures, etc. Some were also being negative about the assignment due to the rigor and/or feeling that different perspectives do not matter. However, by the end of the project an increase in tolerance was evident as the hateful comments no longer occurred and an increase in perseverance was evident in the

decrease of negativity towards the assignment and the amount of pride shown at its completion.

The increase in positive morals that took place during this assignment lead me to believe that it was effective. However, I would make a few changes to make this assignment even more effective. First, I would expand my text set so that even more perspectives are presented to students (Groenke et al., 2010). I would make this change because it seemed that there was not much variety in the perspectives chosen by students. This might have been as a result of them not thinking about as many because they were not discussed in class earlier. I would also break down the steps of this assignment so that it is not so overwhelming for this age group.

#### Bomb Unit Post-Reading Questions

The last type of data that was collected for the study was the Bomb Post-Reading Questions (See Appendix C: Bomb Unit Post-Reading Questions). The purpose of the questions in terms of this study was explained to students. They were reassured that there was not a right or wrong answer and that I did not know the identity of the respondents. They were told to be as honest and thorough as possible so that I could analyze the reasoning behind their decisions. The questions were administered to 41 of the 8th grade students.

Question 1. The first question that students were asked focused on whether or not the United States should have bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki (see Appendix C: Bomb Unit Post-Reading Questions). Student responses to the question were sorted out by gender, yes or no, and the reason for decision. Then, the responses were split into female

and male categories again. Finally, I sorted them out by whether the reasoning showed a higher level of morality (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010) by focusing on whether the reasons showed concern for all lives, or if their concern was focused on their own country. The question was similar to the first pre-reading question (see Appendix B: Bomb Unit Pre-Reading Questions) in order to depict changes clearer.

The main reasons why students thought that the bombs should have been dropped were to save lives on both sides by ending the war; saving American lives by ending the war; and getting revenge for the attack on Pearl Harbor (see Table 3: Responses to Question 1 on Post-Reading Questions). Two male students wrote that they felt that bombing was the only option left, but found it regrettable. All of the students who felt that the bombs should not have been dropped based their decision on not wanting innocent civilians to be attacked.

The female students were evenly split on whether or not we should have dropped the bomb. Their reasons why the bombs should have been dropped were also split relatively evenly. However, there was only one reason why some of the female students thought the bombs should not have been dropped. The most common reason for making their decision was saving the lives of others. This could include protecting the innocent, or acknowledging that the bombing ended the war and saved the lives of many soldiers. The male students overwhelmingly said that the United States should have bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki with their main reason why being revenge.

Gilligan's belief that females gravitate towards caring while males focus on justice when attempting to solve moral dilemmas (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010; Rachels, 1999) seems to be proven with the results to this question. This is evident in that 69% of

Table 3 <i>Responses to Question 1 on Post-Reading Questions</i>			
<u>Yes</u>	<u>Male %</u>	<u>Female %</u>	<u>Total %</u>
Save lives on both sides	33	19	34
Save American lives	29	19	31
Revenge	38	13	34
Total	84	50	71
<u>No</u>	<u>Male %</u>	<u>Female %</u>	<u>Total %</u>
Innocents were killed	16	50	29
<u>Focus of Response</u>	<u>Male %</u>	<u>Female %</u>	<u>Total %</u>
Saving lives on both sides	44	69	54
Protecting self	24	19	22
Revenge	32	13	24
<i>Note.</i> 61% of the participants were male and 39% were female.			

the females based their decision on their desire to save the lives of innocent and from both sides, compared to 44% of the males. That would be at the conventional level using Gilligan's model. The males focused more on justice. The reasons they focused on were saving American lives and getting revenge. Both of these reasons would place students at a pre-conventional level, but at different stages.

Question 2. The second question that students were asked focused on whether or not American scientists should have given information to the Soviet Union (see Appendix

C: Bomb Unit Post-Reading Questions). Student responses to the question were sorted out by gender, yes or no, and the reason for their decision (see Table 4: Responses to Question 2 on Post-Reading Questions). Then the reasoning was analyzed based on what moral or value students based their decisions on.

The main reasons why students thought that the American and British scientists should have shared information with the Soviet Union were that it was only fair since they were an ally; it would have allowed us to make the bomb quicker if we worked together; and it would prevent one country from having too much power. The only reason why students had thought that the Soviet Union should not be given the information is that they felt they couldn't be trusted with it.

Table 4 <i>Responses to Question 2 on Post-Reading Questions</i>			
<u>Yes</u>	<u>Male %</u>	<u>Female %</u>	<u>Total %</u>
Fair to ally	16	6	7
Easier for Americans	0	6	2
Balanced power	8	0	2
Total	24	12	11
<u>No</u>	<u>Male %</u>	<u>Female %</u>	<u>Total %</u>
Soviet Union can't be trusted	76	88	66
<u>Focus of response</u>	<u>Male %</u>	<u>Female %</u>	<u>Total %</u>
Caution	84	88	91
Friendship	16	12	9
<i>Note.</i> 61% of the participants were male and 39% were female.			



The responses to this question were difficult to classify as pre-conventional and conventional using Kohlberg's and Gilligan's models together as there would be differences depending on whether a student applied an ethics of care or an ethics of justices (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010; Rachels, 1999). Part of this is due to the fact that the questions mentioned America, Britain, and the Soviet Union specifically. In addition, students learned that the Cold War took place when the Soviet Union discovered how to make an atomic bomb and that the Soviet Union was Germany's ally earlier in the war (Sheinkin, 2012). However, the reasoning could be categorized by the moral students were considering when making their decision.

