

**CO-TEACHING IN INCLUSIVE SECONDARY ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
CLASSROOMS: A STUDY OF THREE PARTNERSHIPS**

by

Tabetha Bernstein-Danis

Bachelor of Science, Rhode Island College, 1999

Master of Education, Rhode Island College, 2002

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
School of Education in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

University of Pittsburgh

2012

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

This dissertation was presented

by

Tabetha Bernstein-Danis

It was defended on

August 24, 2012

and approved by

Amanda Godley, Associate Professor, School of Education, University of Pittsburgh

Jessica Enoch, Associate Professor, Arts and Sciences, University of Maryland

Christopher Lemons, Assistant Professor, School of Education, University of Pittsburgh

Amanda Thein, Associate Professor, School of Education, University of Iowa

Dissertation Advisor: Amanda Godley, Associate Professor, School of Education

Copyright © by Tabettha Bernstein-Danis

2012

CO-TEACHING IN INCLUSIVE SECONDARY ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CLASSROOMS: A STUDY OF THREE PARTNERSHIPS

Tabetha Bernstein-Danis, PhD

University of Pittsburgh, 2012

This study aims to explore the development of co-teaching partnerships between secondary English language arts (ELA) and special education teachers and the manner in which the co-teachers deliver literacy instruction for students with diverse abilities in inclusive secondary ELA classrooms. The study explores the uses of both best practices in ELA (e.g., Atwell, 1998; Nystrand et al. 2003) and scaffolding techniques (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976) that serve to help students work in their zones of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1986). Furthermore, it considers the affordances and limitations of certain kinds of instruction and scaffolding in the offered by three partnerships in two classrooms at the same school. The study offers a contextually-bound portrait of co-teaching in secondary English education and brings together two bodies of research: best practices in co-teaching and inclusive instruction and best practices in ELA instruction.

Findings suggest that even in schools with co-teaching models that are considered “successful,” limited teacher training, planning time, and ongoing support for co-teaching may prove problematic in several ways: special education teachers may still end up serving in a support rather than co-teaching role, new partnerships may falter, and stronger partnerships may be the result of idiosyncratic factors beyond the control of a local education agency (e.g., the development of a close friendship between co-teachers) and therefore prove difficult to replicate. Further, the perception of strong co-teaching partnerships and rigorous instruction may lead to

lowered expectations and an overuse of scaffolding in inclusive classrooms, particularly when all students in the classroom are seen as “struggling” students by the teachers. These findings suggest that in even schools and districts that appear to have successful co-teaching models and classrooms that appear to provide all students with rigorous ELA instruction, deeper investigation may reveal the need for intervention and support such as increased communication between administrators and co-teachers and training in the use of tools and techniques that enable co-teachers to recognize possible barriers to rigorous instruction.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	GOAL OF THE STUDY.....	1
1.2	BACKGROUND.....	5
	1.2.1 Policy Context: NCLB and IDEA	5
	1.2.2 Co-teaching as a model for inclusive instruction	7
1.3	CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: A SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE.....	9
	1.3.1 Vygotskian Concept Formation and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).....	9
	1.3.2 Scaffolding within the ZPD	10
	1.3.3 Scaffolding Literacy Tasks	11
1.4	RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	12
1.5	METHODOLOGY	14
	1.5.1 Context and Participants.....	14
	1.5.1.1 Demographics.....	14
	1.5.1.2 Assessment Data.....	15
	1.5.1.3 The Co-Teachers and the Co-Teaching Context.....	17
	1.5.2 Procedures	18

1.5.2.1 Methodological Justification	18
1.5.2.2 Data Collection	20
1.5.3 Data Analysis and Interpretation	23
1.5 .4 Findings and Implications	24
2.0 CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	31
2.1 INTRODUCTION	31
2.2 DEFINING THE LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE)	32
2.2.1 LRE as Cascade Model.....	32
2.2.2 From “Mainstreaming” to “Inclusive Education”	33
2.2.3 The Legacy of the Regular Education Initiative (REI)	33
2.3 RECENT LEGISLATION AND INCLUSION DEBATES	34
2.3.1 Effects of NCLB and IDEA 2004	34
2.3.2 Criticisms of Current Inclusive Educational Policies	35
2.3.3 Focusing on Academic Needs of Students with Disabilities	37
2.4 FACTORS THAT LEAD TO MORE SUCCESSFUL INCLUSIVE INSTRUCTION	39
2.4.1 The Possible Benefits of Inclusive Education	39
2.4.2 Schaeffner and Buswell’s Ten Elements	40
2.4.3 Administrative Support	40
2.4.4 Flexibility	41
2.4.5 Parents and Families	43
2.5 COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS: CO-TEACHING IN THE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM	43

2.5.1 Models of Co-Teaching	43
2.5.2 Benefits of Co-Teaching.....	45
2.5.2.1 Benefits to Teachers.....	45
2.5.2.2 Benefits to Students	45
2.5.3 Challenges to Effective Co-Teaching.....	48
2.5.3.1 Special Educator as Teaching Assistant	48
2.5.3.2 Lack of Specialized Instruction for Students with Disabilities.....	49
2.5.3.3 Diminished Use of the IEP	52
2.5.3.4 Lack of Training and Planning Time.....	53
2.5.4 Defining and Supporting Successful Co-Teaching.....	54
2.5.4.1 Factors that Lead to Successful Co-Teaching	54
2.5.4.2 School-wide Commitment and Administrative Support.....	54
2.5.4.3 Preparation at the District and School Levels	55
2.5.4.4 Teacher Planning	56
2.5.4.5 Compatibility and Partnership.....	57
2.5.4.6 Development of Capacity	58
2.6 DESIGNING CURRICULA FOR INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS	60
2.6.1 Curricular Approaches for Addressing Learners of Diverse Abilities	60
2.6.2 Universal Design for Learning (UDL).....	62
2.6.3 Differentiated Instruction (DI)	64
2.6.4 Combining the Two Approaches	65
2.7: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON LEARNING.....	67

2.7.1 Sociocultural Perspectives	67
2.7.2 Vygotskian Concept Formation and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)	68
2.7.3 The Scaffolding Model.....	69
2.7.4 Scaffolding Concept Formation in Adolescents	70
2.8 FEATURES OF SCAFFOLDING IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CLASSROOM	71
2.8.1 Scaffolding Features in Discussion	71
2.8.2 Scaffolding Features in Reading and Literature Instruction.....	73
2.8.3 Scaffolding in Features in Writing Instruction	75
2.8.4 Scaffolding Techniques for Addressing Multiple Ability Levels in Inclusive Classrooms	79
3.0 CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY	83
3.1 INTRODUCTION	83
3.1.1 Rationale for Research Methodologies	84
3.2 THE SETTING AND PARTICIPANTS	86
3.2.1 The Setting	86
3.2.2 Participant Selection	89
3.3 DATA COLLECTION.....	90
3.3.1 Fieldnotes on Classroom Observations	90
3.3.2 Responsive Interviewing.....	91
3.3.3 Collection of Artifacts	93
3.4 DATA ANALYSIS.....	95

3.4.1 Open and Focused Coding	95
3.4.2 Use of NVIVO 9 Software for Data Analysis.....	96
3.4.3 Guiding Coding Categories	97
3.4.3.1 Guiding Coding Categories for Research Question 1: Tables 3.1 – 3.3	97
3.4.3.2 Guiding Coding Categories for Research Question 2: Tables 3.4 – 3.7	106
3.4.4 Recursive Nature of Qualitative Analysis and Interpretation	121
3.5 ESTABLISHING VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY THROUGH CORROBORATION AND REDUNDANCY	122
3.5.1 Triangulation as a Process for Achieving Corroboration and Redundancy	122
3.5.2 Corroboration to Build an Understanding of Concepts and Processes	123
3.5.3 An Example from the Data	123
3.6 SUMMARY.....	125
4.0 CHAPTER IV: DISTRICT CONTEXT	126
4.1. THE COMMUNITY, DISTRICT, AND SCHOOL	127
4.2 ANALYSIS OF STRENGTHS AND NEEDS ACCORDING TO SCHAEFFNER’S AND BUSWELL’S TEN ELEMENTS.....	128
4.2.1 School Culture	128
4.2.2 Deliberate processes to Ensure Student Accountability and Implementation of Effective Instruction	130
4.2.3 Successes and Challenges, Flexibility, and Dealing with Change.....	134

4.2.4 Common Philosophy and Strategic Plan, Ongoing Technical Support, and Support Networks	140
4.2.5 Strength of Leadership	143
4.3 SUMMARY	146
5.0 CHAPTER V: THE ADVANCED PARTNERSHIP	148
5.1 RESEARCH QUESTION 1: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CO-TEACHING PARTNERSHIP: JAMIE AND GINA	149
5.1.1 Area 1: Shared Views on Academic and Behavior Standards for Students	149
5.1.2 Area 2: Honest and Open Communication.....	151
5.1.3 Area 3: Ability to Problem Solve Without Making the Problems Personal	153
5.1.4 Area 4: Equal Pedagogical Skills.....	155
5.1.5 Area 5: Self-confidence, self-esteem, and the ability to take risks.....	158
5.2. RESEARCH QUESTION 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LITERACY INSTRUCTION IN JAMIE AND GINA’S CLASSROOM	160
5.2.1 The Nature of Reading and Literature Instruction	162
5.2.1.1 Components of the <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> Guides	165
5.2.2 The Nature of Discussion.....	176
5.2.3 The Nature of Writing Instruction	190
5.2.3.1 Clarity of Learning Goals	191
5.2.3.2 Scaffolding.....	192
5.2.3.3 Cognitive Challenge of Task.....	194

5.2.3.4 Clarity of Grading Criteria.....	199
5.3 SUMMARY	202
6.0 CHAPTER VI: THE BEGINNING PARTNERSHIP.....	208
6.1 RESEARCH QUESTION 1: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CO-TEACHING PARTNERSHIP: JAMIE AND DAVE	209
6.1.1 Area 1: Shared Views on Academic and Behavior Standards for Students	210
6.1.2 Area 2: Honest and Open Communication.....	217
6.1.3 Area 3: Ability to Problem Solve Without Making the Problems Personal	222
6.1.4 Area 4: Equal Pedagogical Skills	227
6.1.5 Area 5: Self-confidence, self-esteem, and the ability to take risks.....	230
6.2 RESEARCH QUESTION 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LITERACY INSTRUCTION IN JAMIE AND DAVE’S CLASSROOM	235
6.2.1 The Nature of Reading and Literature Instruction	235
6.2.2 The Nature of Discussion.....	238
6.2.3 The Nature of Writing Instruction	254
6.2.3.1 Clarity of Learning Goals	255
6.2.3.2 Scaffolding	256
6.2.3.3 Cognitive Challenge of Task	256
6.2.3.4 Clarity of Grading Criteria.....	258
6.3 SUMMARY	265
7.0 CHAPTER VII: THE INTERMEDIATE PARTNERSHIP.....	268

7.1 RESEARCH QUESTION 1: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CO-TEACHING PARTNERSHIP: SARA AND MINDY.....	269
7.1.1 Area 1: Shared Views on Academic and Behavior Standards for Students	271
7.1.2 Area 2: Honest and Open Communication.....	276
7.1.3 Area 3: Ability to Problem Solve Without Making the Problems Personal	279
7.1.4 Area 4: Equal Pedagogical Skills.....	282
7.1.5 Area 5: Self-confidence, self-esteem, and the ability to take risks.....	285
7.2. RESEARCH QUESTION 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LITERACY INSTRUCTION IN SARA AND MINDY’S CLASSROOM.....	288
7.2.1 The Nature of Reading and Literature Instruction	289
7.2.1.1 Read, Review, Responds.....	289
7.2.1.2 Independent Writing Projects	297
7.2.1.3 Whole Class Work with Common Texts	305
7.2.2 The Nature of Discussion.....	307
7.2.2.1 Whole Group Discussions	308
7.2.2.2 Engaging Talk: Use of Intertextually-Focused Questions and Text-Based Collaborative Learning	317
7.2.3 The Nature of Writing Instruction	323
7.2.3.1 Clarity of Learning Goals	324
7.2.3.2 Scaffolding.....	327
7.2.3.3 Cognitive Challenge of Task.....	330

7.2.3.4 Clarity of Grading	330
7.3 SUMMARY	335
8.0 CONCLUSION	338
8.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	339
8.1.1 Research Question 1.....	339
8.1.2 Research Question 2.....	343
8.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH	346
8.2.1 Significance to Research on Co-teaching.....	346
8.2.2 Significance to Theory of Scaffolding.....	349
8.2.3 Significance to Best Practices in ELA	351
8.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE.....	354
8.3.1 District- and School-Level Practices	355
8.3.2 Co-teaching in the ELA Classroom.....	356
8.3.3 Teacher Professional Development	360
8.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	364
8.5 DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.....	365
8.6 CONCLUSION	366
APPENDIX A	376
APPENDIX B	378
APPENDIX C	379
APPENDIX D	380
APPENDIX E	385
APPENDIX F	387

APPENDIX G.....	389
APPENDIX H.....	391
APPENDIX I.....	404
APPENDIX J.....	411
APPENDIX K.....	413
APPENDIX L.....	415
APPENDIX M.....	419
APPENDIX N.....	429
APPENDIX O.....	433
APPENDIX P.....	439
APPENDIX Q.....	445
APPENDIX R.....	449

LIST OF TABLES

Chapter 1

Table 1.1 2009 - 2010 Reading PSSAs.....	15
Table 1.2 2009 - 2010 Writing PSSAs.....	15

Chapter 3

Table 3.1 Schaeffner and Buswell's Ten Critical Elements	97
Table 3.2 Co-teaching Benefits.....	102
Table 3.3 Rice and Zigmond's Elements of Professional Co-teaching Compatibility.....	105
Table 3.4 Approaches for Students with Disabilities	107
Table 3.5 Scaffolding During Reading and Literature Instruction	110
Table 3.6 Scaffolding During Discussion.....	113
Table 3.7 Scaffolding During Writing Instruction.....	119

Chapter 5

Table 5.1 Analysis of <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> Guides.....	164
Table 5.2 Teacher Input in Gina and Jamie's Class	179
Table 5.3 Student Input in Gina and Jamie's Class.....	180
Table 5.4 Analysis of Characterization Essays.....	200

Chapter 6

Table 6.1 Teacher Input in Jamie and Dave's Class	241
Table 6.2 Student Input in Jamie and Dave's Class	245
Table 6.3 Analysis of <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> Projects	260

Chapter 7

Table 7.1 Teacher Input in Sara and Mindy's Class	309
Table 7.2 Student Input in Sara and Mindy's Class	310
Table 7.3 Analysis of Feedback on Myths.....	332

1.0 CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 GOAL OF THE STUDY

The goal of this study is to qualitatively explore the co-teaching model for inclusive literacy instruction in the context of three co-teaching partnerships in two secondary English language arts (ELA) classrooms, one seventh grade and one ninth grade classroom. In pursuit of this goal, the study aims to (1) develop a deeper understanding of co-teaching processes and the factors that relate to the effectiveness of collaboration between general education English teachers and special education teachers at the secondary school level through the analysis of three co-teaching partnerships, and (2) uncover the affordances and limitations of different kinds of scaffolding and literacy instruction in the focal co-taught inclusive ELA classrooms.

The current body of literature on co-teaching at the secondary level (Austin, 2001; Dieker, 2001; Dieker & Murawski, 2003; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Nichols, Dowdy, & Nichols, 2010; Rice & Zigmond, 2000, Scruggs, Mastropieri, & McDuffie, 2007; Wilson & Michaels, 2006) indicates numerous benefits of co-teaching for both students and teachers, along with several challenges. Two key benefits are (1) the relationship that can develop between the two teachers, allowing each to learn from the other and to share perspectives on teaching and learning, and (2) the increased levels of support that students can receive when two teachers are in the classroom. The most salient challenge to co-teaching

identified in the body of literature concerns the role of the special educator, who often ends up in a more auxiliary position rather than in the role of a classroom teacher. Findings emerging from the extant literature suggest that successful co-teaching partnerships are characterized by compatibility of co-teaching partners, open communication, mutual learning between co-teachers, support from administration, productive and consistent collaborative planning, and sense of joint responsibility for all students with and without disabilities (Austin, 2001; Dieker, 2001; Dieker & Murawski, 2003; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Murawski & Dieker, 2004; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007; Walther-Thomas, Bryant, & Land, 1996).

This study adds to the current body of research by addressing the general dearth of research on co-teaching at the secondary level (Dieker, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005) and responding to calls for studies that “address the means by which individual schools are able to develop truly collaborative or genuine partnerships, and the specific gains that can be realized by such practices”(Scruggs et al., 2007, p. 413); research “conducted in typical classrooms...[that] further clarif[ies] the models of secondary co-teaching and the conditions under which they are likely to succeed” (Rice & Zigmond, 2000, p.197); and research that provides additional support for teacher-identified best practices such as the exchange of feedback between co-teachers and shared classroom management (Austin, 2001).

I selected a district for this study that was recognized in the local region for implementing successful co-teaching. This district recently served as a model for another local district about to embark on co-teaching. I conducted my research at the junior-senior high school where teachers and administrators had been involved in co-teaching for several years and believed their model was successful at both the school and district level.

Despite the general perception of success, however, my study revealed that the district and the focal school in particular still had room for improvement in the implementation of their co-teaching model. I focused on three partnerships between co-teachers in two inclusive secondary ELA classrooms: an advanced partnership (fourth and fifth year of partnership during the study), an intermediate partnership (second and third year), and a newly developing partnership (first year). The newly developing partnership was the result of the special education counterpart in the long-term partnership leaving the district for a job in another state in the middle of the pair's fifth year teaching together. The change in partners led to an opportunity to observe how a new partnership formed when an experienced co-teacher was paired with a new partner in a district that had an established program.

This study explored both the factors involved in the development of co-teaching relationships and the implications of those relationships for student learning. The instructional focus of the study was on the literacy learning activities that took place in these co-taught ELA classrooms, including reading and literature instruction, discussion, and writing. Access to the general education curriculum and placement in general education classes with peers without disabilities may offer students with disabilities greater opportunity to engage in the types of literacy tasks that lead to higher-level cognitive practices and concept formation – the kind of activities that are conspicuously absent from most low-track classes (Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, & Gamoran, 2003; Freedman, Delp, & Crawford, 2005; Nystrand, Wu, Gamoran, Zeiser, & Long, 2003;).

A recent study by Wilson and Michaels (2006) suggested that students perceive the co-taught inclusive English classroom as a context where they can develop literacy skills. Both special education and general education students interviewed by Wilson and Michaels (2006)

perceived that their reading and writing skills improved in co-taught English classes. Although further evidence is necessary to support this claim, the perception of students that they are better developing their literacy skills suggests a positive influence of co-teaching on literacy learning and demonstrates a need for studies like this one that look specifically at student achievement to explore the influence co-teaching might have on literacy learning.

I used a combination of classroom observations and analyses of instructional tasks and student work to determine the ways in which the teachers in my study supported students' literacy learning. I focused specifically on how scaffolding promoted concept formation in adolescent learners (Vygotsky, 1986; Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976) and how that scaffolding occurred within the contexts of literacy learning activities such as reading and literature instruction, writing instruction, and classroom discussions. My observations and task analyses were supported by interviews with teachers and administrators and, when available, other artifacts, such as the end-of-year surveys that the advanced partnership (first pair of ninth grade teachers) administered to students in their co-taught classes.

Analyses of fieldnotes of classroom observations, interview transcripts, and artifacts (e.g., assignments, student work, end-of-year surveys) helped me to develop a detailed representation of the relationships between the co-teachers and between teachers and students as well as the teaching and learning contexts in the focal classrooms. The interviews also served as a way to include member checks (Willis, 2007), incorporating the perspectives of the participants in my study.

1.2 BACKGROUND

1.2.1 Policy Context: NCLB and IDEA

Co-teaching in inclusive classrooms has become more common as a result of recent federal legislation affecting the education of students with disabilities: the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA). These two pieces of legislation, although conflicting in some ways, have together opened the door for increased use of co-teaching, especially at the secondary level – a phenomenon that can have positive (when teachers are able to share their expertise, Murawski & Dieker, 2004) or negative implications (when co-teaching is used only as a way to comply with the law, Nichols et al., 2010).

IDEA has, since its inception in the 1970s as PL 94-142, defined the least restrictive environment (LRE) as placement with non-disabled peers “to the maximum extent appropriate” (Holdheide & Reschly, 2008; Zigmond, 2003). The LRE always intended for a continuum of services; it was never a demand that all students spend the entire day in a general education setting (Holdheide & Reschly, 2008; Kavale & Forness, 2000; Mock & Kauffman, 2005; Zigmond et al., 2009). However, the last two authorizations to IDEA, in 1997 and 2004, made some provisions that mandated greater access to general education compared to earlier iterations of the act. In 1997, the reauthorization of IDEA required that students with disabilities have access to the same curriculum as their peers without disabilities and that all students with disabilities be included in district and state assessments with reasonable adaptations and accommodations (Zigmond et al., 2009).

This requirement was supported by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which insisted that all students be included in statewide testing regardless of disability and that scores for

students with disabilities be reported both as part of the general data for all students and in a disaggregated format. Additionally, NCLB required that all students have access to the same standards-based curriculum taught by a teacher highly qualified in the content area as demonstrated by a bachelor's degree in the content, state certification, or proficiency on a state-selected measure for demonstrating content knowledge - a position supported by IDEA 2004 (Zigmond et al., 2009).

The overlaps between NCLB and recent reauthorizations of IDEA have had some positive effects on students with disabilities because the achievement of these student populations can no longer be ignored by schools, districts, and state departments of education; both NCLB and IDEA 2004 create a system of accountability that forces state and local school education agencies to hold students with disabilities to high standards and to make achievement for these students a priority (Holdheide & Reschly, 2008).

Although NCLB and IDEA 2004 are mutually supportive in several ways, there are also some points of contention between the two pieces of legislation. One of the most salient areas of contradiction regards the full continuum of services ensured under IDEA. These services can become difficult to attain under NCLB because NCLB mandates that all students receive the same standards-based curriculum. IDEA 2004, in fact, is placed at odds with itself, requiring that students both receive instruction in the same curriculum as general education peers while also requiring an individualized education program (IEP) that would make provisions for the student to receive specially designed instruction that meets his or her needs as an individual learner (Zigmond et al., 2009).

Although specially designed instruction should take place in the inclusive classroom through provisions of the special education teacher in collaboration with the general education teacher, in

practice this often does not occur (Mock & Kauffman, 2005; Zigmond et al., 2009).

Subsequently, these two key pieces of legislation must be considered in regards to their implications for students in inclusive settings. Districts and schools must decide how accountability measures and high standards for students with disabilities can be maintained without a loss of the individualized support that is so crucial to many students with special needs. Implications for co-teaching suggest that special educators in co-teaching partnerships may need to be particularly vigilant in ensuring that the IEP goals for students with disabilities remain a priority in the inclusive classroom.

1.2.2 Co-teaching as a model for inclusive instruction

Co-teaching is one model of inclusive services delivery but is not synonymous with inclusive education. Inclusive education for students with disabilities has a long history, spanning back to the early part of the Civil Rights Movement and the 1954 landmark case of *Brown v the Board of Education* (Karagiannis, Stainback, & Stainback, 1996). Posed as civil rights matter, the campaign to allow students with disabilities to receive an education equivalent to and in a setting most like that of their general education peers spurred legislation that evolved over the years as a codified law (PL 94-142, later reauthorized as IDEA) ensuring students a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE); for the majority of the students with disabilities, the LRE is the general education classroom (Karagiannis et al. 1996; Kavale and Forness, 2000; Zigmond et. al., 2009).

An increasingly popular model of instruction for the inclusive education of students with disabilities, co-teaching has a history nearly as long as that of the inclusive movement – spanning back to the 1960s as an approach for general educators and accepted by the late 1980s as a model for collaboration between general and special educators. (Cook & Friend, 1995).

Co-teaching has numerous documented benefits for teachers and students, including increased student support due to the presence of two teachers in the classroom; increased empathy and respect for diversity (especially in general education students); increased instruction in strategies that benefit both students with and without disabilities; increased achievement in students with disabilities; a decrease in stigma for students with disabilities because they no longer receive instruction in a “special education class”; more effective behavior management due to two teachers in the room and the strategies of the special education teacher; opportunities for teachers to share their expertise and learn from each other; and opportunities for teachers to provide each other with feedback and to share perspectives (Austin, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Murawski & Dieker, 2004; Nichols et al., 2010; Rice & Zigmond, 2000, Scruggs, Mastropieri, & McDuffie, 2007; Wilson & Michaels, 2006).

These same studies (Austin, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005, etc.) also identified a number of challenges to the process. Multiple studies (e.g., Austin, 2001; Rice & Zigmond, 2000) emphasized an uneven distribution of teaching duties that left the special education teacher in the role of an assistant rather than a partner, an issue possibly exacerbated by a lack or inefficient use of planning time and special education teachers’ lack of familiarity with content curricula. Some studies (e.g., Keefe & Moore, 2004, Scruggs et al., 2007) also revealed concerns that students with disabilities did not receive sufficient individualized support in co-taught classrooms. Additionally, some researchers have expressed concerns that co-teaching may be implemented as a compliance model primarily intended to meet the legal requirements of NCLB with less regard for the actual development of student learning and teacher expertise (Nichols et al., 2010).

Chapter 2 further explicates the advantages of and challenges to co-teaching, particularly in the context of the ELA classroom as well as the documented factors that have been associated with more effective co-teaching models in the extant literature.

1.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: A SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

1.3.1 Vygotskian Concept Formation and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

This study is framed by a sociocultural perspective of learning. Based on Vygotsky's (1986) view of the learning process a sociocultural perspective posits learning as a process mediated by interactions with others that push learners beyond what they can do on their own. According to Vygotsky, learning primarily consists of the development of conceptual knowledge – knowledge of deeply nuanced and contextually-influenced word meanings. These concepts, or word meanings, are not directly taught but rather evolve over time. The evolution of conceptual knowledge is “a complex activity, in which all basic intellectual functions take part...the central moment [of which]...is a specific use of words as functional ‘tools’ (Vygotsky, 1986, pp. 106 – 107).

Although concepts are not directly taught, Vygotsky (1986) considered instruction a “powerful force in directing their evolution” (p.157). Teachers support students’ concept formation by providing mediation – support to enable students to work at a level just beyond what they are able to do on their own. Vygotsky refers to this level as the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Keeping learners within their ZPDs is therefore the primary goal of instruction. As Vygotsky states: “[T]he only good kind of instruction is that which marches

ahead of development and leads it” (p.188). If students are to move beyond what they are already able to do, they must receive the support needed to push towards the next level of development.

1.3.2 Scaffolding within the ZPD

Keeping students engaged within their respective ZPDs requires an approach that includes modifying tasks to challenge students just enough to consistently move the learning process forward. Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) provide a model that illustrates how an expert can mediate a novice’s development of new knowledge through a process that includes the following six features: (1) recruitment of the novice to attempt a new task; (2) reduction of the steps necessary to carry out the task, making the task more accessible (adjusting for the novice’s ZPD); (3) direction maintenance to keep the novice motivated and focused on the task; (4) guidance to help the novice notice the critical features of the task; (5) frustration control to reduce the novice’s stress level; and (6) demonstration of the appropriate way to complete the task.

The process of scaffolding is sensitive to the needs of individual learners (novices) and requires the teacher (expert) to pay close attention to the kinds of difficulties and subsequent individualized support specific learners need as they acquire new knowledge. In an inclusive classroom, students with disabilities may require a good deal of scaffolding to meet the same standards as their general education peers. In such cases, teachers need to provide different degrees of scaffolding depending on the needs of individual students to reflect the heterogeneous nature of the classroom. For example, some students may require reduction in the degrees of freedom (Wood et al., 1976) to be able to complete a task while others may require only direction maintenance and occasional frustration control (Wood et al., 1976).

In this study, I explored the ways in which co-teachers collaborated to provide scaffolding and the extent to which all students appeared to be working effectively in their ZPDs as a result. Since the research took place in inclusive ELA classrooms, my focus was on the scaffolding techniques employed by the teachers to develop the literacy skills of the students with and without disabilities in the classroom.

1.3.3 Scaffolding Literacy Tasks

As I focused on the ways in which the co-teachers in the study scaffolded literacy learning for their students, I observed and analyzed specific literacy tasks in each classroom. I looked for both the ways in which the tasks themselves included embedded scaffolding and for the additional scaffolding that teachers provided to students to adjust for multiple ability levels in the classroom. As I explored the learning tasks in each classroom, I looked for examples of scaffolding through the following types of activities: classroom discussions about literature with a focus on examples of dialogic discourse – examples of talk that include “participants expand[ing] or modify[ing] the contributions of others as one voice ‘refracts’ another”(Nystrand, Wu, Gamoran, Zeiser, & Long, 2003, p.139); writing assignments involving modeling and support throughout the writing process (e.g., through writing conferences); and reading guides and projects (individual and group) aimed at developing students’ reading comprehension.

Through observation and analysis of tasks, I also looked for examples of instruction in learning strategies as a method of scaffolding. I specifically looked for instruction in strategies (e.g., use of graphic organizers such as plot charts) that helped students to organize their writing and which made the cognitive processes of writing salient to novice writers (Atwell, 1998;

Chalk, Hagan-Burke, and Burke, 2005; Graham & Perin, 2007; Zito, Adkins, Gavins, Harris, and Graham, 2007). Similarly, I documented strategy instruction in techniques aimed at improving reading comprehension and extending students' ability to engage with literature such as explicit vocabulary instruction techniques or summarization of main points in a text (Beck & McKeown, 2006; Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Greenleaf & Hinchman, 2009; Malmgren & Trezek, 2009; Roberts et al., 2008; Szabo, 2006).

Students of all ability levels benefit from engaging in rigorous academic tasks (Applebee et al., 2003) and such tasks are more likely to occur in mixed-ability classes than in low-track classes (Freedman et al., 2005; Nystrand et al., 2003). However, many students – especially those with disabilities - may require significant levels of support to experience success with these rigorous tasks (e.g., Zigmond et al., 2009). This study offers insight on how co-teachers in inclusive settings provide scaffolding for students and the ways in which that scaffolding may maximize opportunities for all students to meet the demands of rigorous literacy tasks. Additionally, the study offers some caveats for the use of scaffolding, highlighting the potential for a detrimental decrease in rigor that may result when teachers engage in an overuse of scaffolding in response to the perception that the students in their classroom are very struggling learners.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study focuses on two general areas for inquiry: (1) the characteristics and development of co-teaching partnerships and the implications of the partnerships for classroom instruction and (2) the ways in which ELA and special education co-teachers scaffold literacy instruction for

students in inclusive secondary ELA classrooms. Research Question One focuses on the nature of the relationship between the ELA and special education co-teachers in the context of the focal classrooms – how co-teachers negotiate their respective teaching roles and interact with each other during teaching – and the ways in which their relationship shapes the instruction in the classroom. Research Question Two explores the instructional tasks, teacher moves, and student learning in co-taught secondary English classrooms with a focus on how teachers scaffold students’ development in the areas of reading comprehension, exploring and understanding literature, writing, and engaging in discussions.

1. What are the characteristics of the co-teaching partnerships in inclusive secondary English language arts (ELA) classrooms and how do those characteristics shape the nature of classroom instruction?

- a. How does the context of the district and school influence the co-teaching relationship?
- b. How do the teachers negotiate their relationship with their co-teachers and their respective roles in the classroom?
- c. How do the teachers interact with each other during classroom instruction?
- d. How do these negotiations and interactions affect the success of the co-teaching, scaffolding, and learning opportunities for all students?

2. How do ELA and Special Education co-teachers scaffold literacy instruction for students in inclusive secondary English classes?

- a. What is the nature of the reading and literature instruction?
- b. What is the nature of the writing instruction?
- c. What is the nature of discussions and classroom talk?

1.5 METHODOLOGY

1.5.1 Context and Participants

1.5.1.1 Demographics

The study was conducted at Stateline Junior-Senior High School (SJSHS), located in a small district, Stateline School District, in rural Pennsylvania near the Ohio border. (All names of research sites and participants in the study are pseudonyms.) According to the district website, the entire district enrolled only 1,152 students across two elementary schools and one secondary school during the time period of my study. SJSHS enrolled 553 students in grades seven through twelve. In regards to the racial/ethnic makeup of the student body, the population was relatively homogeneous; 96% of the students at SJSHS were White/Caucasian, 2% were Black/African-American, and the remaining 2% percent included any other racial or ethnic identities (e.g., Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latino(a), American Indian/Native American). Thirty-two percent of the students were eligible for free or reduced lunch (National Center for Education Statistics). In 2009, the median household income in Stateline was \$47,670, close to the state of Pennsylvania median income for the same year (city-data.com). In general, the population at SJSHS could be described as primarily Caucasian and working to lower middle class.

1.5.1.2 Assessment Data

Across all students enrolled at SJSHS, the following tables (Tables 1 and 2) represent the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) data for Reading at grades seven and eight and for Writing at grade eight for the 2009 – 2010 school year. (State assessments were not administered for reading in grade nine or for writing in grades seven or nine during the time of the study.) Data are broken down at each grade for all students and for students with IEPs.

Table 1.1. 2009 – 2010 Reading PSSAs (Pennsylvania Department of Education)

Grade/IEP Status	% Advanced	% Proficient	% Basic	% Below Basic
Grade 7 – All	38.9	33.7	14.7	12.6
Grade 7 - IEP	21.1	10.5	26.3	42.1
Grade 8 - All	36.1	39.2	13.4	11.3
Grade 8 - IEP	25.0	18.8	12.5	43.8

Table 1.2. 2009 – 2010 Writing PSSAs (Pennsylvania Department of Education)

Grade/IEP Status	% Advanced	% Proficient	% Basic	% Below Basic
Grade 8 – All	1.0	60.8	36.1	2.1
Grade 8- IEP	6.3	31.3	50.0	12.5

Overall, the student achievement data were relatively positive but left room for improvement. At the end of the 2009 – 2010 school year, the school received its first Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) warning since 2005, which likely contributed to the increased focus on PSSAs during the 2010 – 2011 school year compared to the previous years when the school was consistently making AYP. The most salient change affecting the study occurred in the seventh grade classroom. Students at the middle school level were grouped by achievement on the mathematics PSSAs for the 2010 – 2011 school year. Since many of the students who struggled with the mathematics PSSAs also struggled with the reading PSSAs and those students tracked into the same mathematics class also generally needed to be placed together in the same English class for scheduling purposes, the seventh grade teachers found the composition of the class changed quite a bit from the previous year, becoming much more homogenous in regards to student ability even though the class was technically not tracked for ELA.

Additionally, upon analyzing the PSSA data, I noticed a disparity in scores between students with and students without IEPs. In both seventh and eighth grade, considerably more than half of the students with IEPs scored below the Proficient level in reading and over forty percent of students with IEPs scored at Below Basic, the lowest level. Comparatively, only 27.3% of all students at grade seven and 24.7 % of all students at grade eight scored below Proficient in reading. In writing, a large gap existed as well. In eighth grade, 62.5% of students with IEPs scored below Proficient in writing compared to 38.2% of all students. These data suggested that students with IEPs would likely require a good deal of scaffolding in reading and writing to access the general education curriculum. As a caveat, these data were included to offer a brief snapshot of student achievement in reading and writing at SJSHS, but the usefulness of standardized test data is limited in nature (Matsumura, Garnier, Pascal, & Valdés, 2002). My

focus for this study was on classroom instruction and student responses to teacher-created tasks; analysis of student achievement in the focal classrooms came from those data sources.

1.5.1.3 The Co-Teachers and the Co-Teaching Context

The original participants were two pairs of teachers in co-teaching partnerships who had been teaching ELA together for several years – one pair at the seventh grade and the other pair at the ninth grade level. The teachers in the advanced partnership, Gina and Jamie (all names are pseudonyms), were recognized by district administrators and other teachers for sharing the duties of the classroom teacher position in a very equitable manner (e.g., contributing to planning, participating in grading, explaining concepts, reading from texts, asking and answering questions to keep the students engaged in lessons). The teachers in the intermediate partnership (Mindy and Sara) did not share the duties of the classroom teacher position as fully, with the ELA teacher (Sara) taking more of a lead role and the special education teacher (Mindy) in more of a support role. However, both seventh grade teachers worked together to provide students with scaffolding and presented themselves as a team to the students. In both classes, I was rarely able to tell which students were designated as students with disabilities during a typical lesson. Due to the compatibility and teamwork of the co-teachers in both these partnerships, the special education administrator for the district originally recommended these two teams of teachers for participation in my study.

Midway through the 2010 -11 academic year, the ninth grade special education teacher in the advanced partnership took a position in another state and was replaced by a new special education teacher, Dave. This development offered a new opportunity and aspect to this study – an exploration of how new co-teaching partnerships develop, particularly when a co-teacher in an established relationship is suddenly faced with embarking on a new partnership with a

different co-teacher. The development of the beginning partnership (Dave and Jamie) was fraught with a number of problems and exploring these problems offered me further insight into the challenges early partnerships might face.

Another important factor regarding the context was the degree of autonomy the teachers had when it came to planning and enacting the curriculum in their classrooms. They were able to select texts, create lessons and units, and incorporate pedagogical moves in accordance with what they believed their students needed. Thus, these classrooms provided me with an authentic perspective on the kinds of learning tasks the teachers valued compared to schools where the curriculum is rigid and mandated.

1.5.2 Procedures

1.5.2.1 Methodological Justification

This study used qualitative research methods to explore collaborative teaching practices between ELA and special education co-teachers and the kinds of scaffolding practices they employed for literacy instruction in their inclusive classrooms. Denzin & Lincoln (2008) define qualitative research as “a situated practice that locates the observer in the world” and “involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world” (p.4). Qualitative approaches work best when researchers seek, explore, describe, and uncover the layers of particular phenomena in natural rather than experimental settings (Agee, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; LeCompte & Shensul, 1999a; Willis, 2007).

I conducted a total of 67 separate classroom visits across the three partnerships (24 visits to the advanced partnership, 14 visits to the beginning partnership, and 29 visits to the intermediate partnership) in an effort to describe and interpret the natural behaviors of the

participants without manipulating the environment. I sought to develop a deep understanding of the ways in which the co-teachers in the study negotiated their partnerships and scaffolded literacy instruction in their classrooms. Developing such understanding entailed exploring the classroom negotiations between co-teachers at different points in their professional relationships. In pursuit of this understanding, I documented interactions between co-teachers and among teachers and students in the classrooms. The documentation of interactions, according to Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995), allows the researcher to better “identify and follow *processes* [original emphasis] in witnessed events and hence to develop and sustain processual interpretations of happenings in the field” (p.14). My descriptions of the events and interactions I observed in the classrooms were corroborated with interview data from teachers and administrators and with my analyses of classroom artifacts (e.g., assignments sheets, rubrics, student work, student surveys). Through triangulation of data I developed “an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in place” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 7).

In summation, qualitative methodology best fit my study because I sought to gain an in-depth understanding of processes in natural settings – in this case, the processes of building co-teaching partnerships and scaffolding literacy instruction to meet the needs of diverse groups of learners. As described in the next section, I developed a plan for data collection but I remained flexible so that new data could be included as the study progressed and particular insights began to emerge. This flexibility allowed me to incorporate the insights I gained as I conducted with my research.

1.5.2.2 Data Collection

The data sources for this study included (1) detailed fieldnotes based on classroom observations; (2) transcripts from teacher interviews; and (3) classroom artifacts (e.g., assignments, student work, rubrics, student surveys).

Classroom Observations

A substantial source of data came from extensive fieldnotes on my classroom observations spanning from spring 2010 through spring 2011. These fieldnotes were taken contemporaneously on my laptop to document “subtle processes...*as they occur* [original emphasis]” to capture my first impressions and preserve the accuracy of classroom events (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995, p.13). Later I returned to these notes and better developed my initial impressions once I had time to think about how my observations fit with my other data and contributed towards answering my research questions.

To guide my note-taking, I used the Classroom Observation Guide (Appendix A), which provided guidance for capturing examples of co-teachers’ negotiations of the lead and supporting instructor roles during lessons, scaffolding efforts to keep students working in their individual ZPDs, and examples of literacy instruction that resonated with practices identified in the literature as productive for students in classrooms with varying abilities such as dialogic discussions, instruction in strategies that improve reading comprehension, literary understanding, and writing skills, and use of the workshop model for process writing.

Interviews

Interviews with teachers and administrators allowed me to elicit their perspectives on co-teaching partnerships and the process of managing co-taught inclusive classrooms. The goals of

the interviews included: (1) developing knowledge of the history of the co-teaching model at the school and in the district and understanding the school and district context; (2) gaining a sense for how the relationships between the co-teachers evolved over time; (3) eliciting teachers' perspectives on what makes a successful partnership; (4) eliciting teachers' perspectives on the benefits and drawbacks of their current partnerships; (5) gaining further insight about the instructional activities I observed to develop a deeper understanding of classroom processes; (6) developing an understanding of the teachers' view of their students; and (7) developing an understanding of the teachers' philosophies towards enacting literacy instruction and providing scaffolding in inclusive secondary classrooms. I conducted these interviews using the responsive interviewing model, which positions the interviewer and respondent as conversational partners (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Subsequently, while I had a few specific issues I wanted to address during each interview, I allowed the interviews to develop more organically, responding to topics that the teachers raised over the course of the interview. I used a slightly more structured approach in the first interview, employing a loose interview protocol (Appendix B), and allowed later interviews to more specifically address my fieldnotes and artifacts I collected as I conducted my research. I interviewed the three teachers who participated for the full length of the study (Jamie, Sara, and Mindy) three times each and the two teachers who participated during only part of the study (Gina and Dave) twice each. Additionally, I conducted an interview with the school principal, the district special education director, and the district curriculum director to gain further insight into the processes of program administration at the school and district levels.

Classroom Artifacts

I collected assignments and other artifacts that teachers gave to their students to guide their work such as rubrics for writing, instructions for independent reading projects, and the reading guide

packets that the ninth grade teachers used to guide students through reading *Romeo and Juliet*. I used these artifacts in combination with my observations and teacher interviews to analyze the nature of literacy instruction and scaffolding in the focal classrooms. I also collected one set of student work samples produced in response to a classroom task that incorporated both reading/literature and writing for each of the three co-teaching partners. In the ninth grade classroom, the tasks for which I collected student work were both writing assignments done in response to literature. In the seventh grade class, I collected a set of writing assignments that reflected writing in a particular genre that had previously been studied through extensive reading (myths). According to Matsumura et al. (2002), classroom tasks and the work samples students produce in response to these tasks can be used to measure the extent to which classroom practices affect student learning. These artifacts were important for determining student achievement in the focal classrooms.

Appendix C represents the guiding protocol for analysis of artifacts, adapted from Matsumura et al. (2002). This protocol was used primarily as a guide for assessing the student work samples along with the tasks given by teachers to produce those work samples. In addition, I used the coding tables found in Chapter 3 to guide my analysis of the artifacts for use of best practices in ELA instruction and best practices in the instruction of students with disabilities. Through a combination of analyzing artifacts, fieldnotes on my observations, and interviews with the teachers, I was able to gain a more detailed understanding of the literacy instruction that occurred in the focal classrooms.

For the advanced partnership (Gina and Jamie), I also had the opportunity to analyze the student surveys on co-teaching that the two teachers administered at the end of the school year. These surveys provided me with students' perceptions of co-teaching and their own learning, a

useful additional data source since I was unable to conduct my own surveys or interviews with students. Appendix D shows a list of the questions that the teachers included in the surveys. These surveys were designed by the co-teachers in the advanced partnership. They provided me with insight into the kind of feedback the teachers hoped to gain from students and the aspects of co-teaching that these teachers considered important. Although students knew teachers would read these surveys and may have censored themselves somewhat as a result, I believe these surveys were an important data source because they allowed me some insight into students' perspectives of co-teaching in this particular classroom and contributed to the process of triangulating data for the purpose of seeking redundancy and corroboration – the techniques I used to establish the reliability and validity of this study.

1.5.3 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis occurred throughout the data collection process. Initial interviews were analyzed to guide subsequent interviews as well as to help focus classroom observations. Ongoing analyses of fieldnotes on observations, interview transcripts, and artifacts allowed for triangulation of data throughout the research process.

The recursive nature of qualitative inquiry requires continuous analysis of data, followed by initial interpretations that fuel subsequent data collection, analysis, and interpretation. According to LeCompte and Shensul (1999b), analysis and interpretation are two parts of one process. First the researcher must “cook” raw data – organizing and summarizing the data to search for patterns and themes. Then the researcher must decide what is significant about emerging patterns, themes, and connections. The iterative cycle begins once more when the researcher uses these patterns, themes, and connections to plan for subsequent data collection.

This process represents the manner in which I analyzed and interpreted my data throughout the study until a detailed portrait of the phenomena I explored began to emerge, enabling me to answer my research questions in an in-depth way.

1.5 .4 Findings and Implications

As I embarked on my research, I anticipated finding extensive examples of scaffolding in the areas of discussion, reading and understanding literature, and writing instruction and initially believed that extensive scaffolding would be a positive finding. I also anticipated that the co-teachers would demonstrate many of the key characteristics of strong partnerships previously identified in the literature such as similar philosophies of teaching and learning, shared responsibility for all students, and open communication between co-teaching partners. Chapter 3 offers a more detailed explanation of the process that guided my research, including the guiding coding charts I used to analyze my data and organize key findings that resonated with relevant literature on co-teaching, best practices in ELA, and scaffolding. These charts served as flexible guides during the research process, allowing me to remain open to the insights that emerged along the way. This flexibility in design allowed me to recognize important findings that in some cases contradicted my original expectations.