I found that the types of responses could be categorized by two moral values: friendship and caution. The responses that showed that the Soviet Union should have been given the information because they were allies were classified as focusing on friendship since there was a desire to protect the alliance. Although the responses that showed the information should have been given because it would be easier for Americans seem driven by greed, they were also classified as focusing on friendship because the responses mentioned a desire to work as a team. The responses that showed that the Soviet Union could not be trusted fell into the caution category as the students felt that the Soviet Union could not be trusted and giving them the information would endanger the United States and possibly other countries too. Responses that showed the Soviet Union should be given the information because there needs to be a balance of power were also categorized under caution as the students felt that other countries needed the information and America could not be trusted with the power it would have if the

information was not shared. Both female and male students overwhelmingly chose caution over friendship.

### Key Findings

After analyzing the results of the study, there were three key findings that answered the question, “In what ways does the implementation of critical literacy impact the moral reasoning of adolescents?” I found that critical literacy impacted the moral traits students exhibited and used to solve moral dilemmas and also helped students understand the complexity of moral dilemmas. However, there was not a significant change in the level of moral development of the students.

Change in moral traits. Hardy et al. (2011) found that adolescents base their morals on the morals of role models or prototypes and their morals change as they encounter more role models. I believe that this study has confirmed that. The moral traits students showed in class and that they used to make decisions regarding moral dilemmas changed during the study as students became exposed to more perspectives on morals.

At the beginning of the study, some students would occasionally make hateful comments that were sexist, xenophobic, racist, etc. By the end of the study, these comments were no longer made demonstrating an increase in the moral trait of tolerance. Other changes were evident during the discussion regarding whether or not the

Norwegian resistance fighters should have used the cyanide capsules, several students expressed their desire to follow the expectations of God and Jesus which suggests that they are moral prototypes for those students. However, many students changed their opinion after listening to the points made by their classmates who argued that it would be more ethical to use the pills.

In addition, male students went from 0% basing their response to the 2nd question on friendship, to 12 % and the rest on caution. Ambition was not considered in the post questions, but made up 8% of the male responses in the beginning. Female participants had a reduction in the focus on friendship from 25% to 18%. Instead, they increased the focus on caution. The variety of morals focused on in responses to the reading questions was also reduced. The morals that were included were similar to those used by characters to deal with the moral dilemmas. This shows that students might have used the characters as moral prototypes ( Groenke et al, 2010; Hardy et al., 2011)

Awareness of complexity of moral dilemmas. McLaughlin and DeVogd (2004a) describe the second principal of critical literacy as identifying a problem and examining different aspects of it to understand its complexity. All of the critical literacy tasks discussed in Chapter Three and Chapter Four adhered to this principle as they focused on

analyzing multiple perspectives. The focus on different perspectives impacted the moral reasoning of students.

At the beginning of the study many students would act impulsively. When they answered the pre-reading questions, most of them raced through them. Although they all explained their reasoning, most of the explanations were brief. In our discussion after critical literacy tasks, students had to look at decisions regarding moral dilemmas from multiple perspectives. This required students to consider that dilemmas can be solved in several ways, but each has its own consequence (Kohlberg, 1975). When students answered the post-reading questions, there was a noticeable change in the amount of time students took writing their responses. The difficulty students had was also evident in their responses as some students wrote that the questions were difficult to answer. They also expressed their difficulty by weighing the pros and cons of each decision before coming to a conclusion. This shows that these students were able to complete the critical literacy method of analyzing different aspects of a problem and perspectives.

No significant change in moral level. Kohlberg (1975) and Turiel (1977) believed that in order for people to advance to higher stages of moral development, they need to be exposed to moral dilemmas and reasoning that go against their own thinking. This way moral codes are called into question, evaluated, and improved. Kohlberg suggested that

this be done in classrooms by allowing students to discuss moral dilemmas so that students are able to experience higher levels of moral reasoning.

Although there were changes in the moral traits of the students and their understanding of the complexity of moral dilemmas, the results did not show a clear change in the moral level of the students. The percentage of female students who considered how their actions would impact others when responding the the first question were the same for the pre and post reading questions which suggests no long term shift between pre-conventional to conventional/post-conventional moral reasoning. There was an insignificant change in the male responses. Although this study did not show any significant change in the moral levels of students, discussion did make an impact on their views (Kohlberg, 1975).

### Summary

Multiple critical literacy methods were implemented in order to determine if they would impact the moral reasoning of adolescents. The discussion of the results in this chapter showed that the activities impacted the moral traits students used to consider moral dilemmas. In some students the level of moral reasoning also changed through the discussion after critical literacy tasks.

Some activities were more effective than others for the purpose of considering moral dilemmas and evaluating morals. Discussion and research into missing and marginalized perspectives seemed to have the biggest impact. Suggested changes to some of the tasks were provided to increase their potential effectiveness.

In the next chapter, the information gained from the study is synthesized and is presented as key findings. The implications of the study and recommendations for future research are also presented. Finally, I describe how the results were communicated.

## CHAPTER 5

### Conclusion

#### Introduction

In Chapter One I told the story of my journey to my capstone question, “In what ways does the implementation of critical literacy impact the moral reasoning of adolescents?” The question was personally relevant as it was studied in order to help my students think deeply about their perspectives, the perspectives of others, and the choices they make. Nobody is perfect, or will ever be, but by thinking deeply about these topics, I believed my students would become more understanding of others and themselves. It is an increase of these understandings that is necessary for the betterment of society.