Findings for Research Question 1

As the study progressed, several key findings emerged from the data. My first research question, which explored how co-teaching partnerships developed and the implications for instruction, yielded the several important findings. As I originally expected, the teachers in the advanced partnership, Jamie and Gina, exhibited benefits of co-teaching that aligned well with the

literatures, especial Rice and Zigmond's (2000) five areas of co-teacher compatibility: shared views on behavior and academic standards; honest and open communication; the ability to problem solve without making problems personal; equal pedagogical skills; and self-confidence, self-esteem, and the ability to take risks. These two teachers enhanced each other's learning and spent time planning together, discussing students, and occasionally assessing student work together. During lessons they shared the duties of leading class discussions and guiding students through tasks. However, the strength of the partnership seemed to lie primarily in the strength of their friendship. Since friendships cannot be planned or anticipated, the strength of the partnership arose more from an idiosyncratic and less generalizable situation than from the strength of the co-teaching model at the school, which featured very little training for teachers, opportunity for co-planning, or ongoing support.

The weaknesses of the model in the district became more evident with the other two partnerships. The teachers in the intermediate partnership, Sara and Mindy, expressed that they felt positively about their partnership and took shared ownership of the students in the classroom to a large extent. However, their partnership also did not demonstrate true co-teaching in the way that Jamie and Gina's did, as Sara, the ELA teacher, did all of the planning. On a typical day, Mindy did not know what would happen in the class until she walked through the door of the classroom. Although she was adept at orienting herself quickly and joining in supporting the instruction, her role was more one of the a support teacher than a lead ELA teacher in this classroom. This seemed to be largely a result of the lack of planning time or training the teachers received regarding how a co-teaching partnership should ideally develop. However, since both teachers were satisfied with the partnership and students seemed to be learning effectively in the classroom, such a partnership was less likely to garner attention or administrative support.

Finally the beginning partnership between Jamie and Dave had numerous problems that showed little sign of improving. Jamie and Dave had difficulty in dividing the teaching duties, primarily due to the fact that Dave seemed overwhelmed by entering into co-teaching midyear. He struggled to keep up with the instruction that would occur on a day-to-day basis and appeared to also struggle with figuring out how to best support students. Consequently, Jamie became increasingly impatient with him and what she perceived as his reluctance to share the responsibilities of co-teaching. The two teachers did not communicate with each other well and over time Dave began to participate even less in helping to teach the class and eventually began to actually miss classes. Although district administrators were aware of these concerns, no intervention took place to address the problems with this partnership during the time of the study.

Findings for Research Question 2

My second research question, which explored the nature of the reading and literature instruction, discussion, and writing instruction in the focal classrooms with an emphasis on how co-teachers scaffolded student learning produced findings that were surprising and contradicted what I initially expected when I began the study. My study is built upon the theoretical framework that novice learners require mediation to move beyond what they can do independently (Vygotsky, 1986; Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976). I expected that a co-taught classroom would offer more opportunities for student learning because two teachers – one with expertise in ELA instruction and one with expertise in supporting students with disabilities – would be available to provide mediation. This expectation was grounded in a common finding across the co-teaching literature that students generally benefit from additional adaptations built into tasks and the additional help they receive in co-taught classrooms (e.g., Scarggs et al., 2007).

As I analyzed my data, I found that the classroom led by the co-teachers with the strongest co-teaching partnership (Jamie and Gina) also featured the most extensive whole-group scaffolding. The teachers in this classroom took on an approach that aligned with the literature on Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which advocates designing curriculum in a manner that is accessible to most or all students (Edyburn, 2010; Friend & Bursuck, 2006; King-Sears, 2009). In general, this can be very positive, allowing for students both with and without disabilities to access the same rigorous instruction. However, *how* teachers provide access is crucial. The ninth grade classroom, while inclusive in the sense that it included both students with and students without disabilities, was also tracked by student performance. At SJSHS, students at the high school were tracked into either general or academic English classes based on their performance in ELA in middle school. This was not a static placement; if the teachers determined a student was ready to move to the academic English class the following year, the placement could be changed. However, the tracking system resulted in the grouping of students with disabilities together with students who were not diagnosed with disabilities but who were considered struggling or low-achieving students. Subsequently, both Jamie and Gina considered these students to be in great need of extensive scaffolding. This resulted in the development and use of very detailed reading guides that in some cases became the primary focus of classroom discussions, leading to an emphasis on teacher explanation and teacher test questions (Nystrand et al., 2003); overuse of modeling for writing, resulting in writing that was more prescriptive and less authentic; and far more teacher talk compared to student talk during a typical class period.

Conversely, in the seventh grade classroom, although the co-teachers had a less collaborative partnership, the scaffolding for the whole class was less extensive and students were given more opportunity to produce authentic responses to literature through small group

discussions and authentic written work. In the seventh grade classroom, the teachers approached instruction from a Differentiated Instruction (DI) approach rather than a UDL approach; the teachers formatively assessed students on an ongoing basis and designed tasks that allowed for more individualization based on each student's instructional level (Tomlinson, 1999). In keeping with the philosophy of DI, this did not imply that students were always doing different assignments. The teachers led students through units using several shared texts and tried to develop a sense of community through techniques such as small group work interspersed with whole group discussion. However, students were assessed largely on individual writing projects and responses to literature based on texts that they chose to read. The focus on student-selected texts and different standards for assessing student achievement may have inadvertently led to less rigorous instruction for some students compared to others. Additionally, the level of individualization tended to reinforce the special education teacher's role as a supporter rather than a leader of classroom instruction and offers insight into the phenomenon frequently cited in the literature of the special education teacher relegated to the role of assistant (e.g., Austin, 2001; Rice and Zigmond, 2000).

Implications and Discussion

My findings suggest that the view of a particular co-teaching model as "successful" may belie areas of need, resulting in administrators and teachers using a less critical lens when assessing the quality of co-teaching in their classrooms, schools, or districts. Subsequently, problems areas may escape notice or may not garner attention until a problem becomes more serious and more difficult to rectify.

Strong co-teaching partners like Gina and Jamie may not realize when they are reinforcing each other's views of students as less capable and may unintentionally support each

other in providing scaffolding that is so extensive that tasks lose their rigor and student learning is impeded. Such co-teaching partners may benefit from techniques to help them become more aware of how they are scaffolding student learning and to notice potential pitfalls to student learning such as domination of discussions by the co-teachers rather than the students.

Co-teachers in more traditional partnerships like Mindy and Sara would benefit from district support through dedicated planning time and training to help them adjust to a new collaborative role rather than enacting their more traditional roles. For the ELA teacher, this may mean support and encouragement as she releases some responsibility for the curriculum to the special education teacher and for the special education teacher this may require district training in best practices in ELA instruction.

Finally, when serious problems arise, such as those that emerged in the beginning partnership, it is critical for building and district administrators to be aware of the problems and to mediate those problems before they become difficult to fix. Although it is possible that Jamie and Dave could still change the negative direction in which their partnership was headed and begin to communicate and collaborate more effectively, it seems unlikely that this would occur without outside intervention.

Negotiating the dual challenges of learning to share a teaching position with another educator and learning to provide instruction for students both with and without disabilities that offers just the right amount of scaffolding to keep all students learning within their individual ZPDs is a complex process. Without ongoing support, teachers will likely struggle to manage the complexities of the process on their own. As a result, it is likely that students will not receive ideal support and co-teaching partnerships may not develop in the way the school or district hopes they will. Careful monitoring of what is happening in individual classrooms by both

teachers and administrators and monitoring what is occurring at the school and district level by administrators may help address some of the issues that emerged in this study. This monitoring is clearly important even when a co-teaching model or individual partnership appears to be successful.

2.0 CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The movement towards inclusive education for students with disabilities began alongside the Civil Rights Movement. Karagiannis, Stainback, and Stainback (1996) traced the inception of this movement to the 1954 Supreme Court case of *Brown v the Board of Education* – the case that ultimately determined the illegality of racial segregation. In the decades prior to the Civil Rights movement, disability, like race, was used as criteria for the segregation of some students from their peers. People with disabilities and their families joined the fight for civil rights, posing discrimination based on ability as similar to discrimination based on race. Such a parallel aligns with an expanded view of diversity to also include diverse ways of learning. As Holdheide and Reschly (2008) asserted: “Diversity in ways that students learn and retain information and illustrate their knowledge can be just as varied as the students themselves” (p.8).

The efforts of those allied with the Civil Rights Movement led to the development of legislation meant to protect the educational rights of people with disabilities and to reduce ability-based discrimination. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (PL 93-112, especially Section 504) marked the first in multiple pieces of legislation that supported the rights of students with

disabilities. This legislation protects the rights of people with disabilities in the workplace and in educational institutions that receive federal funding (Karagiannis et al., 1996). Soon after, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (PL 94-142) was passed. This act was later reauthorized as the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) of 1990. Two key tenets of IDEA that affect the inclusion of students with disabilities are the provisions for a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) and placement in the least restrictive environment (LRE) that meets the needs of the student (Holdheide & Reschly, 2008; Karagiannis et al. 1996; Kavale and Forness, 2000; Zigmond, Kloo, and Volonino, 2009).

2.2 DEFINING THE LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE)

2.2.1 LRE as Cascade Model

The LRE was meant to be a “cascade model”, meaning that a full continuum of services should exist (e.g., general education classroom full time, general education classroom with pull out services, special class, special school, etc.) to provide flexible levels of support to individual students in accordance with their educational needs (Kavale and Forness, 2000; Zigmond et al., 2009). However, for most students with disabilities, the LRE is considered the general education classroom with appropriate adaptations and supports; special classes, separate schools, or other placements outside of general education are reserved as the LRE only for those students who cannot receive an appropriate education even with accommodations and modifications to the curriculum in the general education setting (Holdheide & Reschly, 2008).

2.2.2 From “Mainstreaming” to “Inclusive Education”

The ways in which the LRE is conceptualized can vary significantly across the literature. Early proponents of more inclusive education referred to the process as “mainstreaming.” Nearly thirty years ago, Madden and Slavin (1983) cautiously recommended that mainstreaming could lead to achievement for students with mild disabilities compared to instruction in a special class. However, they argued that this would not occur simply by placing students in general education classrooms (Madden & Slavin, 1983):

The conclusion that mainstream placement with appropriate supports tends to be superior to full-time, special-class placement for students with mild academic handicaps [MAH] in no way implies that if MAH students are simply assigned to regular classes, their problems will be solved. Serious problems remain. (p.554)

Madden and Slavin (1983) went onto describe four support services that could improve mainstreaming outcomes: social skills training, consulting, cooperative learning, and individualized instruction. According to Madden and Slavin, such instruction would also likely require that students receive some degree of pull out support. Mainstreaming was posited as a practice with potential for student success if – and only if – the right elements were in place.

2.2.3 The Legacy of the Regular Education Initiative (REI)

Mainstreaming was a precursor to the Regular Education Initiative (REI) of the 1980s, which pushed for a merger between general education and special education. REI would have placed more responsibility for students with disabilities in the hands of general education teachers, with

the goal of benefitting all students (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1994; Karagiannis et al., 1996; Kavale & Forness, 2000). However, the goals of REI never came to fruition. Fuchs and Fuchs (1994) suggested this was due to a combination of confusion regarding how the continuum of placements would be changed and a lack of support from the general education community.

Yet, despite the fact that REI as an organized initiative did not succeed, Fuchs and Fuchs (1994) noted the increasing use of the term “inclusive schools” at the time of their writing in the mid-1990s. This indicates that the movement, although unsuccessful, may have sparked consideration throughout the educational community of ways to make classrooms more inclusive for students who learn differently. Fuchs and Fuchs (1994) posed that creating optimal inclusive environments would take considerable work by general and special educators alike to change instructional practices in ways that best meet the needs of students with disabilities in general education classrooms. Their suggestion that inclusive education could work under the right circumstances echoed Madden and Slavin’s (1983) thoughts on how students might benefit from mainstreaming with the right support.

2.3 RECENT LEGISLATION AND INCLUSION DEBATES

2.3.1 Effects of NCLB and IDEA 2004

Over the next decade and a half, debates over inclusion continued, with the next big changes occurring at the beginning of the 21st century. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001(NCLB) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) furthered the extent to which students with disabilities would be included in general education.

Zigmond et al. (2009) detailed the ways in which NCLB and IDEA 2004 led to a push towards the inclusion of most students with disabilities in general education. NCLB imposed a requirement that all teachers of content be “highly qualified” to teach that content as determined by a bachelor’s degree in the field, state certification in the content, or demonstrated proficiency in the content as determined by the state (e.g., through the Praxis exam). This meant that special education teachers could no longer be the sole providers of content instruction unless they were certified in every content area they taught. NCLB also required all students to participate in yearly state assessments, which are based on the standards around which the general education curriculum is designed.

IDEA 2004 supported the goals of NCLB by requiring that students with disabilities have access to the same curriculum as their peers without disabilities and by mandating the inclusion of students with disabilities in state assessments. As explored in the following section, Zigmond et al. (2009) proposed that the push for nearly universal inclusion in the recent legislation created some potential problems for the education of students with disabilities.

2.3.2 Criticisms of Current Inclusive Educational Policies

Some of the more outspoken critics of the current state of inclusive education have expressed concerns that students’ individualized needs are not being served in typical inclusive classrooms. Zigmond et al. (2009) emphasized the role the individualized educational plan (IEP) was supposed to play in planning for the instruction of students with disabilities who require special education services:

Clearly, Congress sought to promote and preserve the notion that public schools were obliged to provide some, although not all, students with disabilities with something *special* [original emphasis]. The what, the how, and the where were to be spelled out in the student's individualized education plan (IEP). The IEP defined and made transparent the content of each student's unique special education program (the content of each student's regular education program was already defined for all students by the local school board or the state.) The IEP described the specially designed instruction and the supplementary and related services needed by the student to benefit from instruction in that special content as well as in the general education curriculum. It gave parents and school personnel the joint responsibility for formalizing the special education curriculum to which that student was now entitled. (p.190)

Zigmond et al. (2009) expressed concerns that the push for inclusion of most students with special needs in general education classes has led to less emphasis on the IEP, creating a paradox within the most recent iteration of IDEA: if all students are to follow the general education curriculum in a general education class, to what extent can a unique individualized educational plan – a core component of IDEA – be implemented for each student requiring one? Arguably, specially designed instruction is meant to take place in the inclusive classroom as provided by the special education teacher who is working in collaboration with the general education teacher; however, in practice this often does not occur (Mock & Kauffman, 2005; Zigmond et al., 2009). Mock and Kauffman (2005), subsequently, referred to the presumption that individualized needs will be met in the general education classroom as an “oversimplification” that does not account for the “complex environments” of secondary schools, where they asserted it is more challenging to implement full inclusion compared to at the elementary level.

There is evidence in the literature that suggests students with special needs may not get the kind of support necessary for success in general education classrooms. Mock and Kauffman (2005) pointed to several studies that found students with special needs in inclusion classrooms rarely got or asked for assistance from the teacher, some teachers made few or no adaptations, and some students interacted very little with either their teachers or their peers without disabilities.

Likewise, Zigmond and Baker (1995) found, in the full inclusion classrooms where they observed, teachers had no time to provide students with individualized instruction. As a result, students with learning disabilities were not getting the research-proven kinds of strategy instruction or intervention that they desperately needed. Zigmond and Baker (1995) also found that special education teachers did not have opportunities to assess individual students or monitor their progress. These findings are clearly at odds with IDEA's notion of FAPE and the requirement of IEPs that are in tune with each student's strengths and needs. Such findings do not necessarily have to be viewed as an indictment against inclusive instruction, but they do indicate a need for vigilance to ensure students with disabilities get their needs adequately met in inclusive classrooms.

2.3.3 Focusing on Academic Needs of Students with Disabilities

If necessary, students with disabilities should have the option to receive some individualized support in a separate setting such as a resource room - even if they are included in general education for the majority of the day. Zigmond and Baker (1995) cautioned that some students may not get the specially designed instructional support that they need if a resource option is not available to these otherwise included students. Therefore, inclusive education should not

preclude students from receiving some services outside of the general education classroom if necessary.

More of a focus on how the academic needs of students with disabilities are served in general education settings may allay concerns that inclusive education is focused only on the socialization of students to the detriment of their academic achievement. Fuchs (1998) attributed concerns that socialization is valued over academic achievement to the difference between inclusion and full inclusion – the former referring to inclusive education that allows for flexibility according to students’ needs and the latter referring to a push for most or all students to be placed in full-time general education settings regardless of academic needs. Fuchs (1998) argued that full inclusionists put too much emphasis on the socialization of students with disabilities and not enough emphasis on students actually receiving the educational support they need (some of which may need to occur in a setting outside of the general education classroom). Fuchs (1998) argued that improved social skills are important for students, but it is also important for them to make academic gains. More flexibility within placements and a stronger focus on the academic achievement of students with disabilities in general education settings might persuade critics of inclusive education to recognize the value of access to general education contexts for most students with disabilities.

Across the literature, the reception of inclusive education has ranged from primarily positive (e.g., Fuchs & Fuchs, 1994; Holdheide & Reschly, 2008) to cautious (e.g., Zigmond et al., 2009) to extremely skeptical (e.g., Mock & Kauffman, 2005). The overwhelming consensus is that certain elements must be in place for students with disabilities to reap benefits from inclusive models of service delivery (special education services provided in the general

education setting). The next section outlines some ways in which districts, schools, and teachers might better ensure the success of students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms.

2.4 FACTORS THAT LEAD TO MORE SUCCESSFUL INCLUSIVE INSTRUCTION

2.4.1 The Possible Benefits of Inclusive Education

Students with disabilities clearly benefit from challenging curricula, access to settings with general education peers, and accountability standards that force their districts and states to invest in their educational success (Holdeheide & Reschly, 2008).

Holdheide and Reschly (2008) suggested that when proper supports are in place, students with disabilities have the potential to become independent learners who are actively involved in their own education, enjoy improved social skills and academic achievement, and develop increased self-worth. Students may find themselves surprised and motivated by their own achievement when they experience success in inclusive settings and parents may be more likely to agree to evaluations for special needs if they know that their child will be placed in an inclusive setting (Crockett, Myers, Griffin, & Hollandsworth, 2007).

Successfully implemented inclusive education addresses whole children (not just their academic or their social needs), promotes a respect for the diversity of all people, establishes networks that create support systems for teachers, and enhances accountability for students with special needs (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996).

Moreover, inclusion can lead to total school improvement, with reconsideration of curricula and adaptations that make learning accessible to students as well as opportunities for

teachers to share expertise through co-teaching and other forms of collaboration (Zigmond & Baker, 1996). Other benefits of inclusion may include an overall improvement in teaching quality and the opportunity for general education students to appreciate and become advocates for students with special needs (Griffin, Jones, & Kilgore, 2007).

2.4.2 Schaeffner and Buswell's Ten Elements

The creation of an inclusive environment must be a goal that schools and educators work towards actively. Schaeffner and Buswell (1996) listed the following ten elements as critical for the establishment of an inclusive environment: (1) development of a common philosophy and strategic plan; (2) strong leadership; (3) promotion of school-wide and classroom cultures that welcome, appreciate, and accommodate diversity; (4) development of support networks; (5) deliberate processes to ensure accountability; (6) organized and ongoing technical assistance; (7) flexibility; (8) effective teaching approaches; (9) celebration of successes and viewing challenges as learning experiences; and (10) being knowledgeable about but not paralyzed by the change process. Successful inclusion requires investment across the school and preferably across the district. Every faculty and staff member should be considered a valued member of the school team and an active participant in furthering the school's mission and goals.

2.4.3 Administrative Support

At the school level, successful inclusive education begins with a supportive principal. It is the principal who is ultimately responsible for ensuring that stakeholders are involved in creating

and maintaining the school's vision for supporting all students and promoting every child's success (Sage, 1996).

In Schaeffer and Buswell's (1996) list of ten elements, elements one through six are very dependent upon the school leadership. The second element explicitly calls for strong leadership. Without supportive leadership, it is difficult if not impossible to develop a cohesive philosophy and strategic plan, to align the support networks, accountability measures, and technical support critical for teachers and students, and to promote an appreciation for diversity at the school-wide level.

Principals also play a key role in ensuring that all teachers receive the support necessary to engage in successful inclusive collaborative practices (Austin, 2001; Murawski & Dieker, 2004; Walther-Thomas, Bryant, & Land, 1996). Principals can facilitate successful collaborative models by providing professional development and planning time for teachers as well as by selecting and pairing teachers who will work well together to achieve positive student outcomes (Walther-Thomas et al., 1996).

2.4.4 Flexibility

Included as part of Schaeffner and Buswell's (1996) ten elements, flexibility and, concomitantly, the celebration of successes and acceptance of challenges as learning experiences rank key among factors that are critically important to community-building efforts. Such efforts may take longer than originally expected and may require changes along the way. At the secondary level, teams of teachers might work together to brainstorm ways to integrate community-building exercises across the content areas to support a spirit of community in various classroom contexts.

Flexibility is particularly an important element for co-teaching partnerships and can actually be a benefit of the co-teaching model as well. Murawski and Dieker (2004) stated: “One of the key benefits of co-teaching is that having two instructors allows flexibility and creativity during lessons.”(p.56) Flexibility, then, might be considered both a need for and a benefit of co-teaching. As a need for co-teaching, flexibility is important because collaborating with a partner requires a willingness to learn from each other and to adjust for differences in style while simultaneously fostering communication. Teachers in co-teaching partnerships ideally should grow together in a manner that has been compared to a marriage (e.g., Keefe & Moore, 2004; Scruggs et al., 2007). As in a marriage, flexibility enables two co-teachers to find ways to work as a team and to “live together” in a shared space over which both should feel ownership.

Flexibility is a crucial factor not only in classrooms but at the school-level as well. At the school level, flexibility may be necessary in pairing co-teachers, planning schedules, and developing a curriculum that works with the context of the school (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996; Scruggs et al., 2007). As previously discussed, administrative support is critical for the implementation of successful inclusive models because it will generally be the principal who has control over aspects of flexibility such as arranging schedules to allow for planning time and changing co-teaching partners if necessary (Sage, 1996; Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996; Scruggs et al., 2007). Ultimately, a successful program will need to grow over time and will require that all stakeholders pay attention to what is working, what isn’t working, and to make adjustments in response to the program’s assessed needs.

2.4.5 Parents and Families

Finally, it is important to remember that parents and families are part of the educational community. At the secondary level, educators sometimes forget the important role parents still play in their children's education. Dyson (2007) found that parents often felt frustrated and stressed because of problematic relationships with their child's teachers and other staff. Involving parents as members of the community right from the beginning may avoid some of these problems and establish parents as allies within a school-wide support network rather than as adversaries.

2.5 COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS: CO-TEACHING IN THE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

2.5.1 Models of Co-Teaching

This study focuses on co-teaching as a model for delivering inclusive educational services. According to Cook and Friend (1995), co-teaching is defined as a general educator and a special educator teaching core curriculum (i.e., not just tutoring, extra support, or joint supervision of assessment) to students of diverse abilities in the same classroom.

Co-teaching has become a popular model for special education service delivery in recent years because it provides a way for students with and without disabilities to receive instruction from teachers highly qualified in the content areas while students with disabilities simultaneously receive special education services in a general education setting (Dieker, 2001; Magiera &

Zigmond, 2005; Murawski & Dieker, 2004). Although a focus exclusively on meeting the requirements of NCLB and IDEA leads to less successful compliance models (Nichols, Dowdy, & Nichols, 2010), satisfaction of the legal requirements of both pieces of legislation would be considered a benefit of the model to most districts and schools.

Co-teaching does not represent a monolithic approach to instruction; rather, co-teachers might choose from a number of different possible configurations. Cook and Friend (1995) list several different ways in which two teachers might instruct together:

One Teaching, One Assisting – One teacher is the lead teacher who takes charge of the lesson while the other teacher assists the lead teacher.

Parallel Teaching – The two teachers simultaneously engage in instruction with two separate groups of students.

Station Teaching – The lesson is broken into segments with each teacher in charge of a segment. Teacher A does Activity 1 with one group while Teacher B does Activity 2 with the other group, then the teachers trade groups.

Alternative Teaching – One teacher works with a small group of students who need extra support while the other teacher leads instruction for the majority of the class.

Team Teaching – Both teachers lead the lesson in tandem.

Although co-teachers often favor a particular model, it is not unusual for teachers to choose different approaches depending on the lesson, even changing configurations within a single lesson (Cook & Friend, 1995). Variety of instructional formats is one example of the flexibility co-teaching can bring to classrooms (Murawski & Dieker, 2004). The following section explores several other benefits of co-teaching for teachers and students in inclusive classrooms.

2.5.2 Benefits of Co-Teaching

Co-teaching can result in numerous benefits for both students and teachers. Scruggs et al. (2007) conducted a metasynthesis on thirty-two qualitative studies of co-teaching in inclusive classrooms. Across the studies, they found several common benefits for general and special educators and the students with and without disabilities in their classes.

2.5.2.1 Benefits to Teachers

In several studies, co-teachers felt they grew professionally from being in collaborative teaching partnerships. Special education teachers gained more facility with teaching content while general education teachers developed a deeper understanding of how to adapt instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners (Scruggs et al., 2007).

Austin (2001) found that both special education and general education teachers characterized co-teaching as “a worthwhile experience that contributed to the improvement of their teaching” (p.248). These teachers expressed that they worked well together with their partners and provided each other with useful feedback. Rice and Zigmond (2000) described similar findings. The co-teachers in Rice and Zigmond’s (2000) study claimed that in their collaborative partnerships they “enhanced each other” and “learn[ed] from each other” (p.193). The benefits of mutual learning seem related to the generally positive experiences of teachers in co-teaching relationships across the literature (Scruggs et al., 2007).

2.5.2.2 Benefits to Students

Numerous studies also explore the ways in which students benefit in co-taught inclusive classrooms. Significant findings across several studies include academic success for students

with disabilities, better cooperative efforts among students without disabilities, and increased attention for students with and without disabilities due to the presence of two teachers in the classroom (Scruggs et al., 2007). Rice and Zigmond (2000) found that struggling students without disabilities also tended to benefit from the accommodations that became a part of co-taught classes such as assessments and assignments that addressed different levels of academic functioning, extra time on tests, and more explicit instructions.

Keefe and Moore's (2004) findings further supported the benefit of instructional adaptations for struggling students without disabilities: "Sometimes the special education teacher helped make modifications for any students who were struggling and this was seen as a benefit of co-teaching" (p.84) These findings paint a portrait of the co-taught inclusive classroom as a place where a network of support structures comes into being through the collaborative work of the special and general educator, creating increased opportunities for every student to meet with success. Subsequently, both teachers (e.g., Austin, 2001) and students (e.g., Wilson & Michaels, 2006) tend to perceive that students with and without disabilities are effectively served in co-taught classrooms. Additionally, with students with and without disabilities included in the same classroom and supports available to all, students with disabilities may feel less stigmatized than they would if they were placed in a special class (Cook & Friend, 1995; Keefe & Moore, 2004).

Although limited, research focused on student perceptions suggests that the students in co-taught classes tend to feel they personally benefit from co-teaching. Wilson and Michaels (2006) surveyed 127 special education and 219 general education secondary students to elicit their perceptions of co-teaching. The students in Wilson and Michael's (2006) study felt they benefited by receiving help more readily (e.g., "One teacher might be doing something, so the other can help you."), receiving more structural support (e.g., "Two people are watching you,

observing you, and checking up on you.”), enjoying more variety in teaching styles (e.g., “Teachers have different methods of teaching the same things.”), and experiencing more academic success and learning (e.g., “You get a better understanding of assignments.”). Further, these students felt they improved their literacy skills in the co-taught classroom and special education students in particular seemed to demonstrate high levels of self-awareness, self-determination, and willingness to seek help as needed (Wilson & Michaels, 2006):

[T]he special education students indicated a healthy level of self-awareness and self-determination. They suggested that getting through the general education English curriculum required them to seek out assistance both in class and outside of class. Voluntarily seeking additional support buttresses the hypothesis that co-teaching may increase student motivation and support success. (p.220)

Although Wilson and Michaels (2006) readily admitted to the limitations of their study (e.g., relies on student perceptions rather than achievement data, sample students were all from the same suburban school district), the study offers insight into secondary students’ experiences and perceptions of co-taught classes – an area which has received little attention in the current literature (Austin 2001; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005).

Wilson and Michael’s (2006) findings corroborated those of Dieker (2001). In another rare study that included secondary students’ perceptions of co-teaching, Dieker (2001) interviewed 54 secondary students with diverse academic profiles (students with disabilities, struggling students without disabilities, and high-achieving students) in co-taught classrooms. Nearly all of the students thought they had benefited from their time in a co-taught class. In Dieker’s (2001) study, student perceptions were supported by the researcher’s classroom

observations. These observations revealed more active learning than typically takes place in secondary classrooms and high expectations for every student regardless of ability and achievement. Such findings lend support to students' perceptions that they are benefiting from co-teaching.

2.5.3 Challenges to Effective Co-Teaching

There are numerous examples of the ways in which co-teaching can potentially benefit both teachers and students. However, multiple challenges can also compromise the positive aspects of co-teaching and reduce the benefits of this otherwise promising model for inclusive instruction. A significant problem presented in the findings across the literature pertains to the role of the special education teacher in co-taught classrooms.

2.5.3.1 Special Educator as Teaching Assistant

Scruggs et al. (2007) found that “one teach, one assist” was the most common teaching configuration across studies, with the special education teacher more often than not relegated to the role of “assistant.” In fact, Austin (2001) claimed: “[P]erhaps the most compelling finding of this study is that the special education and general education co-teachers agreed that the general education co-teachers do more than their special education partners in the inclusive classroom”(p.252). General educators may prefer whole-class instruction and may be reluctant to relinquish any ownership over their classrooms to another teacher (Austin, 2001; Scruggs et al., 2007). Further, if special educators are unfamiliar with the content, they may be unable to move beyond the role of assistant – a particularly pressing issue at the secondary level where a high level of content knowledge is necessary for instructors (Keefe & Moore, 2004).

Without the development of content knowledge in special educators and the willingness of general educators to share the position of “teacher” in the classroom, special educators may find their role to be very limited. In such cases, special educators may end up performing tasks such as walking around to address student behaviors, taking attendance, grading multiple choice quizzes (Rice & Zigmond, 2000) or, in a more insulting example, fetching coffee for the general education teacher (Keefe & Moore, 2004). The relegation of special educators to an assisting role prevents them from fully contributing their expertise and diminishes their authority as teachers. Under such circumstances, a true co-teaching partnership does not exist.

Frequently, special educators are the behavior managers who “assume responsibility for any problem behaviors that [occur] in the classroom” (Scruggs et al., 2007, p.410). This role for the special educator may stem from the fear many general educators have of problem behaviors from students with special needs (Austin, 2001). The practice raises a rather troubling question. How committed are most general education teachers to sharing responsibility for students with disabilities? If students with disabilities are viewed as potential problems and special educators are seen as responsible for handling these problems, the implication is that general educators may not really accept students with disabilities as their students. Instead, a picture emerges of visiting special educators bringing special education student guests into classrooms that really belong to general educators and their students without disabilities.

2.5.3.2 Lack of Specialized Instruction for Students with Disabilities

Along with the relegation of the special educator to the role of helper or assistant and a possible lack of shared responsibility for students with disabilities, arises the problem of students not getting the specialized instruction they may need. Despite a tendency for students with disabilities to receive increased attention in co-taught classrooms (e.g., Magiera & Zigmond,

2005; Scruggs et al., 2007), they may not always have their academic needs met. In fact, although Magiera and Zigmond (2005) found that students with disabilities received more individualized instruction in co-taught classes, this was only in comparison to the very little and sometimes non-existent individualized support in solo-taught general education classes. Additionally, they found that general education teachers actually gave students with disabilities less attention in co-taught classrooms than in solo-taught classrooms, further suggesting that general educators might leave the responsibility of students with disabilities to the special education teachers in co-taught classrooms rather than sharing responsibility for all of the students.

It is also important to highlight that additional attention does not necessarily constitute individual instruction. Zigmond and Baker (1995) found that co-teachers offered good deal of individual attention (e.g., checking in on students as they worked and giving feedback), but very little individual instruction other than some on-the-spot tutoring and even those duties were sometimes delegated to peers and parent volunteers. In general, the co-teaching literature indicates that students with disabilities may not receive the kind of instructional support they require in many co-taught inclusive classrooms. Zigmond et al. (2009) expressed concerns that the actual practices in classrooms may not align with the research on best instructional practices for students with disabilities:

[I]n a recent research synthesis, Swanson (2008) reported that there is a concerning disconnect between classroom practice and the research base [on effective instructional adaptations for students with disabilities]. Undifferentiated, whole-group instruction was the norm for reading at both elementary and secondary levels (Swanson, 2008). This was even true in investigations of co-taught classrooms, regardless of the number of teachers

or adults present (Magiera & Zigmond, 2005). Clearly, the research gap is cavernous, yet differentiated instruction is viewed as the keystone to promoting access to the general education curriculum and appropriate instruction for students with disabilities in successful inclusion models (p.195).

Providing attention and on-the-spot support to students who struggle may be helpful but this kind of attention cannot be a substitute for individualized academic support as designated in a student's IEP. Having extra adults in a classroom available to help students is not sufficient to ensure that all students will further their learning to the maximum extent possible. A greater emphasis on the learning of individual students is clearly necessary in many co-taught classrooms.

If co-taught classrooms are typically characterized by whole-group instruction carried out by general educators while special educators assist students rather than instruct them, then it is unlikely that students with disabilities are receiving the kind of instructional support that will best scaffold their learning. Although studies such as Dieker (2001) have demonstrated that examples of hands-on, active learning (e.g., inventing animals with new mutations in a science class; making Egyptian jewelry in a social studies class) may occur in co-taught secondary classrooms and several studies have noted students' and teachers' perceptions of student achievement (e.g., Austin, 2001; Dieker, 2001; Wilson & Michaels, 2006), descriptions of instruction in the specific techniques demonstrated as effective for students with disabilities such as explicit strategy instruction seem absent from the co-teaching literature.

In fact, Scruggs et al. (2007) stated that across the thirty-two studies they analyzed, instruction seemed strikingly like that of traditional general education classrooms:

Classroom instructional practices have not changed substantially in response to co-teaching. Classroom instruction has generally continued as whole class and lecture driven, and special education co-teachers have generally attempted to fit within this model to deliver assistance to students in need. Practices known to be effective and frequently recommended – such as peer mediation, strategy instruction, mnemonics, study skills training, organizational skills training, hands-on curriculum materials, test-taking skills training, comprehension training, self-advocacy skills training, self-monitoring, or even general principles of effective instruction (e.g., Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2006) – were only rarely observed. As a consequence, the co-teaching model of instruction is apparently being employed far less effectively than is possible. (p.412)

Although co-teaching seems to be a practice that holds great potential as an effective way to deliver inclusive instruction, it is clear that changes must occur in the day-to-day teaching practices in most co-taught classrooms before students and teachers are able to reap the full benefits of the model.

2.5.3.3 Diminished Use of the IEP

Along with changes in instruction that would better benefit students with disabilities, there appears to be a need for greater focus on students' individual needs as expressed in their IEPs. IDEA has always and continues to require an IEP for students with disabilities who qualify for services. However, there is little focus on IEPs in the co-teaching literature. Even Dieker's (2001) study, which contained more description of effective secondary school classroom activities than other studies on co-teaching and overall depicted co-teaching quite favorably,

raised questions about the extent to which students' IEPs actual guided evaluation of their learning. Zigmond et al. (2009) reflected on how the IEP was originally meant to lay out “the specially designed instruction and the supplementary and related services needed by the student to benefit from the instruction in that special content as well as in the general education curriculum” (p.190). It seems unlikely that IEPs are being used in this capacity if students are exposed primarily to traditional general education practices and even special educators are only providing some general tutoring.

2.5.3.4 Lack of Training and Planning Time

It is possible that lack of training before the implementation of a co-teaching model and a lack of planning time during implementation may be associated with both inappropriate instruction for students with disabilities and difficulties teachers face in learning how to negotiate their new roles. Magiera and Zigmond (2005), in regards to this issue, stated:

Co-teachers may require initial training and co-planning time to implement the model and benefit students, which does not typically happen under ordinary conditions (p.84).

Planning time is often not carved out for teachers during the day and co-teachers must try to plan when and how they are able (Dieker, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005). In addition, the training component appears to be crucial in tandem with planning time, because even when teachers are allotted planning time, they do not necessarily use it effectively (Austin, 2001). Perhaps training in planning, instructional, and collaborative techniques might lead to both more effective planning sessions and a deeper understanding of how to work together to meet students' needs.

2.5.4 Defining and Supporting Successful Co-Teaching

2.5.4.1 Factors that Lead to Successful Co-Teaching

Co-teaching is a potentially effective model for delivering special education services in an inclusive setting but implementing this model can be challenging. Across the literature, a portrait of successful co-teaching begins to emerge. Successful co-teaching partnerships seem to occur under the following conditions: (1) school-wide commitment and administrative support; (2) school-wide preparation before implementation (including teacher training); (3) planning between co-teachers both before and on a regular basis during implementation; (4) compatibility of co-teachers and the development of a strong partnership; and (5) the development of capacity in both general and special educators to enable them to provide effective instruction to all students as a group and individually (Austin, 2001; Cook & Friend, 1995; Dieker, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Murawski & Dieker, 2004; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007; Walther et al., 1996).

2.5.4.2 School-wide Commitment and Administrative Support

School administrators, as educational leaders, should guide school-wide co-teaching efforts. Across multiple studies, administrative support has ranked among the most important elements co-teachers perceive as necessary for successful co-teaching models to evolve (e.g., Austin, 2001; Cook & Friend, 1995; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007). Walther-Thomas et al. (1996) suggested that co-teaching efforts should actually begin at the district-level and at the school-level principals should bear the responsibility for managing issues such as scheduling planning time, establishing appropriate class sizes and caseloads for special educators, allocating resources, selecting and pairing compatible co-teachers, and supporting the process in more

subtle ways such as “vision, moral purpose, recognition, and encouragement” (p.258). When administrators offer guidance and take the lead, other factors that are crucial components for co-teaching can fall into place, as Rice and Zigmond (2000) illustrate:

Many of the teachers said that without similar beliefs shaping schoolwide policies, teachers who wanted to work collaboratively encountered barriers. The teachers believed that the reasons for this were that co-teaching required reallocation of specialist resources and rescheduling of teachers’ duties and that these considerations prevailed over arguments to include students with disabilities in general education classes...Schoolwide support was also needed to ensure that specific times were allocated on the weekly schedule to permit co-teaching partners to plan together. When shared planning period were officially scheduled, co-teaching appeared more satisfactory (p.193).

Rice and Zigmond’s (2000) findings support the findings of other similar studies. The teachers in Austin’s (2001) study considered administrative support to be a key requirement for successful co-teaching experiences and teachers across the multiple studies in Scruggs et al. (2007) cited administrative support as a primary need that was linked to other important elements such as planning time and training. The consensus across studies seems to be that co-teaching is most effective when implemented at the school-wide or district level with a principal who takes the lead and is supportive of teachers needs throughout the stages of planning and implementation.

2.5.4.3 Preparation at the District and School Levels

Successful co-teaching models require sufficient preparation prior to implementation. Walther-Thomas et al. (1996) recommended that districts assemble a task force to develop a plan that

considers how co-teaching will work across schools and grades and how implementation at one school or grade level might affect others. As they stated: “One team’s decision may create ripples across the entire system” (Walther-Thomas et al., 1996, p.257).

At the school level, principals need to prepare by pairing compatible teachers, arranging dedicated planning time for co-teachers to work together, developing rosters that balance ratios of students with disabilities to students without disabilities, planning and implementing training for teachers and staff, and providing other resources and ongoing support as necessary (Walther-Thomas et al., 1996). Creating opportunities for teachers to work together is particularly important because these opportunities will better enable teachers to prepare for implementation and to continue their planning throughout the process once they begin co-teaching.

2.5.4.4 Teacher Planning

For classroom teachers, regular and focused planning sessions can facilitate more successful co-teaching experiences. Without planning time, general education teachers may become overwhelmed and special education teachers may be marginalized (Cook & Friend, 1995). Subsequently, it is unsurprising that Scruggs et al. (2007) noted across multiple studies that co-teachers emphasized the importance of dedicated planning time. The need for planning time comes with the caveat that teachers should learn ways to make that time effective. Austin (2001) noted a disparity between how highly planning time was ranked by teachers who did not have the time available compared to those who did. Among-co-teachers with planning time built into their schedules, some teachers ranked this element as not important, indicating that the time was likely not utilized productively. Walther-Thomas et al. (1996) recommended that planning time should happen on a weekly basis and should be focused on activities such as developing lesson plans, problem solving, setting priorities, and assessing student performance. Additionally, Walther-

Thomas et al. (1996) recommended that planning time can provide an opportunity for aligning curricular goals with IEP goals:

Typically, co-teachers rely on district curriculum guides as their framework for instructional units, weekly plans, and daily lessons. They develop linkage between content and IEP goals of identified students. Together they determine the extent to which content goals must be modified, if at all, for students with disabilities. As students study new content (e.g., the Civil War, adjective usage, environmental chemistry, literature), many co-teachers also teach students learning strategies and study skills (e.g., reading comprehension strategies, two-column note-taking, test preparation, problem solving) to facilitate learning mastery. They create instructional plans that weave content and strategies instruction together. (p.260)

Planning time, as envisioned by Walther-Thomas et al. (1996), provides co-teachers with an opportunity to share their expertise (general education teachers' content knowledge and special education teachers' knowledge of IEPs and strategy instruction), which might better enable both special and general educators to share the teacher position in the classroom. Additionally, this type of planning incorporates analyses of students' IEP goals and might lead to better use and incorporation of IEPs as a way to guide instruction for students with disabilities in co-taught inclusive classrooms.

2.5.4.5 Compatibility and Partnership

The metaphor of a marriage has been used to describe the co-teaching relationship across a multitude of studies (Scruggs et al., 2007). Compatibility, as in a marriage, is paramount for

successful co-teaching partnerships to develop. Rice and Zigmond (2000) identified five areas of compatibility based on the data from the teachers in their study: (1) shared views on academic and behavior standards for students; (2) honest and open communication; (3) ability to problem solve without making the problems personal; (4) equal pedagogical skills and knowledge; and (5) self-confidence, self-esteem, and ability to take risks. Several teachers in their study stated that the personal relationship between co-teachers was paramount and that, along with the areas listed above, humor, tolerance and patience, and a willingness to adapt to the new partner were crucial for a positive partnership to develop.

Some of these areas need to be pre-existing. For example, if teachers have radically different philosophies of teaching or if one teacher is a significantly less skilled instructor than the other, it will be difficult to reconcile these differences to build a strong partnership. Other areas, such as behavior standards, might be aligned as teachers develop honest and open communication and get to know each other. Training might help facilitate compatibility to an extent as well. Teachers might be trained to problem solve in effective ways without getting too personal. Adequate training and preparation might also help teachers to feel more self-confident and willing to take risks. When co-teachers are compatible, receive training to develop their collaborative skills, and have time to plan to support their students in shared, inclusive classrooms, they are more likely to be able to “use their complementary professional skills to provide students with enriched learning experiences” (Walther-Thomas et al., 1996, p.261).

2.5.4.6 Development of Capacity

As previously discussed, training in collaborative skills, pairing compatible co-teachers, and planning can maximize the potential of co-teaching partnerships. One way to develop the capacity of teachers to work collaboratively is through training specifically directed towards this

goal. Boudah, Shumacher, & Deshler (1997) developed a model for co-teaching called the Collaborative Instruction (CI) Model. The CI Model was designed specifically to train secondary general educators and special educators to work together in inclusive classrooms. The model positions the teachers alternately in two roles: presenter and mediator. The presenter's job is to present the academic content material while the mediator adapts the instructional tasks and aids students in mastering the content.

Initially, Boudah et al. (1997) expected that the general educator, as the content expert, would primarily take the role of the presenter while the special educator, as the adaptive instruction expert, would primarily serve as the mediator, but over time the teachers would ideally alternate roles. They developed a graphic that depicted an exchange between roles that might occur multiple times within the same lesson as teachers became more proficient in this model of instruction. Over time, the two teachers should begin to present themselves as a united front, sharing the role of teacher: "Thus, through this kind of instructional process, the special education teacher and general education teacher can complement and support each other, rather than acting as two teachers who are taking turns delivering instruction" (Boudah et al., 1997, p.298).

Although this small-scale study did have several limitations (e.g., short period of time for observations of implementation, classes included only students with disabilities and low-achieving students without disabilities rather than a full range of students) and revealed some problematic issues (e.g., lack of student engagement in both experimental and control groups), Boudah et al. (1997) did find that training in the CI model led to significant increases in role exchanges between teachers. In this respect, the CI model offers a possibility for how co-teachers might be trained to better work together and share the teacher position in the classroom.

Boudah et al. (1997) recommended that future research might further explore ways to refine and develop this kind of teacher preparation for co-teaching:

First, further research is needed to determine whether improvements in teacher instruction can be created such that both teachers in a collaborative team are highly engaged in the instructional process during almost all of class time. Teacher training methods that lead to these improvements need to be identified. Second, the relationship between highly engaged collaborate instruction by teachers and the performance of their students needs to be clarified. Third, teacher performance and student outcomes need to be compared across CI Model classrooms in which large and small proportions of low-achieving students are enrolled. (p.314)

In light of evidence that special education teachers often end up in assisting roles in co-taught classrooms (e.g., Austin, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007), training that better enables special educators and general educators to share the teacher position warrants substantial attention.

2.6 DESIGNING CURRICULA FOR INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

2.6.1 Curricular Approaches for Addressing Learners of Diverse Abilities

The first half of this literature review focused on the concept of the inclusive classroom, co-teaching, and recommendations for maximizing the potential of the co-taught inclusive

classroom. The next sections turn attention towards curriculum and pedagogical techniques that co-teachers might employ to effectively address student learning in secondary English language arts classrooms like the ones observed for the present study.