In order to determine whether or not a critical literacy approach to teaching English would have an impact on the morals and behavior of my students, I researched several theories regarding moral development. In addition, I identified several specific critical literacy methods that focused on different perspectives in order to help students think about perspectives besides their own. It was important for me to expose students to

a variety of perspectives as their reality was similar to mine growing up and reflected little diversity.

In this chapter I share with you how the journey I took while completing this study changed me as a teacher, a parent, and a person. In addition, I will share with you the limitations of the study. Suggestions for future research are presented so that the next steps in my journey are clear.

### Lessons From the Journey

When I first developed the question for my study, I did not consider any impact it might have on myself. I was focused on the possible benefits it would have for my students and in what ways I could help make a difference for them, and, by extension, our community. However, through reflection, I cannot deny that the journey I took through the research, planning, implementation, and analysis of the results changed me as a teacher, parent, and person.

Teacher. Teaching is my passion and knowing that nobody knows everything about teaching, I have always worked on improving my practice. This study has taught me several lessons that has improved my teaching.

Prior to this study, people who visited my room would see a lot of reading and writing being done by my students, but not much meaningful discussion. One of the



things I truly learned was the importance of classroom discussion and that it is an essential element of a lesson. Although I knew before that discussion had many benefits and was important, I did not make sure that it took place daily in my classroom. A lot of times it seemed as if it was an add-on and not always thought out. This study helped me realize the importance of making time for meaningful discussion everyday. The tasks that were not paired with discussion did not seem to make as big of an impact on the moral reasoning of students. This finding corresponded with Kohlberg's (1975) belief that discussion of moral dilemmas increases the moral development of students. As I began to be more conscious of allowing time for discussion and making sure it was planned out before, I noticed an improvement in student comprehension and the classroom environment as students learned more about different perspectives they had not considered while listening to classmates.

Another important lesson from this study is the importance of having students analyze perspectives represented in texts. When students and parents visit my room on orientation night, many of them get excited when they see the variety of award-winning texts on my shelf that are used in my curriculum. The texts include a variety of perspectives that span centuries and cultures. I was proud of the texts I selected to use, but this study helped me realize how crucial of a step I was missing. While it is important

and beneficial to expose students to a variety of perspectives, they also need to be taught how to analyze the representation of them in order to truly understand them (McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004b). Also, since the content of student discussions suggested that they had moral prototypes (Hardy et al., 2011), I learned that it is important that students critically analyze perspectives in a text in order to decrease the chances of them selecting an immoral character or individual as a prototype just because they seem “edgy” or “funny.”

The process of action research itself also changed me as a teacher. By conducting action research I learned how to take the initiative to solve classroom issues through my own research. This was empowering because I was taking control to find a solution for my own students as Mills (2014) observed with other teachers. In addition, it reinforced the importance and benefits of reflection as I was able to analyze the effectiveness of each critical literacy method and plan ways to modify them to make them more effective next time.

Finally, the results of the study made gender differences more apparent. Before the study I did not always notice a general difference between the moral traits of the

males and females. Gilligan (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010) believed that there is a difference between males and females in terms of moral codes. While I noticed that this was true for my students as a whole, students from both genders used some of the same moral traits when responding to the moral dilemma. This has made me more conscious of how I treat the genders in my classroom and make sure that I am not promoting gender stereotypes and that students feel free to base their moral code on any moral trait. It has also encouraged me to have more open conversations with gender stereotypes with students to make them aware of the issue.

Parent. One lesson that I learned through this study that has implications for parents is that if we want our children to have strong morals, it is important to instill those in them early and spend a lot of time working on them. Although some changes were apparent in the students through this study, it made me wonder how much change could have been made if we were given more time.

As parents it is also essential that we surround our children with positive moral prototypes through my own behavior and with diverse characters accurately depicted in books (Janks, 2014; Lapsley & Lasky, 2001). However, it is not enough to simply surround our children with these texts. We need to teach our children how to critically

analyze a text and how to consider multiple perspectives when attempting to solve a moral dilemma.

Prior to this study I would often choose to read books to my small children based on how much enjoyment they would get from the book and/or the message the author conveyed. While reading to them they would often interrupt me to share a connection or insight they had, however we rarely, if at all, had discussions about the actions or depictions of the characters. Now these discussions are occurring more often. For example, rather than just commenting on the exciting spells learned by Harry Potter in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (Rowling, 2002) and his narrow escapes, my children and I also talk about the representation of house elves and giants and discuss how individual characters appear to break the stereotypes that Rowling says exist in the wizarding world. Discussions such as these are easy to include when reading aloud a book to children and it is worthwhile because being able to identify and analyze these issues with characters prepares children to identify and analyze issues in the real world (Groenke et al., 2010).

Person. It might seem strange to some that this study also impacted me on a personal level in several ways, but the reality is that it did. One of these ways was that it helped increase my confidence in myself. I learned to believe that I was capable of

finding a solution to issues in my classroom and that I was also an educational researcher. Prior to this study I would often ask colleagues for advice with most of my issues. Now, I find most of my answers and ideas through research. The other ways it impacted me did not become evident until later.