Stainback and Stainback (1996) suggested that the curriculum in inclusive schools and classrooms is more effective when it is student-centered, avoids a focus on deficits, and is centered on activities relevant to students' lives. At the high school level, Jorgensen (1996) also recommended building interdisciplinary units that work towards outcomes for student learning and proficiency, posing open-ended essential questions that require students to apply knowledge from different domains, and incorporating performance-based exhibitions as final projects (e.g., performing a play and producing a video depicting one of the major life processes occurring in a cell). In inclusive settings, it is important to design lessons and projects that include multiple points of entry, offering every student access. Although a class may include students at many different levels, teachers should not be expected to create multiple, separate lesson plans. This would be neither efficient nor inclusive. Rather, teachers should develop lessons that engage a variety of learners in appropriate ways.

For students with disabilities and possibly other struggling students, instruction in strategies and interventions that have been research-proven to strengthen certain skills (such as reading comprehension) may be necessary to facilitate access to the general education curriculum. Vaughn and Linan-Thompson (2003) compiled a list of approaches that have been proven effective for students with learning disabilities. These include controlling for task difficulty; teaching small, interactive groups; modeling and teaching strategies for generating questions and thinking aloud during reading; direct and explicit instruction; higher order

processing and problem solving skills; strategy instruction; progress monitoring; process writing; reading and writing skills instruction; and teacher and peer feedback.

Each of these approaches may include a number of different associated programs or methods. Initially, the general educator may need to rely on the special educator's expertise in this area, since most secondary general education teachers have been trained to be experts in content. However, this does not exclude general educators from learning approaches that work best in inclusive settings any more than it would exclude special educators from developing content knowledge. On the contrary, Holdheide and Reschly (2008) asserted that all pre-service and in-service teachers should receive training in instructional strategies that will scaffold access to the general education curriculum for students with disabilities.

Two frameworks for teaching students with diverse learning needs are Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Differentiated Instruction (DI). As frameworks, they each can include a number of different approaches. UDL and DI bear some similarities but are not the same. Rather, they present complementary but different ways to address the needs of a variety of learners. The following sections explain the basic tenets of each and the ways in which both frameworks can be used to guide curriculum development in inclusive classrooms.

2.6.2 Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

UDL has origins in architecture and follows the principle that it is more efficient to design a structure accessible to all people than to make accommodations to a structure designed for only some people (Edyburn, 2010; Friend & Bursuck, 2006; King-Sears, 2009).

According to UDL, accessibility can be best achieved through seven principles: (1) flexibility in use – curriculum is designed to be accessible for students of all abilities; (2)

equitable use – instructional materials are accessible to all; (3) perceptible information – information is presented in multiple ways such as verbally, through an illustration, and through a hands-on activity; (4) tolerance for error – opportunities are made for students to recognize and correct errors; (5) simple and intuitive use – information is presented in as straightforward a manner as possible and with respect for student characteristics such as different levels of background knowledge; (6) low physical effort – materials and activities are designed not to over-exert students; and (7) size and space for approach and use – presentation of information involves using the physical space of the classroom and materials to create accessibility for all students (King-Sears, 2009).

As with universally-designed architecture, UDL posits the efficiency of instructional tasks designed to be accessible to all students. The seven principles of UDL guide teachers towards developing pathways to understanding that include clear presentation of material, support and feedback, use of technology, and sufficient guidance to allow each student access to the lesson (King-Sears, 2009). For example, a teacher might design a reading activity that includes opportunities for clarifying key points in the reading as a class and collaboratively building a visual model that demonstrates how these key points are related. Although some students might be able to gain a relatively in-depth level of understanding from reading a text on their own, most if not all students will increase their understanding through the additional support. Clarification and model building activities will make the reading more accessible to students who would have difficulty identifying and connecting key ideas on their own and all students are likely to enrich their learning experience through the activity.

Although it may seem that UDL just employs good teaching practices, the framework actually goes beyond “good teaching”; rather, it includes a complex and structured set of

methodological approaches that will require continued refinement and development to distinguish the ways in which UDL as an instructional approach differs from UD as an architectural approach (Edyburn, 2010). Edyburn (2010) noted that UDL is now referenced in IDEA 2004 and defined in the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 as a way to increase flexibility in instruction and reduce of barriers to learning.

The Assistive Technology Act also refers to UDL as a “scientifically valid framework” but Edyburn (2010) argued that such a claim cannot currently be substantiated in the literature and maintained that UDL requires further definition and consideration of how it can best be implemented. To promote these efforts, Edyburn (2010) offered ten propositions for the further development of UDL. Edyburn’s (2010) ten propositions provide a guideline for defining UDL as unique to education in several ways: by moving away from the seven principles that are rooted in architecture and replacing those principles with ones more tailored to education; by placing a proactive focus on diversity at the center of UDL rather than as an addendum; by defining who designs and who implements UDL (e.g., Are teachers designers?); by distinguishing UDL from assistive technology and general good teaching; and by creating a system for evaluating UDL and its impact on student achievement. As a framework still in development, UDL will require current teachers in inclusive classrooms to continually engage in defining how UDL is practiced and how it can lead to better accessibility to the curriculum for students of diverse abilities.

2.6.3 Differentiated Instruction (DI)

According to leading differentiated instruction expert Tomlinson (2001), DI is characterized by recognition of students’ unique ways of learning as individuals, careful formative assessment of

students' needs, and instruction designed to accommodate a variety of different learning needs in the classroom.

Tomlinson (2001) described the work that teachers in differentiated classrooms do as “begin[ning] with a clear and solid sense of what constitutes powerful curriculum and engaging instruction” and then “ask[ing] what it will take to modify that instruction so that each learner comes away with understanding and skills that offer guidance to the next phase of learning” (p.2). During DI, Tomlinson (2001) asserted that teachers should focus on adapting four aspects of instruction to meet learners' needs: the content they teach, the process by which they teach the content, the product through which students demonstrate their learning, and the learning environment.

2.6.4 Combining the Two Approaches

UDL and DI differ in that UDL focuses on anticipating a variety of needs and designing learning situations to be accessible to all students while DI focuses on formatively assessing students and adapting instruction to meet the unique repertoire of different strengths and needs among students in a particular classroom. Both UDL and DI are frameworks that can guide curricular planning for inclusive instruction. Prior to implementation of instruction, co-teachers should design the curriculum based on anticipation of different student needs and should plan to make learning accessible to as many students as possible by doing things such as providing input on new topics in multiple ways (e.g., readings, discussions, short video clips, and visual aids) and providing graphic organizers for planning major writing assignments.

Once teachers get to know their students, they should formatively assess all students on a continuing basis, consider how individuals are functioning, and use assessments and

observations to make instructional decisions. DI focuses on individuals but is not individual instruction, as Tomlinson (2001) explained:

Differentiation is probably more reminiscent of a one-room-schoolhouse than individualization. This model of instruction recognized that the teacher needed to work sometimes with the whole class, sometimes with small groups, and sometimes with individuals. These variations were important in order both to move each student along in his particular understandings and skill as well as to build a sense of community in the group. (p.2)

DI is compatible with using IEPs to guide instruction but it is not a substitute for focused, individualized intervention. IEPs provide an overview of students' strengths and needs as well as goals and adaptations that are appropriate for helping individual students to successfully navigate the curriculum. The IEPs do not replace the general education curriculum; they outline how the student will access the general curriculum and offer goals that are appropriate to individual students. Within the framework of DI, co-teachers might review students' IEPs to decide on particular supports for lessons that will make the lessons accessible to these students, and use the data from the IEPs to consider grouping structures in accordance with supporting different students' needs during various lessons.

Both UDL and DI are frameworks that can align with curricula throughout different content areas, as they outline ways to make a variety of content accessible and tailored to students' needs. The context for the present study is the secondary English language arts classroom and therefore focuses on ways of instructing students in literacy practices. The next

few sections will therefore explore the processes of reading and writing, the conceptual framework for literacy used in this study, and documented practices that promote literacy achievement for adolescents in general as well some of the specific techniques designed to facilitate the learning of struggling adolescent readers and writers, including those with disabilities.

2.7: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON LEARNING

2.7.1 Sociocultural Perspectives

Sociocultural perspectives on learning posit that learning does not take place in an isolated vacuum but rather within particular cultural and historical contexts and through sets of particular social interactions. Within sociocultural contexts, interactions with influential others and the surrounding culture in which an individual lives contribute to the ways in which certain practices and materials for learning are made available to the learner (Applebee et al., 2003; Gee, 2001; Smagorinsky, 2001; Snow & Sweet, 2003). Without an appropriate sociocultural context, Vygotsky (1986) argued that adolescent students would not make desired gains in their thinking:

Unlike the development of instincts, thinking and behavior of adolescents are prompted not from within but from without, by the social milieu. The tasks with which society confronts the adolescent as he enters the cultural, professional, and civic world of adults undoubtedly become an important factor in the emergence of conceptual thinking.

If the milieu presents no such tasks to the adolescent, makes no new demands of him, and does not stimulate his intellect by providing a sequence of new goals, his thinking fails to reach the highest stages, or reaches them with great delay. (p.108)

Vygotsky's (1986) assertions place secondary teachers in the position of critical importance as designers of the academic milieu and tasks that will push adolescents towards higher-level intellectual development. Accomplishing this task requires an understanding of how young people develop knowledge and the ways in which teachers can most effectively intervene to mobilize the learning process.

2.7.2 Vygotskian Concept Formation and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

Teachers in inclusive settings must account for a variety of ability levels in one classroom. In such classrooms, the teachers must determine the level at which each student is appropriately challenged and try to keep each student working at this level during instructional time. This instructional level is what Vygotsky's (1986) called the zone of proximal development" (ZPD) – the gap between what students can do independently and what the students can do with the help of a more expert other. Vygotsky (1986) posited that mediation from a more knowledgeable person is necessary to keep students working in their ZPDs; they cannot work within the ZPD independently. If students are not working in their ZPDs, they are unlikely to grow intellectually or academically because doing tasks they are already able to do will not lead to new learning and attempting tasks that are too difficult will likely just lead to frustration and may cause students to give up on the task altogether.

Mediating students' learning to keep them working in their ZPDs allows for teachers to assist students in the development of scientific concepts. According to Vygotsky (1986), scientific concepts – word meanings representing the networks of interrelated abstractions that are the basis for academic instruction – develop through language use and “the central moment in concept formation, and its generative cause, is a specific use of words as functional ‘tools’” (p.107). Vygotsky (1986) asserted that these concepts must develop through the “strenuous mental activity” of the learner but that instruction is “a powerful force in directing [conceptual] evolution” (p. 157). In other words, the mediation that an instructor provides is critical for learners to fully develop conceptual knowledge.

Some educational researchers such as Beck, McKeown, and Kucan (2002) have designed techniques for teachers to provide the kind of mediation that leads to a strong understanding of scientific concepts. Beck et al.'s (2002) approach is based on the idea that teaching word meanings is not just a matter of teaching definitions but rather guiding students towards an understanding of interrelated abstract concepts and that this is best accomplished by grounding key concepts in examples from literature. Approaches such as Beck et al.'s (2002) approach acknowledge the centrality of concept formation in literacy learning. An instructional focus on mediating concept formation is critical for struggling students, as an understanding of word meanings is more often the cause of reading failure than difficulty with phonetic decoding (Gee, 2001).

2.7.3 The Scaffolding Model

The systematic mediation of concept formation is often referred to as “scaffolding.” This term was originally coined by Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976), who depicted scaffolding as a multi-

faceted process by which an individual with expertise in a particular task assists a novice towards building proficiency in the task. Wood et al. (1976) outlined the following features as part of this process: (1) recruiting the learner to become involved in the task; (2) simplifying the task to make it accessible to the learner (reducing degrees of freedom – steps involved in the task); (3) maintaining the learner's direction, motivation, and focus on moving from one step to the next until the task is completed; (4) pointing out critical features of the task to help the learner assess the extent to which the task is being done correctly and what, if anything, needs to be changed; (5) helping the learner to control frustration; and (6) demonstrating in an exemplary way for the task to be completed.

2.7.4 Scaffolding Concept Formation in Adolescents

Although Wood et al. (1976) focused on young children, the process of scaffolding can be used any time a more knowledgeable person must provide mediation to help a novice learn a new skill. The more knowledgeable person adjusts the task and assists the learner in ways that require less and less assistance over time until mastery is reached. The process of lessening assistance was coined as “gradual release of responsibility” by Pearson & Gallagher (1983) – the removal of scaffolding over time until the learner is independent. This paradigm can be applied to the optimal relationship between teachers and students of any age.

Adolescence may represent a particularly important developmental period for scaffolding students to understand new concepts because, as Vygotsky (1986) asserted: “[l]earning to direct one's own mental processes with the aid of words or signs is an integral part of the process of concept formation... [and] [t]he ability to regulate one's own actions by using auxiliary means [i.e., words and signs] reaches its full development only in adolescence” (p.108).

Scaffolding the behaviors that will allow secondary students to mediate their own thinking through language is paramount for promoting students' ability to learn. The classroom becomes a key context for this development of the conceptual knowledge in a particular content area (in this study, literacy/English language arts).

2.8 FEATURES OF SCAFFOLDING IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CLASSROOM

2.8.1 Scaffolding Features in Discussion

Concept formation, as a critical aspect of literacy instruction, requires teacher scaffolding that meets the needs of students at their respective instructional levels or ZPDs. In the secondary English classroom, discussion serves as the primary opportunity for conceptual development (e.g., Applebee et al., 2003). Discussion around high-level texts can help students to use texts as “thinking devices,” which holds more promise for reading as a path towards concept formation and higher-level cognitive development than the use of texts as merely tools for transmission of information (Nystrand et al., 2003). For example, discussing the concept of a “feud” in relationship to the Shakespearean text *Romeo and Juliet* would allow for students to develop a more thorough understanding of this concept than they would if they just looked up the term in the dictionary. Discussions that develop conceptual knowledge do not, however, typically occur spontaneously; teachers typically need to provide scaffolding to engage students in the kinds of discussions that lead to concept formation. Nystrand et al. (20003) suggested that one way in which teachers scaffold discussions is through a technique called the dialogic bid. During

dialogic discourse, teachers welcome and build on students' ideas. Ideally, teacher scaffolding should lead to students asking many questions, responding to one another's questions, and building on one another's ideas. This process eventually allows for not only the teacher to serve as a mediator of concept formation but for students to also mediate one another's learning.

Dialogic bids are an example of a teacher technique that can be used in a manner consistent with the scaffolding process described by Wood et al. (1976). The teacher might first recruit students into a discussion of a key concept by asking open-ended questions that get students thinking. If students are struggling to develop a concept among one another, the teacher can reduce the complexity of the task by taking up an important statement or question that a student offers and focusing the other students' attention towards this statement or question. If no such student responses have been offered, the teacher might ask further questions to elicit this kind of response.

Emphasizing important student responses and focusing the attention of the group towards these responses can allow the teacher to point out critical features of a concept and to maintain students' direction and motivation for continuing to discuss the concept. Additional teacher questions might again be needed if students are not getting to the critical features of the concept. As the teacher asks the kinds of questions that students will then be expected to pose to one another, the teacher is demonstrating or modeling the questioning process. In this way the scaffolding process (Wood et al., 1976) can initiate students into the situated practice of the dialogic discussion.

Students are subsequently exposed to perspectives that they may not otherwise access on their own and therefore develop a more sophisticated representation of a particular concept through exposure to these other perspectives.

2.8.2 Scaffolding Features in Reading and Literature Instruction

According to the 2009 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) report, 68% of eighth-grade students read at less than Proficient levels. Of these students, 26 % scored at the Below Basic level. Although these data represent significant gains compared to 2007, a substantial number of adolescent learners still struggle with reading. By the time students reach the secondary level, most are able to decode words without difficulty, but many still struggle to comprehend the material they read (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Greenleaf & Hinchman, 2009). As Nystrand et al. (2003) demonstrated, engagement in dialogic discussions about texts can represent a key opportunity for scaffolding students' conceptual knowledge and developing higher-level cognitive skills – all of which should lead to increased comprehension of texts. Due to the high prevalence of struggling adolescent readers, providing scaffolding in an inclusive instructional context would likely have a positive effect on the literacy learning of many students – not just those with disabilities. The following sections describe a variety of approaches to scaffolding reading instruction for struggling readers.

Frequently, the way teachers scaffold students' reading and literature learning at the secondary level is through teaching strategies for reading comprehension and analyzing grade-appropriate pieces of literature (e.g., being able to explore a theme through the relationships among several key characters). Subsequently, instruction in strategies has been the topic of several recent studies that focused on providing scaffolding for older struggling readers (e.g. Greenleaf & Hinchman, 2009; Szabo, 2006). Strategies may include techniques that teach students general ways to better make sense of what they read (such as teaching students to make

predictions or activate prior knowledge before reading - e.g., Greenleaf and Hinchman, 2009) or may be more elaborate strategies that teachers develop with their particular students in mind (e.g., Szabo's KWHHL chart, an elaboration of the Know, Want to Know, Learned, or KWL, strategy). Freedman et al. (2005) offered examples of a number of strategies aimed at engaging students of diverse abilities in deep engagement with literature. These included techniques such as having students respond to ideas in a piece of literature through a log, guiding them to create resource maps that organize the ideas in a novel, and getting them to use these artifacts to spur class discussion of a literary work.

Strategies used to increase comprehension seem to require some tailoring for specific groups of students and classrooms (e.g. Freedman et al., 2005; Szabo, 2006) and ideally should draw upon students' interests to increase motivation (Darvin, 2006). Certain techniques require a great deal of knowledge of one's own students. For example, in inclusive settings, teachers may take advantage of the different levels in the classroom to encourage peer-to-peer scaffolding in addition to teacher scaffolding (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Freedman et al., 2005). Such approaches would require teachers to understand their instructional contexts and the needs of their students to make decisions appropriate for their classes. Therefore, the specific ways in which teachers use what they know about their students and the context of the classroom to develop techniques that will lead to better reading comprehension and engagement with literature are important areas for analysis. As I elaborate in Chapter 7, the seventh grade co-teachers in particular tried to tailor instruction to meet the variety of needs and interests of the students in their classroom.

2.8.3 Scaffolding in Features in Writing Instruction

Writing instruction, while receiving less attention than reading instruction, has emerged as an area of critical need demonstrated by the results of standardized tests and based on feedback from college-level instructors and employers (Graham and Perin, 2007). The most recent NAEP results (2007) place 67% of eighth-grade and 76% of twelfth-grade students at below Proficient levels in writing. These results represent the need for a stronger focus on developing students as writers. The development of writing proficiency is particularly important for adolescents, who will soon enter college or the job market.

Considering the number of struggling adolescent writers, finding ways to provide students with scaffolding during the writing process is critically important for secondary English language arts teachers. Atwell (1998), the originator of the workshop model for process writing, offered some guidance regarding what scaffolding might look like in writing instruction. Within the structure of the workshop model, scaffolding primarily happens during writing conferences. Individual writing conferences, a key component of the writer's workshop model, offer a particularly fruitful opportunity for providing students with scaffolding that meets their individual needs. During these conferences, which entail teachers working individually with students at different points in the writing process (e.g., drafting, revising, etc.), teachers are able to keep students working in their individual ZPDs by attending to each student's specific needs. Atwell (1998) described how she uses conferences as an opportunity to develop student learning in alignment with the Vygotskian concept of mediation:

I listen hard or read the draft, ask questions about things I don't understand or would like to know more about, talk with the writer about how he or she might solve a writing

problem, offer the options and solutions I know that might work here, and ask what the writer plans to do next...My goal is what Vygotsky termed “mediated” learning: “What a child can do in cooperation today he can do alone tomorrow” (1962, 104)...I’m learning to relax, to use the predictable pattern of the conference to make room for deliberation, reflection, collaboration, and genuine conversation. When I listen hard, the writer and the writing becomes my focus. (Atwell, 1998, p.221)

These conferences can be opportunities for teachers to formatively assess individual students’ needs and to “awaken and direct a system of processes in the child’s mind that are hidden from direct observation and subject to its own developmental laws” (Vygotsky, 1986, p.186). The teacher, during this individual time with the students, can tailor support to spur the students’ thinking processes and help scaffold their learning in ways that will lead towards developing an understanding of concepts, processes, and ideas (e.g., fashioning a coherent plot in an original piece of writing).

During writing, an individual goes through complex cognitive processes that are part of composing the piece of writing, first planning what will be written (including generating and organizing ideas and setting goals for the writing), then translating those ideas into written prose, and finally reviewing the writing (which includes both revising and editing) to ensure the writing coherently communicates ideas for a potential reader (Flower & Hayes, 1980, 1981). Throughout the processes of composing, proficient writers monitor their thinking and make adjustments to writing along the way. Conversely, novice writers may not understand the processes of composition or how to monitor those processes; subsequently novice writing is typically reflective of the ongoing and often confusing thinking of the writer rather a finished product that

strongly communicates ideas to a reader. Flower (1979) referred to this novice writing as *writer-based prose* compared to the more clearly communicative *reader-based prose* that is characteristic of advanced writing. Writing conferences, which are such a key aspect of the workshop model, afford teachers the opportunity to help make the cognitive processes of writing salient to students and to assist students in learning to monitor these processes as they write independently.

The writer's workshop model for process writing is particularly promising for teaching writing instruction in co-taught inclusive classrooms because it presents opportunities for scaffolding at both a whole class level during minilessons and at the individual level during conferences. The presence of two teachers in the classroom should also allow conferences to occur more often and allow teachers to spend more time with each individual student.

Although the scaffolding that takes place during writing conferences may be more general (e.g., showing students places in their writing where they should add more descriptive language), scaffolding through instructing students in specific learning strategies has been identified as an effective way to help students become better writers (e.g., Graham & Perin, 2007). Graham and Perin (2007) described strategy instruction in general and a specific model for strategy instruction called Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) in particular, as an approach that is well-supported in the literature for improving writing quality in struggling writers. SRSD is strongly influenced by social cognitive theory, which asserts that students learn best when social instruction matches their developmental level (Zito, Adkins, Gavins, Harris, and Graham, 2007). In other words, SRSD works from the premise that it is best to keep students learning within their ZPDs.

SRSD as a model for strategy instruction bears much in common with Wood et al.'s (1976) scaffolding model. During SRSD, a task (the strategy) is modeled by an instructor who then provides individualized guidance, feedback, and reinforcement as the learner practices and works towards mastery of the task (Graham & Perin, 2007; Zito, Adkins, Gavins, Harris, and Graham, 2007). Both scaffolding (Wood et al., 1976) and SRSD (e.g., Graham & Perin, 2007) focus on providing mediation to enable the accomplishment of a task at a level just above what a learner can do alone (the ZPD). The features of SRSD include the development the background knowledge necessary to access a target writing strategy; description of the strategy to students; teacher modeling of the strategy; the opportunity for students to memorize the strategy so it can be independently deployed by students as they write; ongoing support for students as they use the strategy; and finally the independent use of the strategy by students, who have now included the new strategy as part of their set of tools for tackling writing.

Even though they are not equivalent, there are several similarities between the features of scaffolding and the features of SRSD. Some features of SRSD map well onto a particular feature of scaffolding. For example, the demonstration feature of scaffolding is nearly identical to the modeling feature of SRSD. Other features of SRSD are more complex, and may function in a variety of capacities that map onto several different features of scaffolding. The support feature of SRSD is a particularly salient example, as it might function in the capacity of reducing degrees of freedom, direction maintenance, marking critical features, or frustration control depending on how the teacher chooses to provide support for a particular student according to the student's needs. The similarities between the SRSD model and Wood et al.'s (1976) scaffolding model suggest that SRSD is primarily a model for scaffolding specific to writing instruction.

Both Atwell's (1998) approach to writing conferences as part of the workshop model and the SRSD approach to teaching writing strategies serve to better clarify ways in which scaffolding during writing instruction might manifest. These examples offer some guidance regarding the ways in which scaffolding for academic writing might take shape in inclusive secondary ELA classrooms.

2.8.4 Scaffolding Techniques for Addressing Multiple Ability Levels in Inclusive Classrooms

In inclusive classrooms, teachers are challenged to find ways to engage students at very different ability levels in the same rigorous literacy tasks. For all students to meet with success in these contexts, scaffolding is paramount and does not necessarily need to take on the structure of a model such as SRSD. Freedman et al. (2005), offered the instructive example of a middle school teacher (Delp) who addressed the needs of her eighth-grade students of varying ability levels through scaffolding their reading and writing by implementing a number of creative techniques. One such technique, "resource maps," served as a strategy for both promoting reading comprehension and developing ideas for writing in her students:

[Delp] had the students fold the paper to make eight boxes on each side...The boxes provided spaces for the students to trace their thinking about topics...Delp helped students record their thinking on their maps as well as make use of the [whole-class] discussion to record her thinking and the thinking of others in the class. Students copied quotations that supported their thoughts, including page numbers for reference. Delp also asked the students to draw pictures to help them better understand their responses to the

literature, the metaphorical language, and the perspectives of the characters. She frequently directed the class and individuals to make notes of something particular on their maps and then to write about whatever they had noted. (p.86)

These resource maps represent a strategy for tracking and organizing students' emerging understandings gained through reading and class discussions and then using this information to make connections among ideas in a piece of writing. This type of promising but less structured (than SRSD) strategy is closer to the type of scaffolding I encountered in the focal classrooms, such as the use of plot charts in the seventh grade classrooms (described in Chapter 7).

This example also provides a good description of how reading and literature instruction, discussion, and writing instruction are interrelated and overlapping in the ELA classroom rather than discrete entities. Coherent instruction and effective scaffolding for literacy learning must weave together these areas of ELA instruction. The need for this coherence is well explained in Beck and Jeffrey's (2009) recent study, which found that secondary students in ELA classrooms found it especially difficult to write a literary analysis and that this difficulty was related to difficulty with interpreting literature. The student work artifacts that I chose to analyze for each partnership are examples of student writing related to literature that had been read and discussed by the whole class. For both co-teaching partnerships in the ninth grade classroom (Gina and Jamie; Dave and Jamie), I analyzed a piece of writing about a novel the class had read together. For the seventh grade partnership (Mindy and Sara), I analyzed a piece of writing that was meant to follow the structure of a particular genre that the class had studied through reading several shorter texts in that genre (Greek myths). Through analyzing these student work artifacts, I was

able to gain a sense for the work students had done across all three areas of ELA instruction, not just in writing.

2.9 SUMMARY

My study explores the nature of three co-teaching partnerships and the literacy instruction these co-teachers provided for students in their inclusive secondary ELA classrooms. My focus on literacy instruction was focused on the specific ways in which the co-teachers provided scaffolding in the areas of reading and literature instruction, discussion, and writing instruction.

Successful co-teaching requires the support, long-term motivation, and strategic efforts of key stakeholders – most crucially teachers and administrators. My findings indicated both strengths and weaknesses of the co-teaching model in the focal classrooms. I found some strong examples of scaffolding that had the potential to move students forward in their literacy learning and also several examples of scaffolding used in a less productive manner, leading to less rigorous instruction.

I also found the co-teaching partnerships developed inconsistently and in some cases idiosyncratically due to a rather loose and less organized plan for the implementation and ongoing support of co-teaching in the district. The need for better ongoing support was most evident in the beginning teaching partnership, which was marked by a series of challenges that were never addressed during the time of the study and which subsequently had dire consequences for that partnership.

These mixed findings contradicted my original expectations, which were based on the characterization of the co-teaching model at SJSHS as highly successful. The co-teaching model at the school- and district-level was recognized as successful by neighboring districts, considered successful by both the original co-teachers in the study and the school and district leadership, and

guided by administrators with co-teaching experience (a principal who was previously in a mathematics co-teaching partnership and a dynamic special education director who had a long history of co-teaching).

A careful analysis of my observations, interview data, and the artifacts I gathered in the focal classrooms revealed a more complex perspective of the co-teaching model at SJSHS. Bringing together two bodies of literature – on co-teaching and inclusive instruction and best practices in ELA – this study provides a unique view of how co-taught ELA classrooms may take shape, revealing the potential for both enhanced and diminished student learning opportunities depending on the way in which individual partnerships and classrooms evolve over time.

Implications of the study include support for a well-organized co-teaching plan at the school and district level that includes training and ongoing support for teachers, including those who appear to have successful partnerships; a deeper understanding of how co-teaching partnerships within the same school and district may develop in very different ways; and a deeper understanding of the more and less effective ways in which co-teachers might scaffold literacy instruction for learners with diverse abilities in the same classroom.

Perhaps most importantly, the study reveals the need for both co-teachers at the classroom level and leadership at the school- and district-level to turn a continually critical eye towards the practices they enact. Even models that appear to be successful may have many areas of need beneath the glossy veneer of their apparent success, and not recognizing those areas of need may ultimately have a negative effect on both teachers and students.

3.0 CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study was guided by the following two major research questions, which focus on building an understanding of co-teaching partnerships and the ways in which co-teachers jointly support the literacy learning of students with diverse abilities in inclusive English language arts classrooms:

1. What are the characteristics of the co-teaching partnerships in inclusive secondary English language arts (ELA) classrooms and how do those characteristics shape the nature of classroom instruction?
 - a. How does the context of the district and school influence the co-teaching relationship?
 - b. How do the teachers negotiate their relationship with their co-teachers and their respective roles in the classroom?
 - c. How do the teachers interact with each other during classroom instruction?
 - d. How do these negotiations and interactions affect the success of the co-teaching, scaffolding, and learning opportunities for all students?
2. How do ELA and Special Education co-teachers scaffold literacy instruction for students in inclusive secondary English classes?

- a. What is the nature of the reading and literature instruction?
- b. What is the nature of the writing instruction?
- c. What is the nature of discussions and classroom talk?

3.1.1 Rationale for Research Methodologies

My study used a qualitative research design to explore the negotiation of the co-teaching partnerships in inclusive secondary ELA classrooms, the ways in which those partnerships shaped instruction, and the nature of literacy instruction in those classrooms, with a focus on how the co-teachers provided scaffolding to facilitate the literacy learning of students both with and without disabilities. Qualitative researchers typically employ multiple methods, seeking to develop an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon or process. Pursuit of an in-depth understanding entails delving beneath the surface of observations, member checking (e.g., Willis, 2007) to gain participants' perspectives on the researcher's conclusions through interviews, and analyzing a variety of sources to capture nuances and relationships that lay beneath the surface of a behavior.

My study explored several complex processes: the constantly evolving relationships between teachers who collaboratively guide the instruction of adolescent students and the ways that teachers provide scaffolding to support students at multiple different ability levels in the same classroom. Previous studies in literacy education (e.g., Dyson, 2003; Heath, 1983/2007; Rex, 2003) attest to the usefulness of qualitative methodologies for developing an understanding of literacy learning processes as bound within rich networks of sociocultural contexts and interactions among various actors. These data are obtained through spending time in the contexts under study and communicating with those who engage in the processes that are then analyzed. I

gathered and analyzed data from multiple sources to develop a sufficient understanding of how the co-teachers in my study collaborated to enact literacy practices and build relationships with each other. These data included fieldnotes on my extensive observations, interviews with administrators and teachers, and an array of classroom artifacts, including rubrics, assignment, student work, and teacher-created student surveys.

My study focused on the particular experiences of teachers and students in the context of the classrooms where I conducted my research. The questions I crafted were “how” and “what” questions focused on the description of processes occurring in natural settings (i.e., classrooms). These questions guided my exploration of the detailed structures and relationships that emerged from the data and are the kinds of questions that are best answered by qualitative approaches (Agee, 2009; Anthanases & Heath, 1995; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; LeCompte & Shensul, 1999a; Willis, 2007).

As a goal for this qualitative study, I borrowed Willis’s (2007) use of the term *verstehen*, a German word that asserts “understanding the particulars of a situation is an honorable purpose” (p.100). In this study, I aimed to gain an understanding of how co-teaching partnerships develop and the ways in which co-teachers’ approaches to literacy instruction in their classrooms influence the literacy learning of students both with and without disabilities. This goal of understanding is “an honorable purpose” in that it offers new dimensions and perspectives to our current understanding of co-teaching and literacy learning in inclusive secondary classrooms and might provide a basis for practical guidance for educational stakeholders who wish to attempt similar frameworks for teaching and learning.

My findings are represented in Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7 through careful descriptions, which include “details of the basic scenes, settings, objects, people, and actions...observed” (Emerson

et al., 1995, p.68). I included descriptions of the actions and moments that took place in the focal classrooms, bits of dialogue (or approximate dialogue), and “members own descriptions and ‘stories’ of their experiences” (Emerson et al., 1995, p.75) garnered through my multiple interviews. My descriptions are relayed as the interconnected episodes that Emerson et al. (1995) suggest allow research data to eventually take narrative shape. Through the narrative descriptions of each co-teaching partnership, a coherent portrait emerged, illustrating co-teaching and scaffolded literacy instruction in the context of the researched classrooms.

3.2 THE SETTING AND PARTICIPANTS

3.2.1 The Setting

This study was conducted in a small rural secondary school in Pennsylvania near the Ohio border. The town of Stateline was one of several small, adjacent towns in a county that included large farms, a handful of colleges, and growing urban sprawl. A drive down the main road servicing the area led to a shopping mall anchored by Macy’s and Sears, several free-standing major chain department stores like Home Depot, and restaurant chains such as Starbucks and Bob Evans. However, the community still retained its rural character. Rolling hills of fertile farmland and the occasional Amish horse-drawn buggy attested to the continued legacy of several loosely connected farming communities. It was an area where churches still outnumbered coffee shops and the John Deere dealership sat conveniently across the road from the Sunoco station. The population of Stateline was generally White and working-class to middle-class

(96.6% White with a median household income of \$47, 670 in 2009 according to city-data). In general, Stateline resembled other rural Pennsylvania towns.

The district was quite small, comprised of just three schools – a lower elementary school, an upper elementary school, and a secondary school that housed grades 7 – 12. A total of 1,152 students were enrolled across the three schools at the time of the study according to the district’s website. The small size of the district was likely a contributing factor in the feasibility of implementing co-teaching across the district. The three schools were situated together on the same large plot of land and district administrators could easily travel from school to school. Indeed, it was feasible to travel “across the district” on foot.

According to the district’s website, Stateline Junior-Senior High School (SJSHS) housed 553 middle school and high school students at the time of the study. During the 2010 -2011 academic school year, a wing of the secondary school became a dedicated middle school with block scheduling. In previous years, middle school and high school students mingled throughout the building, sitting in adjacent classrooms and receiving instruction from the same teachers (albeit in different classrooms). There was a small-town atmosphere of “everybody knowing everybody.” Teachers frequently were acquainted with students’ families and often remembered an older brother or sister from previous years. The school seemed to have a strong sense of community, which was unsurprising considering the small size. When there was an upcoming football game or other major school event, the entire school seemed to come alive with excitement.

The building itself was clean, modern, and easy to navigate. The whole building was on one floor with three wings diverging from a central dining area. Classrooms were well-maintained and equipped with SMART Boards™ and television sets. There were two computer

labs in the building as well. Students participated in a number of different sports, arts, and special interest extracurricular activities. The faculty consisted of primarily young and enthusiastic teachers in their twenties, thirties, and early forties and a general atmosphere of camaraderie seemed to exist among the faculty and staff.

At SJSHS, special education services were primarily delivered through the co-teaching model. Two special education teachers were assigned to work with the English department and two special education teachers worked with the math department. These teachers co-taught inclusive classes with the general education English and math teachers. Teaching assistants provided support in the science and social studies classes. There was one self-contained class for students with the most significant disabilities. This class was called the “life skills” class and the students in this placement were typically students who qualified for the state alternative assessment. Occasionally, students from the life skills class were placed in some co-taught classes if the teachers believed the students might succeed in such a setting.

I conducted my research in two English classrooms – one at the seventh and one at the ninth grade level. The co-teachers in both classrooms had a considerable amount of curricular and pedagogical freedom. They were expected to follow the state standards and at the high school level there was a focus on Shakespeare, but otherwise teachers were free to choose texts and create lessons that they thought would best fit the needs of their students. The curriculum in each classroom therefore represented teacher choices to a much greater extent than would be the case in a district with a uniform, mandated curriculum.

3.2.2 Participant Selection

The four original teachers were selected in response to a call for participants that I released to area districts. In my call for participants, I sought co-teaching partners in inclusive secondary ELA classrooms who were in at least their second year co-teaching together and who characterized their partnerships as successful. I was contacted by the director of special education for the Stateline school district, who recommended the four participating teachers as co-teachers with successful partnerships. I met with the teachers informally and determined that they fit the criteria set forth for my study. Sara and Mindy, the co-teachers at the seventh grade level, were in their second and third years of co-teaching together during the study while Jamie and Gina, the original co-teachers at the ninth grade level, were in their fourth and fifth years as co-teaching partners. A later development occurred when Gina left the district to take a position in Michigan. She was replaced by Dave, a new special education teacher and former SJSHS student. This unexpected development offered an opportunity to not only explore established partnerships but to also learn about the processes of a developing partnership – in this case between an experienced general education co-teacher (Jamie) and a new special education co-teacher (Dave). This change led me to reframe my study from my original focus on established co-teaching partnerships to a new focus on co-teaching relationships at three different stages (new, ongoing, established) in a particular context.

The three pairs represented three points in the process of developing a partnership: a new partnership (Jamie/Dave), a partnership in middle of development (Sara/Mindy), and a well-developed partnership (Jamie/Gina). Exploring co-teaching at these three points provided me with the chance to pay attention to the ways in which teachers negotiated their roles, shared responsibility for students, and made decisions about student scaffolding over time. It also

helped me to explore some of the benefits and drawbacks of the district's open and teacher-led approach to implementing both co-teaching and literacy instruction.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION

3.3.1 Fieldnotes on Classroom Observations

Classroom observations were conducted roughly two to four times a week (generally once to twice a week in each classroom) over the course of twelve months. The purpose of these observations was to experience the negotiation of instructional roles between the teachers and their methods of scaffolding literacy learning for students both with and without disabilities.

During these observations, I recorded fieldnotes on my laptop. Emerson et al. (1995) depict fieldnotes as “the primary means for deeper appreciation of how field researchers come to grasp and interpret the actions and concerns of others’ lives, routines, and meanings” (p.13). Through my time in the focal classrooms, I gained a sense for the ways in which the teachers worked together, the nature of the scaffolding provided for learners, and the general culture of the classrooms. Fieldnotes were contemporaneously taken via laptop during observations to document processes and to “provide a distinctive resource for preserving experience close to the moment of occurrence and, hence, for deepening reflection upon and understanding those experiences” (Emerson et al., 1995, p.13).

These fieldnotes included my attempts to capture as much classroom talk as possible to compensate for being unable to audio record due to a school policy forbidding use of audio

recording equipment during classes. The inability to audio record posed the greatest challenge to analysis of classroom talk. Although I was unable to gain permission to audio record classes at SJSHS, I was able to capture a significant number of examples of classroom talk by teachers and students in each classroom. The data I gathered in this respect were not comprehensive, as I could not type every response. However, I was able to gather enough data to analyze the kind of talk that typically occurred between each co-teaching pair and the students they taught.

All initial fieldnotes were later uploaded into the NVIVO 9 software program, where I edited and coded them in a more focused way, reflecting upon my own emerging interpretations through the “memo” feature, which allowed me to attach my reflections to relevant places in the fieldnotes.

3.3.2 Responsive Interviewing

I conducted a series of interviews with key participants using Rubin and Rubin’s (2005) responsive interviewing model. Responsive interviewing is based on an interpretive constructionist viewpoint and privileges “how people view an object or event and the meaning that they attribute to it” (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p.27). The responsive interviewing model holds shared, situated meanings as particularly important. During interviews, I listened carefully for ways in which participants held similar contextually-bound meanings of events in the classrooms, ideas about ways students learn best, and interpretations of the ways in which they negotiated their teaching roles.

The structure of responsive interviews is flexible because the goal is to position the interviewer and respondent within a “conversational partnership”; general questions and probes can be prepared beforehand, but the interview should be flexible enough to allow the interviewer

to be guided by the respondent (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The interviewer should listen closely to what the respondent has to say, respectfully probing for more information as the respondent conveys a possibly important concept. This style of interviewing leads to better knowledge of the respondent's perspective and leads to a deeper understanding of phenomenon under study (Rubin & Rubin, 2005; Willis, 2007).

Appendix B shows the loose protocol I followed for my initial interview with the teachers. The first interviews focused on gaining a sense for the relationship between co-teaching partners and the history of how this relationship developed. Subsequent interviews with teachers built upon the first interview and from my own wonderings as I observed and analyzed artifacts in the classrooms. For subsequent teacher interviews, I did not create a protocol but rather used my fieldnotes and artifacts such as student work to begin the conversation.

The purpose of these interviews was to gain a deeper understanding of what I observed and to establish validity and reliability of findings through the triangulation of data. The relaxed and unstructured nature of the later interviews occurred after I had developed trust over time with the participants and led to important revelations that came from engaging with the respondents as conversational partners. For example, as the partnership between Jamie and Dave became increasingly problematic, Jamie revealed her dissatisfaction and cited several clear examples supporting her reasons for these feelings of dissatisfaction with the partnership. From my second to third interview with Jamie, I was also able to trace a loss of hope that the relationship would improve with time. Her description of the troubled co-teaching partnership contrasted sharply with Dave's characterization of the partnership as generally positive with a few areas for growth. This helped support my conclusion that the two teachers were not

communicating effectively and that a lack of communication was likely one of largest contributing factors to the problems in the development of the partnership.

I also interviewed the special education director, principal, and curriculum director. These interviews were unstructured and meant to elicit a history of the co-teaching model at SJSHS (from the special education director, who was the key actor behind the implementation of co-teaching in the district) as well as administrators' perspectives on their roles in regards to co-teaching in the district.

3.3.3 Collection of Artifacts

The primary artifacts I collected included assignment, rubrics, and examples of student work. Through analyzing these artifacts, I was better able to draw conclusions about student learning in the focal classrooms. Matsumura, Garnier, Pascal, and Valdés (2002) found that learning tasks that are cognitively challenging, have clear learning goals, and have clearly defined grading criteria are associated with higher quality student work. I adapted their categories (cognitive challenge of the task, clarity of the learning goals, clarity of grading criteria) and added a fourth category (scaffolding) to create an instrument for analyzing the assignments and student work produced in response to those assignments in the focal classrooms. As previously stated, I collected one set of student work samples for each of the three partnerships and in all three cases the student work represented writing connected to reading instruction in the focal classrooms. Additionally I collected assignment, rubrics, and other items such as reading guides and quizzes that represented instruction in these classrooms.

For the advanced partnership (Gina and Jamie), I also had the opportunity to collect the end-of-year surveys that these two teachers designed and administered to their students. These surveys elicited students' perspectives on co-teaching and their general experiences in the class. The surveys represented a regular practice that the ninth-grade teachers implemented to garner feedback from their students. A list of the questions from the survey is included (Appendix D). Although some responses may have been affected by the fact that students knew teachers would read the surveys, I believe these artifacts still offered valuable information that supported my findings for this partnership and allowed me to include some data on student perspectives of co-teaching even though this study did not include student interviews or researcher-created surveys. The opportunity to analyze teacher-designed surveys was actually helpful because the surveys indicated what teachers considered to be important aspects of the co-taught classroom and indicated the areas in which they desired feedback from their students. Many students did seem to offer candid responses to questions that had the potential for censoring due to the knowledge that teachers would read the surveys. For example, one student responded that new freshman should "be on the ball!" and not get "[Gina] yelling" while another student responded that having two teachers with two different perspectives was both helpful and confusing because "it starts conversations but could also get you lost with directions, too." The culture in Gina and Jamie's classroom was, from my observations, supportive and open. Subsequently I think most students were honest with these teachers on the surveys, but analysis of these data acknowledged the fact that some degree of self-censoring may have occurred.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

3.4.1 Open and Focused Coding

The purpose of coding in qualitative research is to “identify, elaborate, and refine analytic insights from and for the interpretation of data” (Emerson et al., 1995, p.151). My study employed both open and focused coding. My fieldnotes from my classroom observations along with my interview transcripts and the artifacts I collected were thoroughly analyzed for emerging examples of student learning, scaffolding during literacy instruction, negotiation of teachers’ roles in the classroom, and interactions among teachers and students. Prior to conducting my data collection, I created some preliminary coding categories to help me recognize potentially important characteristics of scaffolding. These guides were used loosely, not as checklists for evaluation or the sole criteria for interpreting what I saw happening in the classrooms. Instead, they were intended to alert me to possible similarities from previous findings in the literature and helped me to better situate my findings within the larger body of extant literature on co-teaching and inclusive instruction and best practices in ELA instruction. Flexibility in the research design allowed me to consider unanticipated categories for coding as they emerged during analysis of the data. Open coding occurred as I analyzed each piece of data to ensure that findings of possible significance are not excluded from the final report.

LeCompte and Shensul (1999b) refer to open and focused coding phases as item level and pattern level analysis and describe the entire analysis process as “cooking” raw data. The data are translated into a format that better allows the researcher to make sense of the gathered information. Once the researcher has arranged the data in ways that allow relationships, patterns, and connections among ideas and concepts to emerge, the next step is to move beyond the coded

data and interpret what these relationships, patterns, and connections might mean and imply. My interpretations of the data are represented through the narrative descriptions that comprise Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7.

3.4.2 Use of NVIVO 9 Software for Data Analysis

For this study, I used the NVIVO 9 software to aid in my open and focused coding of the data. NVIVO 9 allows for open coding through the creation of free nodes. The collection of free nodes serves as a codebook for the study. Initial free nodes for this study included categories from my guiding coding tables. As I analyzed the data, new categories were added. Free nodes can be altered and merged as necessary and additional data can be added to the free nodes along the way. During the focused coding phase, free nodes are turned into tree nodes, which are used to build themes through hierarchical structures from the initial collection of free nodes. Like free nodes, tree nodes can be altered as necessary along the way. The tree nodes allow the researcher to arrange data into patterns and to interpret the data in ways that further theory. Use of free and tree nodes assisted me in organizing my data throughout the study and capturing potentially important findings along the way.