On April 16, 2016 my little brother committed suicide while suffering from extreme confusion after having gone days without sleep. For days I did not think I would be able to move past this loss, and honestly did not want to as I felt it would be dishonoring him by moving on. However, the skills entwined with critical literacy and action research helped me cope. Before conducting this study, I would not always take action to correct injustices besides voicing my opinions to a few people directly related to a situation and reporting issues that concerned my students. However, after the study I felt that there was no need to feel uncomfortable about taking action, but rather it was my duty. This change in attitude was most evident when I thought about my brother's death and some of the injustices.

One of the injustices was the stigmas and stereotypes regarding those with mental illness and those who attempt or commit suicide. When my brother passed, many people thought it was either due to a brain tumor or depression. They refused to acknowledge that he wasn't experiencing either of these and that he was acting delusional due to sleep

deprivation. It seemed as if they wanted to blame it on things that are more easily understood and not as stigmatized. This bothered me because it made me believe that people having issues with delusions or psychosis probably feel isolated and misunderstood by others. One of my sisters and I are planning on keeping Miles' story alive and encouraging research on mental illness and awareness in a few ways. First, we are establishing a scholarship for students who will be studying psychology. Secondly, we will be creating an annual tractor/truck show with proceeds going to charities for suicide prevention and mental health awareness.

Another injustice I have the courage to take action against concerns policies that contributed to his death. My brother was taken to a mental health clinic the day before his death, but as he said that he would not hurt himself or others, the counselor was unable to keep him. If the counselor was able to keep him for a few days because he was not in the right mind and unable to really answer the questions, he would probably be still alive. Before this study I never would have had the courage to push for changes in law, now I do.

### Limitations

There were a few limitations in this study including the length of time and the amount of student absences. The research I read regarding moral development showed

changes over years (Kakkori & Huttunen, 2010). In this study data was collected in two months and this length of time was a limitation. Although some change did occur in the morals of the students in this time, it would be difficult to make a significant and permanent change with such a reduction in time. Some changes in moral traits were observed, but there would need to be later observations to ensure that the impact wasn't just temporary.

In addition, there was little diversity among the participants. A study that included a more diverse population would be valuable. If a class is diverse, multiple perspectives would be presented often if teachers are utilizing discussion. If these students are already exposed to multiple perspectives frequently, their might not be as big of an impact on their moral reasoning compared to students from a less diverse class.

#### Future Plans

My study has ended and the results have been analyzed. However, this is not the end. I plan to share the results in order to encourage a larger implementation of critical literacy methods in my school and in other schools. I also intend to conduct further research to address gaps in this study.

Sharing of results. Parents, students, and administration were informed prior to the study that the results would be available on Hamline University's Digital Commons (see Appendix A: Consent form). This is a searchable database that is available to anyone. This will allow others to read about this study in order to inform their instruction or to fuel further research.

A summary of the results was also presented to the administration, parents, and students. The summary included a review of the process, the key findings, and implications. Information from the pre and post reading questions was also provided. Data pertaining to individual students was given to parents and students upon request.

I intend to also share results with other English teachers through publication or presentation. The information would be useful to educators at the middle or secondary level, so I intend to submit an article about the study and results to *The English Journal*, *Voices from the Middle*, or *Minnesota English Journal*. In addition, I would like to present my process and findings at a Minnesota Council of Teachers of English (MCTE) convention in the future. While conducting my literature research for this study I found a plethora of useful information, I feel that it is only fitting that I add to the body of knowledge by sharing my results with others.



Future research. One gap in this study was the impact of critical literacy on behavior. An increase in moral reasoning does not always lead to a significant change in behavior (Kohlberg, 1975). While this study did include some observation notes, notes were mostly taken only on discussion. It would be valuable to also study how the implementation of critical literacy impacts the behavior of students. This would show whether or not students are acting upon an increase and change in moral traits. Data could include observation notes and surveys. If the results are positive in this future study, administrators and school board members will likely be more convinced to encourage critical literacy methods across grade levels and content areas as the benefits will be more visible.

Another gap in this study is that students were rarely asked to discuss specific moral traits or explain which traits are the most important to them. The study showed a change in moral traits that were focused on when responding to the reading questions and based on discussion in class, but there was not a clear indication of which morals the students found important. Hardy et al. (2011) found that adolescents consider multiple moral traits to be important. Students did not specify moral traits in their explanations and work samples, so it would be beneficial to have students list the moral traits they find

valuable at the beginning and end of a study to determine how their interpretations of a moral person changed.

A final gap in the study was that work samples were not analyzed for struggling readers. Although I had my reasons for making this decision, I can't help but wonder if the impact would be larger, smaller, or similar to that of average and above average readers. Kohlberg (1975) believed that the level of reasoning a person is able to do has a close correlation to their level of moral development. Since McLaughlin and DeVogd (2004b) claim that critical literacy can lead to deeper comprehension, this suggests that critical literacy will result in better comprehension which will enable students to analyze texts which will lead to a stronger ability to reason which will lead to a higher level of moral development.

### Summary

This study was personally significant to me as it gave me an opportunity to explore a way to open the eyes of my students in a way that I wish mine were at that age. It also allowed me to not only learn about different methods of critical literacy, but also

evaluate their effectiveness in the moral development of students and determine ways to modify the assignments for future use. This was important to me as I want to make a difference in the lives of my students and help them understand how they can make a positive impact as well. As a result, the study addresses the component of Hamline University's School of Education's Framework that focuses on a desire to promote equity in schools and society.

Conducting action research has helped me grow as a learner and a teacher. The benefits I experienced of researching and implementing research-based practices and evaluating their effectiveness has given me a desire to do even more research. The evaluation and analysis involved with this study has already given me ideas for future studies. This study is just the beginning.

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## APPENDIX

## Appendix A

### Consent Form

### Parental Informed Consent Form

Dear Parent/Guardian:

I am your child's English teacher and am a graduate student currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Literacy Education through Hamline University. As part of my graduate work, I plan to conduct research in my classroom from January 11- February 29, 2016. The purpose of this letter is to ask your permission for your child to take part in this research. This research is public scholarship. The abstract and final product will be cataloged in Hamline's Bush Library Digital Commons, a searchable electronic repository, and it may be published or used in other ways.

The purpose of my project is to study the possible impact of a critical literacy approach to teaching English on the decision-making abilities of adolescents. I have chosen this focus in hopes of making a larger impact on my students beyond simply teaching them about my subject. I plan to incorporate critical literacy methods during our unit on *Bomb* from January 11-February 29, 2016. Students will discuss the actions of individuals in the book and the moral dilemmas they faced, and students will also complete assignments that require them to explore multiple perspectives. To conclude the *Bomb* unit, students will write a multi-genre paper that requires them to consider in-depth a perspective that is missing from the book, after which students will answer a few

questions to show whether or not the practice of exploring multiple perspectives changed the way they consider and seek to resolve moral dilemmas.

All assignments given during the unit will be analyzed to determine if changes have been made in the ways that students view and attempt to solve moral dilemmas. Observation notes will also be taken and analyzed, as I will be noting down students' verbal comments during class discussions that demonstrate thinking and reasoning regarding the moral dilemmas individuals faced in the text. In addition, student classwork samples from the following assignments will be collected and analyzed and may be included in Chapter 4 of the capstone and/or in the appendix: Bomb Unit Pre-Questions; Bomb Unit Post-Questions; Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait; Discussion Web; and the multi-genre paper.

There is little to no risk for your child to participate. All results and work samples included will be confidential and anonymous. Pseudonyms for the school and the students will be used. Participation is voluntary and you may decide at any time and without negative consequences that information about your child or their work will not be included in the study. If your child's classwork is used in the capstone, all excerpts, results and analysis will be confidential and anonymous. All identifiers will be removed from any work samples used.

I have received permission from the School of Education at Hamline University and from the principal to conduct this study. The capstone will be cataloged in Hamline's Bush Library Digital Commons, a searchable electronic repository. My results might also be included in an article for publication in a professional journal or in a report at a

professional conference. In all cases, your child's identity and participation in the study will be confidential.

Thank you for your consideration. If you agree to allow your child to participate, keep this page. Fill out the duplicate agreement and return it to me no later than January 8, 2016. Please keep the parent/guardian and participant copy for your records.

Yours truly,

Sierra Gilbertson

7th, 8th, and 12th English

### Informed Consent to Conduct Research

*Keep this portion for your records.*

I have received your letter about your research study for which you will be implementing critical literacy, taking observation notes, collecting work samples, and analyzing the results. I understand that the capstone will be cataloged in Hamline's Bush Library Digital Commons, a searchable electronic repository, and that they might also be included in an article for publication in a professional journal or in a report at a professional conference. I understand that work samples will be collected and give permission for those samples to be analyzed and excerpted in the Capstone. I understand that the study poses little to no risk for my child, his/her identity will be confidential, and we can withdraw at any time. I give permission for my child to participate in this study.

---

Parent/Guardian Signature

---

Date

Participant Copy

### Informed Consent to Conduct Research

*Return this portion to Sierra Gilbertson.*

I have received your letter about your research study for which you will be implementing critical literacy, taking observation notes, collecting work samples, and analyzing the results. I understand that the capstone will be cataloged in Hamline's Bush Library Digital Commons, a searchable electronic repository, and that they might also be included in an article for publication in a professional journal or in a report at a professional conference. I understand that work samples will be collected and give permission for those samples to be analyzed and excerpted in the Capstone. I understand that the study poses little to no risk for my child, his/her identity will be confidential, and we can withdraw at any time. I give permission for my child to participate in this study.

---

Parent/Guardian Signature

---

Date

Researcher Copy



## Appendix B

### Bomb Unit Pre-Reading Questions

Participant Number \_\_\_\_\_

*Bomb Unit Pre-Questions*

Directions: Read each scenario and answer the questions that follow. Explain your answers as much as possible.

I.

Two countries are at war. One of the countries develops an advanced weapon that would be able to end the war so no more of their soldiers are killed. However, if the weapon was used, thousands of the other country's civilians would die.

Should the weapon be used? Why or why not?

II.

A scientist has been asked by his country to develop the most powerful weapon in the world. While creating it, he realizes that it might give his country too much power and considers leaking the secrets to scientists from a country which is an ally to his. If he does leak the information, he would be punished severely.

Should he do it? Why or why not?

## Appendix C

### Bomb Unit Post-Questions

Participant Number \_\_\_\_\_

*Bomb* Unit Post-Questions

Directions: Respond to each question as thoroughly as possible.