As my findings became clearer and more refined, I was able to bring them together in a way that enabled a detailed and nuanced narrative of the three partnerships and instruction in the focal classrooms. The NVIVO 9 software helped me to explicitly link my findings to findings from throughout the literature and to recognize findings that were new or diverged in some way from those in the extant literature. Through this process, I was able to respond to my research questions in a manner that contributed to the bodies of literature on co-teaching and inclusive instruction and best practices in ELA instruction.

3.4.3 Guiding Coding Categories

The guiding coding categories for this study served the purpose of highlighting key findings from the extant literature on factors that characterize strong partnerships between co-teachers, ways of mediating or scaffolding learning for learners of diverse abilities, and best practices in ELA instruction. These tables functioned as general guides to help me recognize potentially important characteristics and features of the phenomena under study while still allowing me to be open-minded about findings not evident in the current literature.

3.4.3.1 Guiding Coding Categories for Research Question 1: Tables 3.1 – 3.3

Table 3.1: Schaeffner and Buswell's (1996) Ten Critical Elements

My research focused on the participating teachers in their classrooms, but I also included data from interviews with the principal, curriculum director, and special education director to help establish the larger context of co-teaching in this study. Additionally, during the first round of teacher interviews, I asked teachers about how the context influenced their experiences as co-teachers (e.g., curricular/pedagogical freedom, supportive leadership, etc). Schaeffner and Buswell's (1996) ten elements offered a framework for considering the contextual factors that influenced the co-teaching process. This list of elements served as a helpful guide towards identifying some of the specific ways in which the educational context at the classroom-, school-, and district-level led to the development of particular kinds of co-teaching partnerships and literacy instruction and helped me to better understand the influences on co-teaching and literacy instruction in this research setting.

Table 3.1. Ten Critical Elements of Inclusive Education (based on Schaeffner and Buswell, 1996)

Schaeffner and Buswell's Ten Elements	What it looks like	Data sources
Development of a common philosophy and strategic plan	Teachers have similar philosophies about the way students learn and agree on the roles for the general and special educator in the co-taught inclusive classroom. Administrators support teachers' instructional decisions and the development of their relationships with their co-teachers. There is a school- and district-level common guiding philosophy and plan for inclusive instruction.	Interviews with teachers and administrators
Strong leadership	Administrators take responsibility for and lead inclusive instruction efforts in the school and district. Teachers feel that administrators support them and provide encouragement for successful co-teaching and inclusive instruction	Interviews with teachers and administrators

	experiences.	
Promotion of school-wide and classroom cultures that welcome, appreciate, and accommodate diversity	<p>Teachers create lessons that give all students the opportunity to participate and grow as learners.</p> <p>Students seem comfortable in the classroom and treat one another and their teachers with respect. Teachers respect each other and the students.</p> <p>Administrators support teachers' efforts to accommodate for diverse learners.</p>	<p>Interviews with teachers and administrators</p> <p>Classroom observations</p> <p>Classroom Artifacts</p> <p>(teacher-created student surveys)</p>
Development of support networks	Teachers provide each other with support and receive support from outside sources.	Interviews with teachers
Deliberate processes to ensure accountability	Teachers and administrators ensure that the needs of all students are met.	<p>Interviews with teachers and administrators</p> <p>Classroom observations</p> <p>Classroom artifacts</p>
Organized and ongoing technical support	Teachers receive the school/district support necessary to carry out inclusive instruction and co-teaching in an effective manner.	Interviews with teachers and administrators
Flexibility	School makes changes as necessary	Interviews with teachers

	for program to work (e.g., changing co-teacher pairings). Teachers adapt assignments to meet the needs of the class and students. Teachers respond to each other's concerns and ways of teaching.	and administrators Classroom observations Classroom artifacts
Effective teaching practices	Teachers implement pedagogical techniques that meet the needs of students with and without disabilities. All students have the opportunity to grow as learners	Interviews with teachers Classroom observations Classroom artifacts
Celebration of successes and viewing challenges as learning experiences	District/school makes a commitment to inclusive instruction. Setbacks lead to changes that improve the program. Teachers have a positive outlook. They focus on the benefits students gain from inclusive instruction and analyze less successful experiences to see what went wrong and how future experiences might be improved.	Interviews with teachers and administrators
Being knowledgeable about but not paralyzed by the change process	Teachers adapt to changes in the teaching context (e.g., changes in	Interviews with teachers and administrators

	partners, schedules, school structure, etc).	
--	---	--

Table 3.2: Co-teaching Benefits

This table represents a compilation of the various benefits of co-teaching for teachers and students evidenced across multiple studies (Austin, 2001; Cook & Friend, 1995; Dieker, 2001; Holheide & Reschly, 2008; Griffin et al., 2007; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007; Wilson & Michaels, 2006.) The coding categories in the table guided me towards recognizing examples of benefits across my data sources and establishing who gained from each benefit in what way. They also guided me towards noticing when certain benefits for students and teachers were not evident and prompted my further exploration of why particular benefits did not occur within the context of a particular partnership. Additionally, these categories assisted me in making explicit connections between my findings and those findings previously cited across the literature on co-teaching.

Table 3.2. Co-Teaching Benefits (based on Austin, 2001; Cook & Friend, 1995; Dieker, 2001; Holheide & Reschly, 2008; Griffin et al., 2007; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007; Wilson & Michaels, 2006)

Benefits of co-teaching identified across the literature (for teachers and students)	What it looks like	Data Sources
General education teachers: Building knowledge of strategies for working with diverse learners	General education teachers implement strategy instruction with students. General education teachers express a comfort level with and understanding of techniques for helping all students, including those with disabilities, to access the general education curriculum.	Interviews with teachers Classroom observations
Special education teachers: Building content knowledge	Special education teachers are knowledgeable about the general education curriculum and are comfortable leading lessons in the content area. They express high levels of knowledge in the content area	Teacher interviews Classroom observations
Teachers: Providing each other with useful feedback	Teachers support each other by offering each other suggestions and	Teacher interviews

	constructive criticism.	
Teachers: Mutual learning and enhancement	Teachers express that they have learned from each other and feel that their teaching has improved as a result of being involved in a co-teaching relationship.	Teacher interviews
Students: Benefits from instructional adaptations (scaffolding built into assignments, explicit instructions, extra time on tests)	The teachers provide explicit instructional support as students engage in learning tasks. They scaffold tasks through modeling and ongoing guidance. The tasks include support such as examples, explicit directions, and guidance in the form of rubrics or criteria charts.	Classroom observations Classroom artifacts
Students with disabilities: Reduction of stigma	Students with disabilities are not easily distinguished from students without disabilities.	Teacher interviews Classroom observations
Students: Receiving more teacher help during lessons	Two teachers are present in the classrooms, allowing for students to receive more individualized support as they work.	Classroom observations
Students: Exposure to different teaching styles	The students benefit from the different approaches and styles of	Teacher interviews Classroom observations

	the two teachers. Some students may respond better to one teacher's style while other students may respond better to the other teacher's style.	Classroom artifacts (teacher-created student surveys)
--	---	--

Table 3.3: Rice and Zigmond's (2000) Five Elements of Professional Co-Teaching Compatibility

Rice and Zigmond's (2000) elements of professional compatibility for co-teaching focus specifically on the relationship between co-teachers. Since a major focus of my study was on examining the relationships between co-teaching partners, these categories gave me a sense for the ways in which co-teachers might demonstrate their compatibility and develop their relationship. These categories helped me to understand what it means for co-teachers to be compatible, identify how co-teaching compatibility might manifest, and identify specific ways in which partnerships exhibiting problems demonstrated what can happen when co-teachers lack compatibility in some ways.

Table 3.3. Co-teacher Compatibility (based on Rice & Zigmond, 2000)

Rice & Zigmond's 5 elements of professional compatibility	What it looks like	Data Sources
Shared views on academic and behavior standards for students	Teachers are in agreement about how to assess students, the standards to which students will be held academically, and the behavioral expectations for the classroom.	Teacher interviews
Honest and open communication	Teachers frequently speak to each other and discuss ideas and issues as they arise.	Teacher interviews
Ability to problem solve without making the problems personal	Teachers address problems in a positive manner and collaborate to find solutions that work for both teachers and the teaching context (students, curriculum, length of periods, etc).	Teacher interviews
Equal pedagogical skills and knowledge	Teachers are equal in their knowledge and ability to provide instructional support to all students.	Teacher interviews Classroom observations

Self-confidence, self-esteem, and the ability to take risks	Teachers are confident to try new approaches and make changes that might benefit students.	Teacher interviews Classroom observations
---	--	--

3.4.3.2 Guiding Coding Categories for Research Question 2: Tables 3.4 – 3.7

Table 3.4: Vaughn and Linan-Thompson's (2003) Research-Identified Approaches for Students with Disabilities

These approaches were compiled by Vaughn and Linan-Thompson (2003) from across the literature on best practices for supporting the learning of students with disabilities. Teachers in inclusive classrooms may find that incorporating such approaches helps students with disabilities to receive sufficient support to benefit from their inclusion in general education classrooms. As demonstrated in the next few tables, I coded for scaffolding techniques specific to reading, understanding, and analyzing literature; discussion; and writing. However, within each area, I also looked for examples of more general techniques that teachers employed across the different areas of literacy instruction to provide general scaffolding for both the whole class (as part of UDL, Edyburn, 2010; Friend & Bursuck, 2006; King-Sears, 2009) and individual students (as part of DI, Tomlinson, 2001). These categories guided analysis of more general scaffolding across the three areas of literacy instruction.

Table 3.4. Previously identified effective approaches for students with disabilities (based on Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2003)

Research-identified effective approaches for students with disabilities	What it looks like	Data sources
Controlling for task difficulty	Assignments include built-in scaffolding. Difficulty of tasks may be adjusted to keep students in their individual ZPDs.	Teacher interviews Classroom observations Classroom artifacts
Teaching small, interactive groups	Teachers provide differentiated instruction through flexible use of heterogeneous and homogeneous grouping (depending on the nature of the assignment).	Teacher interviews Classroom observations
Modeling and teaching strategies (e.g., generating questions while reading, think alouds)	Teachers model strategies for students such as how to ask oneself questions during reading to monitor comprehension.	Teacher interviews Classroom observations
Problem solving skills	Teachers assist students in	Teacher interviews

	working through problems presented by tasks. Assistance may include direct assistance from teacher and guidance built into the task.	Classroom observations Classroom artifacts
Progress monitoring	Teachers formatively assess students and respond to students' needs.	Teacher interviews Classroom observations Classroom artifacts
Process writing	Teachers guide students through brainstorming, drafting, revising, and editing original pieces of writing.	Teacher interviews Classroom observations Classroom artifacts
Instruction in reading and writing skills (direct and explicit instruction)	See coding categories for scaffolding in writing and scaffolding in reading.	
Teacher and peer feedback	Teachers and peers give students constructive criticism on their work.	Teacher interviews Classroom observations

Table 3.5: Scaffolding During Reading and Literature Instruction

Table 3.5 lists several key elements of effective reading and literature instruction identified by Biancarosa and Snow (2006) and aligns these elements with Wood et al.'s (1976) features of scaffolding. These coding categories helped me to analyze the ways in which teachers scaffolded students' reading comprehension and engagement with literature. These practices are among those that Biancarosa and Snow (2006) found to be particularly helpful for struggling readers. Analysis of reading and literature instruction was guided by both analysis of how teachers enacted elements of these practices and analysis of how teachers led discussions of literature. The coding categories for discussion are listed in Table 3.5. Reading and literature learning were necessarily analyzed in tandem with analysis of discussion, since all three co-teaching partners used classroom talk as a primary vehicle for engaging students in literacy learning.

Table 3.5 Scaffolding during Reading and Literature Instruction (based on Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Wood et al., 1976)

Elements of effective adolescent literacy	Connection to feature(s) of scaffolding	What it looks like	Data sources
Direct, explicit comprehension instruction	Recruitment; Reduction in degrees of freedom; Marking critical features; Frustration control; Demonstration	Students are directly taught the comprehension processes of proficient readers such as summarizing and monitoring one's own understanding.	Teacher interviews Classroom observations Classroom artifacts
Motivation and self-directed learning	Recruitment; Reduction in degrees of freedom; Direction maintenance; Frustration control	Teachers motivate students to engage in reading literature and provide support to enable them to be successful with independent reading tasks.	Teacher interviews Classroom observations Classroom artifacts (student surveys)
Text-based collaborative	Direction	Students interact	Teacher interviews

learning	maintenance; Frustration control	collaboratively around literature-based tasks.	Classroom observations
Strategic tutoring	Reduction in degrees of freedom; Direction maintenance; Marking critical features; Frustration control	Teachers provide students with intense, individualized support as needed.	Teacher interviews Classroom observations

Table 3.6: Scaffolding During Discussion

Nystrand et al. (2003) described dialogic bids as moves “responding to and taking up ideas and observations that students introduce, for example, through uptake and authentic questions” and “withholding evaluation in such as way as to encourage discussion and conversational interaction”(p.151). I looked for examples of dialogic spells, those periods of time that begin with an authentic student question and lead to students building on one another’s ideas; (These are differentiated from discussions in that discussions are characterized by a free exchange of ideas not marked by questions.) These dialogic bids are aligned in the Table 3.6 with the scaffolding features (Wood et al., 1976) they best facilitate.

Although I broadly refer to “discussion” in classrooms, I generally saw only a few dialogic spells that didn’t quite reach the level of full discussions and these were typically interspersed with monologic spells, those periods of time characterized by teacher test questions and students’ responses to these teacher test questions (Nystrand et al., 2003). True dialogic

discussions appeared to be a goal that teachers must guide student towards over time through gradual release of responsibility until students feel confident enough to take on full open exchanges with one another. In this study, I used the term “discussion” to mean classroom talk more generally and “dialogic discussion” to mean discussions as defined by Nystrand et al. (2003).

In addition to documenting dialogic bids by teachers and students, I also documented examples of moves that led to monologic or IRE (initiation-response-evaluation, Nystrand et al., 2003) examples of classroom talk: evaluation of student responses by teachers without follow up; teacher explanation of ideas in a text; teacher test questions; and students’ responses to teacher test questions. Documenting these teacher and student moves helped me to develop a sense for how teachers used classroom talk to approach literature learning as they led students through engaging with a variety of different texts.

Table 3.6. Scaffolding during Discussion (Based on Nystrand et al., 2003; Wood et al., 1976)

Dialogic bids	Connection to feature(s) of scaffolding	What it looks like	Data Sources
Teachers: Higher-level authentic teacher questions	Recruitment; Demonstration	Teachers ask questions that do not have predetermined answers. To be considered higher-level, these questions should ask students to make generalizations (tie together ideas rather than just report information), analyze an event, or speculate on what might occur. These kinds of teacher questions both encourage engaged responses from students and serve as a model for student questions.	Classroom observations
Teachers:	Recruitment;	These questions are	

Lower-level authentic teacher questions	Direction Maintenance; Marking critical features	authentic in that they do not have predetermined answers. However, unlike higher-level authentic questions, they engage students in ways that require less thinking. For example, a teacher may ask what students are thinking about or if they have any questions about an event in a text. These are authentic questions but can be answered without engaging in the higher level thinking activities of generalization, analysis, and speculation.	
---	--	---	--

Teachers: Uptake	Recruitment; Reduction in degrees of freedom; Direction maintenance; Marking critical features; Frustration control; Demonstration (models how to take up another person's ideas and build upon them)	Teachers follow up on student responses and welcome student ideas and observations into the discussion. The teachers may highlight particularly important student ideas that will help lead the class towards concept formation.	Classroom observations
Teachers: Evaluation with follow up	Direction maintenance; Marking critical features; Demonstration	Teachers evaluate student responses in a way that encourages students to share ideas freely and introduce new topics. This teacher move is differentiated from lower level evaluation because it pushes students to	Classroom observations

		<p>explain or expand on what they say,</p> <p>encouraging a continued flow of student ideas.</p>	
<p>Students:</p> <p>Engaged Response</p>	<p>Direction</p> <p>maintenance;</p> <p>Marking critical features</p>	<p>In this category, I included uptake by students – moves by which students respond to one another and encourage one another's thinking. This included moves where students respectfully debated one another. I also included thoughtful responses to authentic teacher questions in this category, as these responses could elicit uptake, sparking authentic student questions, and a subsequent dialogic</p>	<p>Classroom observations</p>

		spell.	
Students: Authentic student questions	Direction maintenance; Marking critical features	Students ask questions based on their authentic wonderings and teachers allow student questions to shape the discussion. Although this is actually a type of engage response, I created a separate category for just student questions, as Nystrand et. al (2003) emphasized student questions as important student moves facilitating dialogic spells.	Classroom observations

Table 3.7: Scaffolding During Writing Instruction

Both the workshop model (as designed by Atwell, 1998) and SRSD (explained by Graham and Perin, 2007) are models that provide insight into what scaffolding for writing instruction looks like. The features of these models guided me towards identifying instructional techniques that teachers used to support students as writers. For example, some features of SRSD such as describing and modeling writing strategies represented ways that teachers in the focal classrooms scaffolded student writing even though none of the co-teaching pairs were implementing SRSD as a systematic model for writing instruction. All three co-teaching pairs also used aspects of the workshop model for process writing through teaching minilessons and providing students with individualized support during conferences. (The seventh grade pair most clearly employed a workshop model for writing, but all three pairs used aspects of this model.) Use of these guiding coding categories helped me to more clearly describe the ways in which I saw teachers scaffold student writing in the focal classrooms. The coding categories for writing in Table 3.7 are also aligned with the scaffolding features they facilitate (Wood et al., 1976).

Table 3.7. Scaffolding during Writing (based on Atwell, 1998; Graham & Perin, 2007; Wood et al., 1976)

Element of Scaffolding During writing Instruction	Connection to feature(s) of scaffolding	What it looks like	Data sources
Develop background knowledge	Marking critical features; Frustration control	Students are taught any background knowledge that will be necessary to learn a new strategy.	Teacher interviews Classroom observations
Describe of strategies Minilessons on a particular technique used by proficient writers or a skill for independent learning. (Workshop model)	Recruitment; Marking critical features	The new strategy as well as its purpose and benefits are described and discussed with students. Students are explicitly taught how to include a particular writing technique such as using dialogue or providing descriptive details. They might also be taught independent	Classroom observations Classroom artifacts (tasks)

		learning skills such as how to use a thesaurus.	
Modeling with teacher writing or professional piece of writing	Demonstration	The teacher models the new strategy or shares a teacher-written writing sample with students to demonstrate a technique. Teachers may use a piece of professional writing for the same purpose.	Classroom observations; Classroom artifacts
Memorization of a strategy and how to use it	Recruitment; Direction maintenance	Students memorize steps to the new strategy.	Classroom observations Classroom artifacts
Support of students in using a new strategy Individual conferences	Reduction in degrees of freedom; Direction maintenance; Marking critical features;	The teacher supports or scaffolds student mastery of the new strategy. The teacher provides students with	Teacher interviews Classroom observations

	Frustration control	individualized scaffolding through conferences. The purpose of the conference is to keep students working in their individual ZPDs.	
Independent performance	This is a step beyond scaffolding and addresses mastery. SRSD has the end goal listed as a feature of the technique.	The student deploys a new strategy independently.	Classroom observations Classroom artifacts

3.4.4 Recursive Nature of Qualitative Analysis and Interpretation

Qualitative data collection, analysis, and interpretation are recursive in nature and occur as part of an iterative cycle (LeCompte and Shensul, 1999b). As I worked through the research process, I continually engaged in both open and then focused coding. I returned to my data multiple times, refining my coding categories and drawing relationships among the data as I developed a

narrative for each partnership. This process continued until I reached the point where I felt I had developed legitimate, well-corroborated responses to my initial questions. Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 are the result of this recursive process.

3.5 ESTABLISHING VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY THROUGH CORROBORATION AND REDUNDANCY

3.5.1 Triangulation as a Process for Achieving Corroboration and Redundancy

Denzin and Lincoln (2008) describe qualitative research as “inherently multimethod in focus,” employing multiple methods and data sources to achieve “triangulation” of data. Triangulation provides a way to illustrate the ideas of “validity” and “reliability” through the concepts of “corroboration” and “redundancy.” Corroboration and redundancy describe what qualitative researchers work to achieve in service of developing an understanding of a particular phenomenon (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999b):

Patterns emerge as one piece of data is corroborated by others. The process of triangulation often can unearth patterns as responses, items, events, or themes as various sources of data begin to corroborate one another. (p.102)

Once the researcher recognizes patterns that appear across data sources, the process of making sense of these patterns can occur. The goal in a qualitative study is to search for consistent patterns through multiple data sources and to then attribute significance to these patterns, leading to deeper levels of understanding of the phenomena under study; such understanding comes only through close attention to emerging relationships. LeCompte and Shensul (1999b) assert that this

occurs through “attaching meaning and significance to patterns, themes, and connections that the researcher identified during analysis; explaining why they have come to exist; and indicating what implications they might have for future actions” (p.5).

3.5.2 Corroboration to Build an Understanding of Concepts and Processes

I employed different data collection methods, which I have explained in this chapter, to develop an understanding of how the co-teaching partnerships in this study developed and the co-teachers scaffolded literacy learning in the focal classrooms. My observations were analyzed in respect to the findings in the current bodies of literature on co-teaching and inclusive instruction and best practices in ELA. Participants’ perspectives were included through the use of multiple interviews, which provided me with a deeper understanding of my own observations and provided details that could not be gained through only observing, such as the history of the co-teaching model in the district or the thinking processes of the teachers as they made instructional decisions. Finally, I analyzed classroom artifacts, which provided me with insight into student learning, student perspectives, approaches teachers used to guide students’ understanding of tasks, and approaches to assessing student learning.

3.5.3 An Example from the Data

In the following example from my data, I demonstrate how triangulation of data allowed me to corroborate certain concepts that emerged as I conducted my research. In separate interviews with Gina, the ninth grade special education teacher in the advanced partnership, and Jamie, the ninth grade ELA teacher, each teacher stated that the students called Gina “dad” and Jamie

“mom” because they viewed Gina as more of a “disciplinarian” and Jamie as more of a “nurturer.” These gendered constructions of the two teachers’ roles were corroborated through observations. One morning, not long after I had interviewed Jamie and she first described this characterization of the relationship, Gina was running late to class. A student asked Jamie, “Where’s Dad?” Finding this shared meaning in the interviews allowed me to understand an important aspect of the roles these two teachers took on in the classroom. In the end-of-year student surveys, several students also corroborated the role of Gina as the disciplinarian. Additionally, in response to a question asking them to offer advice to an incoming freshman, several students made suggested the new students “get on [Gina’s] good side” or “not get smart with” Gina. Through triangulation, I was able to corroborate that this dynamic between the teachers was observed by both the students and the two teachers.