1. Should we have dropped the bombs in Nagasaki and Hiroshima? Explain.

2. Should American and British scientists have provided information about the bombs to the Soviet scientists?

Appendix D  
Observation Notes

## **Observation Notes**

Student Name _____	Date _____
Observations:	
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Reflection:	
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Student Name _____	Date _____
Observations:	
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Reflection:	
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## Appendix E

### Text Set

## Text Set

Text	Topic	Genre	Summary
<i>Bomb</i> by Steve Sheinkin	WWII, atomic bombs, Hiroshima, Manhattan Project, nuclear physics	Narrative nonfiction	Scientists around the world realize the possibility of nuclear weapons and begin a race to be the first to build it before their enemies. Multiple perspectives are presented to show the complexity of the situation.
“There Will Come Soft Rains” by Ray Bradbury	Nuclear war, effects of war, extinction of humans	Short story	The year is 2026 and all humans have died as a result of nuclear warfare. A few animals survive along with forms of technology. Eventually they also die out and



			nothing is left.
Excerpt from <i>Unbroken</i> by Laura Hillenbrand	WWII, prisoner of war, olympic athlete, resilience, survival	Biography	After his plane crashes in the Pacific during a rescue mission, an olympic athlete finds himself stuck on a raft for over a month. Finally he finds land, but is captured by the Japanese and endures torture in their POW camps.
“6 Things You Should Know About the Iran Nuclear Deal” by Eyder Peralta	Iran nuclear deal, negotiation	Informational article	Eyder explains six components of the Iran Nuclear Deal.
Theresa Strottman interview of Kay Manley	Manhattan Project, scientist’s wife, WWII, living conditions in Los Alamos	Interview	Kay Manley discusses her experiences living in Los Alamos while her husband worked

			for the Manhattan Project.
<i>Hiroshima</i> from BBC	Hiroshima, WWII, atomic bomb	Documentary	The development of the atomic bomb and the plan for dropping it are presented. The reason behind the decision to drop it is also explained and survivors share their stories.

## Appendix F

### Mind Portrait/Alternative Portrait

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Text \_\_\_\_\_

### **Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait**

<b>Mind Portrait</b>	<b>Alternative Mind Portrait</b>
Perspective:	Perspective:

*Adapted from McLaughlin & Allen (2002)*

## Appendix G

### Discussion Web

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Discussion Web**

<u>No</u>		<u>Question</u>		<u>Yes</u>
		<u>Conclusion</u>		

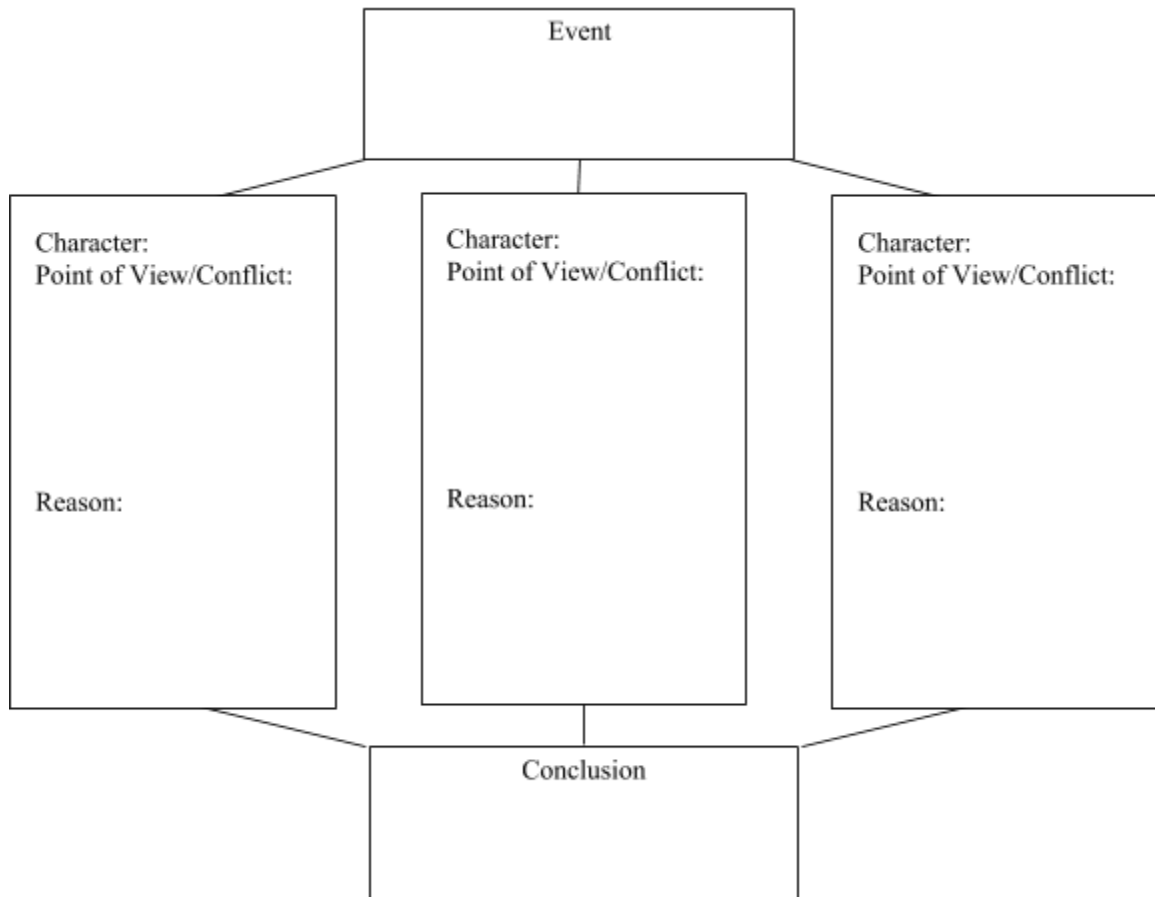
*Adapted from Alvermann (1991)*

Appendix H

Multiple Perspectives Web

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## **Multiple Perspectives Web**



*Adapted from Linder (2004)*



Appendix I

Problem-Posing Questions

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## **Problem-Posing Questions**

Text \_\_\_\_\_

1. Who is in the text/picture/situation? Whose voices are represented?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Who is missing? Whose voices are not represented? Whose voices are marginalized or discounted?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What are the intentions of the author? What does the author want the reader to think?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What would an alternative text/picture/situation say?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. How can the reader use this information to promote equity?

Appendix J  
Multi-Genre Paper

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Multi-Genre Paper Process

### Step I

**Directions:** Think about your responses to the Problem-Posing Questions. Choose a perspective that was absent from *Bomb* or was marginalized that you would like to explore. Then brainstorm what you already know and what you would like to learn.

1. Chosen Perspective:
2. What do you already know about the topic and perspective? Include sources of information if possible.
3. What do you want to know about the topic and perspective?

**Step II**

**Directions:** Identify at least four different sources that discuss your person or events related to the building and dropping of the atomic bombs. For each of your sources, write the title, the author, and the publication date. Summarize your findings from each making sure to use your own words.

<b>Source</b> <b>(Title, author, date)</b>	<b>Summary of important information</b>

### **Step III**

**Directions:** Consider what is the most important information you need to convey about your chosen perspective so that others understand it. Then determine which genre would best represent that moment, aspect, etc. Your paper should include at least four different genre types.

Important People, Places, Things, Moments, Acts, Conversations	What genre would best represent this?

### **Step IV**

**Directions:** On separate paper, create a rough draft for each genre piece. When done, show them to Mrs. Gilbertson to receive feedback.

**Step V**

**Directions:** Revise the genre pieces and blend them into a coherent whole. When done, show it to Mrs. Gilbertson to receive feedback.

**Step VI**

**Directions:** Make necessary revisions. Write an introduction for your paper that explains the reason why you chose your perspective and a reflection on what you learned by completing it. Create a bibliography that lists the sources used.

**Step VII**

**Directions:** Design a container for your completed paper. Give it to Mrs. Gilbertson with your completed paper inside. Take pride in your great work!

## Appendix K

### Character Perspective Chart



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## **Character Perspective Chart**

1. Who is your character?
2. Setting: Where and when does your story take place?
3. Conflict: What is your character's problem?
4. Goal: What is your character's goal?
5. Attempt: What does your character do to solve the problem or reach the goal?
6. Outcome: What happened as a result of the character's attempt?
7. Reaction: How does your character feel about the outcome?
8. Theme: What point did the author want to make?

*Adapted from Shanahan & Shanahan (1997)*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Character Perspective Chart**

	<b>Character:</b>	<b>Character:</b>
<b>Setting</b>		
<b>Conflict</b>		
<b>Goal</b>		
<b>Attempt</b>		
<b>Outcome</b>		
<b>Reaction</b>		
<b>Theme</b>		

*Adapted from Shanahan & Shanahan (1997)*

## Appendix L

### Updated Mind Portrait/Alternative Portrait

Name\_\_\_\_\_

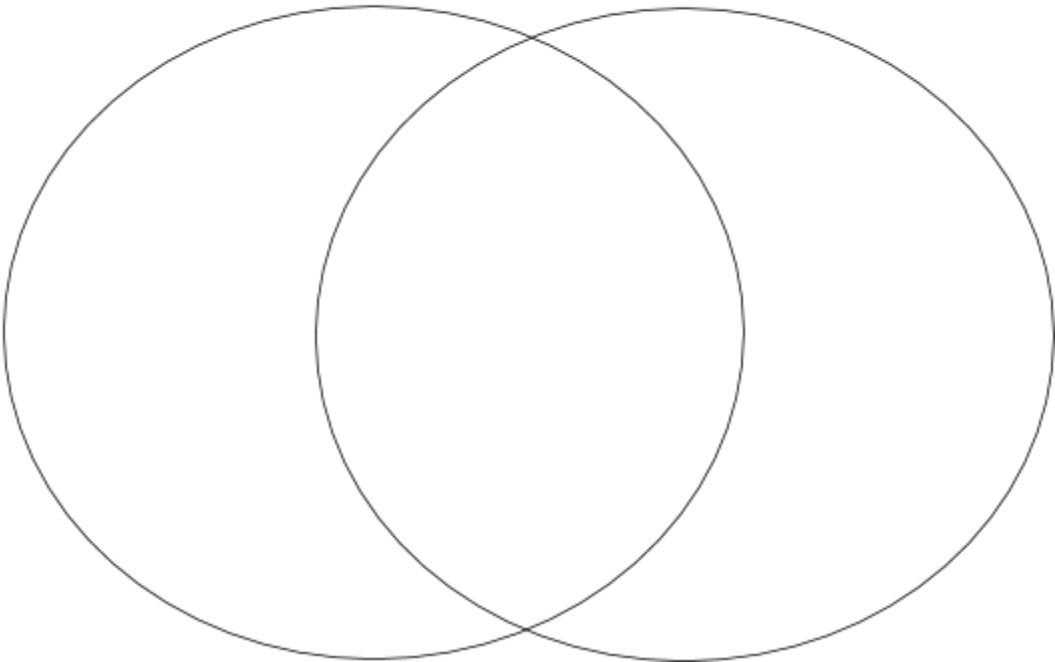
Text\_\_\_\_\_

**Mind Portrait/Alternative Mind Portrait**

Perspective 1:	Perspective 2:

Perspective 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Perspective 2: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix M

### Updated Discussion Web

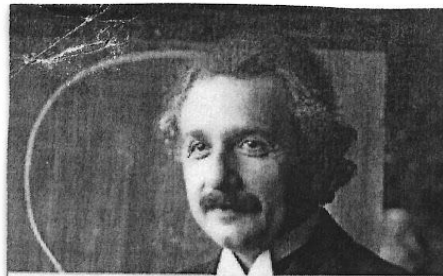
Name \_\_\_\_\_

## **Discussion Web**

<u>No</u>	Should _____ have _____ _____ _____?	<u>Yes</u>
	<u>Conclusion</u> 1. Should the character have completed the action? Explain.	
	2. What moral/value did the character show with this action?	
	3. Would you be concerned about the same moral/value as the character? Explain.	

## Appendix N

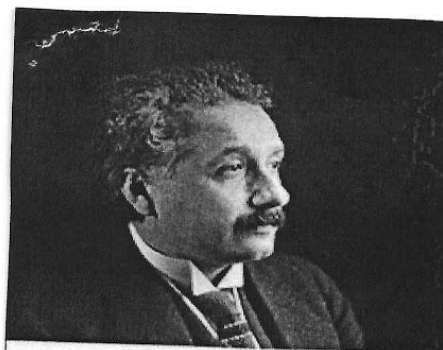
### Einstein Snapchat



Have you seen my newest invention!



No, I haven't, what have you invented now.



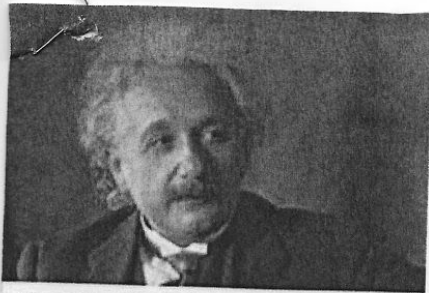
I have made a formula to describe fission.



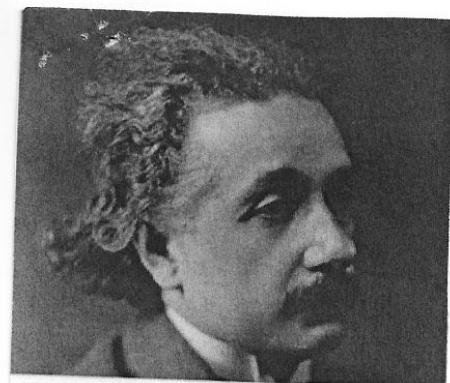
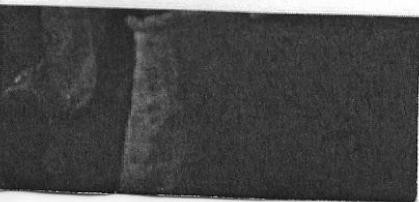
Wow, that is a pretty good discovery, but I wish you would stop bragging about all the stuff you do.







I'm not trying to brag but i'm just telling  
you what my latest discoveries are.



Thank you for understanding, I agree that it  
will help in the project a lot!



Okay, well good job on your latest  
discoveries and I know it will help the  
Manhattan project greatly!



## Appendix O

### Einstein Twitter





**Albert Einstein** @scienceiscool\_ 3m

I wasn't involved in the making of the bomb, except for the snapchats I sent to the president.  
#leavemealongegrooves



**Grooves** @grooves\_bomb 1m

@scienceiscool\_ you were too involved Einstein, don't start lying to make yourself look innocent.



**Albert Einstein**  
@scienceiscool\_

@grooves\_bomb I never intended the bomb to be dropped on Hiroshima, that was your call.

Reply to Grooves

Appendix P  
Big Six Dialogue

# Dialogue of Big 6 Meeting

Vote Counter: All in favor of surrendering say "Aye." If not say "No".

PM Admiral Rontero: Aye, we don't need more people dead!

Chief of the Army: NO!!! If we surrender, we lose our dignity as soldiers, surrendering is unacceptable!!

Minister of the Navy: I second that!

Minister of Foreign Affairs: You guys are crazy! Why allow millions of people to be killed just because you guys are afraid of losing your dignity. I vote surrender.

Chief of Navy: I also will not surrender when we can so easily attack their mainland. A few towns lost is the price of war.

Vote Counter: What about you Minister of War General Korechika Anami.

Mow General: I think yes.

Radio Broadcaster: *"IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT BY EMPEROR HIROHITO!"*

Emperor: *"Today we will formally surrender and agree to the U.S. terms. I can not allow any more innocent lives to die because of our ignorance, thank you for your time."*

Radio Broadcaster: *"And now back to hit song 'Japanese Flowers'."*

Vote Counter: Okay folks, there's our decision, this session is now over.

## Appendix Q

### Pre and Post Reading Question Analysis Template



## Pre and Post Questions Analysis Template

<i>Responses to Question ____ on _____ Reading Questions</i>			
<u>Yes</u>	<u>Male%</u>	<u>Female%</u>	<u>Total%</u>
<u>No</u>	<u>Male%</u>	<u>Female%</u>	<u>Total%</u>
<u>Focus of Response</u>	<u>Male%</u>	<u>Female%</u>	<u>Total%</u>
<i>Note.</i> ____% of the students were male and ____% of the students were female.			