Based on these data, I have corroboration to suggest that Gina and Jamie took on “parental” roles in the classroom and that these roles were gendered, with Gina cast in a “masculine” role and Jamie cast in a “feminine” role. This revealed nuances not only about the roles of the teachers but about the way students classified certain kinds of teacher behaviors as either masculine or feminine. Further, this particular finding added another dimension to a common metaphor in the co-teaching literature – the description of a co-teaching partnership as a marriage (e.g., Keefe & Moore, 2004; Scruggs et al., 2007). The finding about Gina and Jamie’s gendered roles suggests that in some partnerships the construction of the partnership as a marriage may also lead to the construction of gendered teaching roles even when both teachers happen to be the same gender. This example is a good demonstration of how corroboration and redundancy can be achieved in a qualitative study through triangulation of data and how these methods serve to establish validity and reliability. Ultimately, the discovery of well-corroborated

and redundant findings facilitate the opportunity to make contributions to the larger body of scholarship in a particular area.

3.6 SUMMARY

Qualitative research design was appropriate for my study, as my research questions were designed to invite descriptions of broad processes that are highly nuanced and complex. Through the collection of data through the multiple sources, I sought to achieve *verstehen* – understanding for an “honorable” purpose (Willis, 2007). In the context of this study, the honorable purpose was a deeper understanding of how co-teaching partnerships develop and the implications of particular co-teaching partnerships for instruction.

I focused not only on the partnership between the teachers but also on how each pair of teachers engaged students in literacy learning, honing in on the ways in which they scaffolded literacy instruction for learners at different ability levels. Through the process of triangulation (e.g., Denzin & Lincoln, 2008), I sought corroboration and redundancy of emerging patterns throughout the data to achieve reliability and validity in my findings. The patterns that subsequently emerged from the data enabled me to develop sufficient understanding to respond to my research questions in a way that furthers the current conceptions of the development of co-teaching partnerships and the influence of particular kinds of scaffolding in literacy instruction for students of diverse abilities.

4.0 CHAPTER IV: DISTRICT CONTEXT

In this chapter, I provide an analysis of the school and district context guided by Schaeffner and Buswell's (1996) ten critical elements of inclusive instruction. (See Table 3.1) Overall, the co-teaching model at SJSHS was one marked by inconsistency, strong in some areas and struggling in others. SJSHS exhibited some clear strengths according to Schaeffner and Buswell (1996), particularly in the area of school-wide and classroom cultures that welcome, appreciate, and accommodate diversity.

In regards to several other of Schaeffner and Buswell's (1996) elements, SJSHS exhibited some strengths but also some challenges. The elements in which SJSHS exhibited inconsistent strengths were effective teaching practices; processes to ensure student accountability; flexibility; celebration of successes and viewing challenges as learning experiences; being knowledgeable about but not paralyzed by the change process; and strong leadership.

Finally, there were some areas in which the school clearly exhibited the need for improvement - the development of a common philosophy and strategic plan; development of support networks; and organized and ongoing technical support, such as the design of a schedule that included designated planning time (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996). In Chapter 4, I provide an

analysis of both the strengths and challenges of the co-teaching model at SJSHS, addressing the school- and district-wide level before analyzing each partnership in detail in Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

4.1. THE COMMUNITY, DISTRICT, AND SCHOOL

Teaching practices develop within the context of particular schools, districts, and communities and a variety of factors contribute towards shaping those practices. The three co-teaching partnerships described in this study developed under conditions specific to the Stateline, PA School District. As previously described, Stateline was a small, rural community and the district consisted of only three schools: a lower elementary school, an upper elementary school, and the junior-senior high school.

The small size of the district also allowed for relationships to more easily develop among teachers and between teachers and district administrators. All of the teachers in the study were personally acquainted with Sandy, the special education director, who had observed in their classrooms on several occasions. Additionally, Jeff, the principal, and special education teachers Gina and Mindy had taught at the elementary schools in the past – Jeff and Gina at the upper elementary school and Mindy at the lower elementary school.

In addition to the small size of the district, the relatively good performance of district schools on measures of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) led to less pressure related to testing compared to districts that were consistently not making AYP. State tests were regarded as important but not the sole focus of teaching and learning. I observed some test preparation activities in the seventh grade classroom as testing time approached during the 2010-2011 academic year, after the school missed making AYP for the first time in five years, but generally

teachers were expected to teach to the standards, not to the test.

4.2 ANALYSIS OF STRENGTHS AND NEEDS ACCORDING TO SCHAEFFNER'S AND BUSWELL'S TEN ELEMENTS

4.2.1 School Culture

Overall, the culture at SJSHS and in the focal classrooms was one of inclusivity. The nature of co-teaching as a district-wide and school-wide initiative led to the expectation that students with and without disabilities would generally be included together in the same classrooms. In the classrooms where I observed, it was very difficult to tell which students had disabilities and which did not because both co-teachers seemed to work with all of the students. During the times when a student did need a little extra support, the other students did not seem to react negatively to the student receiving extra help.

For example, Gina, the special education teacher in the advanced partnership, would sometimes sit near a young woman who seemed to struggle more than the other students. Gina and Jamie both indicated that this particular student had an intellectual disability and required additional support during quizzes or independent work. When this occurred, the other students did not stare or make comments. Rather, they continued with their own assignments.

This example is indicative of what I observed in both classrooms. I believe that the culture of the classrooms grew from a general acceptance throughout the school (and possibly throughout the district) that people learn in different ways. Different learning abilities seemed to be considered part of diversity and worthy of respect. The teachers and administrators relayed

similar observations during their interviews. The principal, Jeff, offered his own thoughts on what he observed to be benefits of inclusive co-teaching, capturing the importance of a culture that fosters feelings of belonging in all students:

It's not just discipline but it's just their behavior in school. The way [students with disabilities] look at school, I think, is just different. They feel that they're a part of the program. They're not acting out. They're not frustrated. They're not feeling excluded.

- Jeff, principal

His statement corroborated the impressions gained from my time in the school and observations in individual classroom. The teachers in my study also agreed that students both with and without disabilities benefitted both academically and socially from co-teaching.

The evidence obtained both through my observations and through interviews indicated that many students likely reaped the benefits of inclusive practices noted in the literature including a reduction in stigma (e.g., Cook & Friend, 1995; Keefe & Moore, 2004) and improved social skills and self-worth (Holdheide & Reschly, 2008) for students with disabilities and a deeper sense of empathy and appreciation for people with diverse abilities for general education students (Griffin et al., 2007).

The small, close-knit culture of the town likely contributed to the inclusive culture at SJSHS. Families in this small community tended to stay in the area, and the low mobility rate allowed teachers to build relationships with students and their families over time, increasing the likelihood of positive relationships with parents and families rather than adversarial relationships. Many of the teachers were also from the community or neighboring communities.

For example, Dave, the new special education teacher who replaced Gina halfway through the study, was a former student who had graduated from SJSHS six years earlier.

The teachers in the study did not describe any negative encounters with parents and the principal stated in an interview that the parents at SJSHS were generally receptive to co-teaching. Parents of students with disabilities are frequently more receptive to inclusive settings for delivery of special education services and a congenial, close-knit community can foster even further support from parents and families for district and school efforts (Crockett et al., 2007; Dyson, 2007). The school, in this sense, appeared to reflect the values of the larger community.

4.2.2 Deliberate processes to Ensure Student Accountability and Implementation of Effective Instruction

Teachers had a great deal of instructional freedom at SJSHS and were treated as professionals who could make sound pedagogical and curricular decisions. The school- and district-level administrators trusted teachers to make curricular and pedagogical decisions for their classes and administrators positioned themselves as fellow educators and colleagues.

Curricular and pedagogical freedom can have a positive effect on student learning when teachers use knowledge of their students to tailor instruction to promote engaged learning and to implement strategies appropriate to students' academic and social needs (e.g., Darwin, 2006; Dieker, 2001; Freedman et al., 2005; Greenleaf & Hinchman, 2009; Szabo, 2006). As a result of this curricular and pedagogical freedom, the ELA instruction and scaffolding moves I observed in the focal classrooms were authentic products of teacher decision-making, which was valued at SJSHS.

Nick, the curriculum director for the district, expressed the administration's respect for teachers' professional knowledge and decision-making skills:

[The teachers] have a strong curriculum. They've well-articulated it. They've driven it. They know what they need to teach. They teach the standards. That's embedded in the core curriculum. That's the end point. Let's face it, they're accountable for what they're delivering to the kids and as a team they've decided, "We're teaching this here, we're teaching that there." And that was in place when I walked in the door. It falls under my official [responsibility]. If it isn't broke, don't fix it. They've got it rolling...

- *Nick, district curriculum director*

Teachers at SJSHS were given both the privilege and responsibility of developing curriculum. Collaboration and accountability were assumed to be part and parcel of teaching in the district. The administrators had faith in the teachers and felt comfortable allowing the teachers freedom to drive the instruction in their classrooms.

Although generally positive, there were also concerning consequences of this curricular and pedagogical freedom. These consequences are detailed in my responses to Research Question 2 for each partnership, which explore in-depth the characteristics of scaffolding for reading and literature instruction, writing instruction, and discussion in the focal classrooms. On the positive side, the freedom teachers had enabled them to incorporate texts and techniques (e.g., Socratic seminar) that they had been exposed to in their college and graduate courses and offered teachers ownership over the curriculum they taught. Through my classroom observations and interviews with teachers, I found that students both with and without disabilities in the

seventh and ninth grade classrooms had access to authentic texts and teachers were able to make decisions about materials and instructional techniques based on what they thought would meet the needs of their students.

In the seventh grade classroom, the curriculum was very student-centered and relevant to students' lives, offering frequent opportunities for student choice in regards to reading materials and assignments. Such practices align with best practices for instruction in inclusive classrooms (e.g., Stainback & Stainback, 1996) and the principles of differentiated instruction, or DI (Tomlinson, 2001). As a result, in the seventh grade classroom, processes appeared to be in place to ensure student accountability for learning (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996). As I further discuss in Chapter 7, students in this classroom demonstrated increasing independence as the year progressed through activities such as creating student-designed projects that incorporated literary analysis and writing.

On the other hand, the teachers in the ninth grade classroom, in their attempts to support students who struggled to access the general education curriculum, had some difficulty implementing the right amount of scaffolding while still maintaining the rigor of classroom tasks. As a result, I observed several examples of overused scaffolding, with teachers doing the bulk of the intellectual work around classroom tasks. In this manner, processes for student accountability were not truly in place (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996). Due to the considerable challenge inherent balancing scaffolding and releasing responsibility of learning to students, professional development and ongoing support may have given teachers the guidance necessary to better serve the needs of all students while still allowing the teachers to have freedom regarding curriculum and pedagogy.

Another area for concern was the minimal emphasis on and use of IEPs for students with

disabilities. The special education teachers at both the high school and middle school levels downplayed the role of the IEP, either considering it less important due to the scaffolding already provided for all students or primarily a vehicle for addressing state test scores for students with disabilities rather than as a document guiding specially designed instruction and related services in accordance with individual students' needs (Zigmond et al., 2009):

I'm going to be honest with you - for me, I don't adapt. I don't do anything in here that...like I said, if they do a paper and I need to proofread the paper for them, I would maybe assist them with that. Their adaptations don't really change in any way in my view for this classroom. I think that the kids are all treated the same way. And we expect what we do from special ed kids in here from the regular general population. I would say that IEPs...I mean, honestly, I don't remove [the kids]. We don't give them extra time. – *Gina, 9th grade special education teacher*

Well, their IEP goals anymore are pretty much driven off the PSSAs. Because when you look at the PSSA scores...if they're below basic or basic that's pretty much driving our PSSA goals...Like [student's name], he's one that would be struggling with written expression and comprehension and making a connection to a text...analyze, interpreting, things like that...So really their PSSAs are matching what their work is anyways so it would be the same thing. You know, you would know that he'd need work with written expression. – *Mindy, 7th grade special education teacher*

The special education teachers' views of the IEPs as supplementary documents highlight an issue that has been frequently cited throughout the literature as a problem with inclusion – the increasing marginalization of the IEP (e.g., Dieker, 2001; Mock & Kauffman, 2005; Zigmond et al., 2009). These teachers felt students' needs were addressed through the general practices of the classroom. In the ninth grade classroom, this translated into assignments that were made accessible to all students through an approach that aligned primarily with universal design for learning, or UDL (Edyburn, 2010; Friend & Bursuck, 2006; King-Sears, 2009). In the seventh grade classroom the more DI-aligned approach (Tomlinson, 2001) led to flexible scaffolding that fit different students' various needs.

However, general approaches to instruction, even if effective, are not a substitute for the IEP (Dieker, 2001). The IEP is a legal document that originally was intended to be a true individualized education plan that “defined and made transparent the content of each student's unique special education program” (Zigmond et al., 2009, p.190). For students with disabilities the IEP would logically be part of deliberate processes to ensure student accountability as well as effective instruction (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996). Subsequently, the view of IEPs as less central to the education of students with disabilities, even from the perspective of the special education teachers at SJSHS, caused concern regarding how well the needs of students with disabilities were actually served in these classrooms.

4.2.3 Successes and Challenges, Flexibility, and Dealing with Change

The teachers and administrators in Stateline were willing to put effort into co-teaching and to persevere in the face of adversity – qualities emphasized as critical for successful inclusive education according to Schaeffner and Buswell (1996). Initially quite a few teachers resisted co-

teaching, but Sandy, the special education administrator, applauded the fact that the teachers did not “sabotage” the co-teaching initiative. She acknowledged the particular difficulty special education teachers faced as they tried to learn the curriculum and initially took on less of a leading role than they were accustomed to in their self-contained classrooms:

[I]t takes years to really see the fruition. The teachers have to be willing to say, "I'm going to be willing to play an aide's role." You can't have an ego involved in it. And then...you become more proficient in the content area you're co-teaching in and you start to slowly play that reciprocal role. We don't even get subs now when our teachers are absent because the co-teacher takes care of it. – *Sandy, district special education director*

The decision by school and district administrators to designate special educators to either ELA or mathematics classrooms at the secondary level was helpful in giving special educators the opportunity to learn the content so they could eventually share the teaching role in the classroom. Sandy’s description of how special educators learned the content over time was partially supported through my observations in the focal classrooms as well as through interviews, especially in regards to the advanced partnership. The phenomenon described by Sandy highlights an important benefit of co-teaching cited numerous times in the literature – the process of mutual learning or enhancement between co-teachers (e.g., Austin, 2001; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007).

However, I found the process of mutual enhancement to also be inconsistent at SJSHS. The teachers in the intermediate partnership didn’t seem to learn as much from each other or share the teaching role as fully as the teachers in the advanced partnership and the teachers in the beginning partnership didn’t exhibit much mutual learning at all. Although this observation

could be related to the amount of time spent in the co-teaching partnership, it also seemed related to the friendship that had developed between the two teachers in the advanced partnership.

The other teachers in the study did not spend time outside of school together and were more affected by the lack of planning time at SJSHS, a common problem (e.g, Austin, 2001; Scruggs et al., 2007), which I discuss in greater detail in the next section of this chapter. Jamie stated in an interview that other teachers realized her partnership with Gina was unique and also suggested that much of Gina's success as a special education co-teacher was related to her personality rather than school or district factors that could be replicated with a different teacher:

On our one in-service day, the other English teachers had made the comment to the whole department, "Well, the only one of us who has really, truly co-taught is Jamie with Gina." It was actually Sara [the 7th grade English teacher in this study] who said it. And I felt like, for her to say that, I guess maybe...you know, and I think I disagree with that to an extent because I think that when Gina co-taught with Jack there was co-teaching. And I think that when Gina went into Marvin's room that started to happen. I think with Gina, she was the type of person who made it work because she just had the right personality. And obviously Gina and I were friends outside of school anyway, so that helped. –

Jamie, 9th grade English teacher

Although the celebration of successes is considered an important element of successful inclusive education according to Schaeffner and Buswell (1996), celebrating successes without deeply examining the extent to which those successes are substantial and comprehensive (i.e., most or all partnerships across classrooms or schools experience a high degree of success in a particular

area) may lead to the inability to see where challenges remain. Challenges cannot be addressed if they are not perceived. It is unlikely that Sandy realized most of the ELA teachers at SJSHS – including Sara, who she identified as a teacher in a strong partnership – did not believe they were engaging in “real” co-teaching. Sara’s comment that she did not believe she was doing “real” co-teaching resonates with the definitions of co-teaching that appear in the co-teaching literature. Cook and Friend (1995) defined co-teaching as the general and special educator teaching core curriculum together, emphasizing planning and instruction as a joint process. Likewise, Murawski and Dieker (2004) stated:

At the core of co-teaching is determining what instructional techniques will be most efficient and effective in helping all students meet those standards. One of the major benefits of co-teaching is that teachers bring different areas of expertise. These diverse skills are helpful during the planning stage, as both educators can find ways to use their strengths to ensure that the lesson is appropriately differentiated for a heterogeneous class. (p.55)

According to such definitions, Sara was correct in her thinking that she and Mindy did not engage in actual co-teaching. Sandy may have believed that teachers were playing a “reciprocal role” in the classroom, but at least some teachers - in this case the entire English department at the secondary school - did not necessarily agree. This theme of celebrating perceived successes without fully examining them to determine if they represented real successes led to challenges that might otherwise be avoided. For example, the perception that Sara and Mindy were engaged in successful co-teaching may have lessened pressure by administrators to provide them with

schedules that allowed planning time because it was perceived that they didn't need the time. In fact, Sara and Mindy's partnership would have greatly benefited from designated planning time since planning was an aspect of the partnership that they did not currently share. Nick, the curriculum director, made a statement that was highly descriptive of the general attitude I encountered at the administrative level: "If it isn't broke, don't fix it." A more accurate statement might have been: "If it doesn't *look* broken, don't fix it." I explore the theme of perceived success in a more detailed way over the course of the next three chapters in relationship to each co-teaching partnership.

Along with concerns about perceptions of success, was a concern over perceived flexibility and ability to address challenges effectively. One example of this emerged in my interview with Jeff, the principal, regarding issues of compatibility between co-teachers. Compatibility of co-teachers is an important factor in determining how a partnership develops over time (Rice & Zigmond, 2000). As I further explain in Chapters 5, 6, and 7, the degree to which each pair of teachers exhibited compatibility related to how well they ultimately shared the teaching role.

In my interview with Jeff, it appeared he valued flexibility in addressing teachers' needs and had a plan for flexibly dealing with compatibility issues between teachers. He explained the process at SJSHS for addressing compatibility in a way that seemed to align with viewing challenges as learning experiences and being flexible when necessary (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996). Jeff recounted how he needed to make some adjustments to teacher pairings to enable more successful partnerships and how communication between the teachers and administrators was essential for this to happen:

If it's a relationship that isn't working out with a particular teacher, if it's a content issue, where they'd feel more comfortable somewhere else and another staff member would maybe prefer to be in there...So I think them being comfortable to discuss those things is an important part of being successful. – *Jeff, principal*

According to Jeff, he had a history of making changes or adjustments in response to problems communicated to him by teachers. This approach to problem solving would indicate strengths in the areas of flexibility as well as viewing challenges as learning experiences (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996). Acting in the capacity he described during this interview would also suggest Jeff's strength as a leader of co-teaching at SJSHS since the ability to manage and address concerns in the area of co-teacher compatibility is rightly a responsibility of the building principal (Sage, 1996; Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996; Scruggs et al., 2007; Walther-Thomas et al., 1996).

My initial impressions from my first round of interviews with administrators and teachers suggested that flexibility and openness to change were generally strengths at SJSHS and that the leadership was generally strong. However, the problems that arose when Dave, the special education teacher in the beginning partnership, arrived at SJSHS led to a more critical analysis of school- and district-level support for co-teaching. Dave and Jamie appeared to not be communicating well and this lack of communication emerged most strikingly during the interviews, when the teachers described how they thought the partnership was progressing.

In summary, Jamie communicated to me through our interviews that the partnership had many serious problems. Conversely, Dave expressed that he thought the partnership was off to a generally positive start. According to Jamie, the administrators at both the school- and district-level were aware of the problems with the new partnership but did not intervene. This situation

led me to question my initial view of SJSHS as a school with a strong co-teaching model. These findings are addressed more fully in Chapter 6.

4.2.4 Common Philosophy and Strategic Plan, Ongoing Technical Support, and Support Networks

Overall, SJSHS addressed Schaeffner and Buswell's (1996) ten critical elements inconsistently, with evidence of both successes and challenges in several areas. However, in regards to three elements, significant areas of need emerged: a common philosophy or strategic plan; development of support networks; and ongoing and organized technical support.

Challenges in all three areas seemed to originate from the relaxed, less-organized nature of the initial launch of co-teaching in this district. All of the teachers in the study who had been in the district when co-teaching was first launched (Jamie, Gina, and Mindy) commented on the lack of preparation they received before beginning their co-teaching partnerships:

We were just thrown in. – *Jamie, 9th grade English teacher*

I was assigned to do co-teaching with Jamie. We actually didn't find out until... I think it was the day of the inservice... – *Gina, 9th grade special education teacher*

When we first started out, our role was kind of like real reserved because we really didn't know the curriculum. We really didn't know what we were doing. It was just kind of like here, we're co-teaching and that's it. There wasn't really any guidance. We weren't

trained or anything. It was just we were going to be co-teaching and have at it! – *Mindy, 7th grade special education teacher*

The general sentiment among the teachers in my study was that the administration could have done more to prepare them for co-teaching and to provide them with some guidance as they got started.

However, Sandy, the special education director, felt strongly that the teachers just needed to get started and would be convinced that co-teaching worked once they were actually doing it. The district's plan was for co-teaching to take place across the district with little top down guidance for how those co-teaching partnerships might take shape. Although the teachers in this study did end up becoming supportive of co-teaching, Mindy expressed that the lack of preparation caused teachers to feel some initial anxiety about beginning co-teaching:

I think at first why we were iffy [about co-teaching] was it was just like, “You’re going to be co-teaching” and that was it. We weren’t trained. We weren’t given information. There wasn’t much discussion about it. It was just, “This is what we’re doing. This is what you’re co-teaching and go.” – *Mindy, 7th grade special education teacher*

Like the other teachers in this study, Mindy eventually became convinced that co-teaching was positive but there was a general feeling among the teachers in my study that better initial planning and preparation would have made the transition to co-teaching a bit easier.

The body of literature on co-teaching overwhelmingly emphasizes that it is important to have a strategic plan led by school- and district-level administrators that includes a variety of factors such as teacher training in effective co-teaching; arrangement of schedules to allow for

planning time; preparation of teachers to use planning time effectively; and an organized support system to address problems or concerns that may arise (Austin, 2001; Boudah et al., 1997; Cook & Friend, 1995; Dieker, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Murawski & Dieker, 2004; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996; Scruggs et al., 2007; Walther-Thomas et al., 1996). Walther-Thomas et al. (1996) actually recommend assembling a district-level task force for the purpose of developing a strategic plan (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996).

Not enough preparation can lead to challenges such as marginalization of the special education teacher (e.g., Austin, 2001; Cook & Friend, 1995; Keefe & Moore, 2004) and missed opportunities to capitalize on complementary expertise for collaborative work in areas such as linking IEP goals for students to the general education curriculum (Walther-Thomas et al., 1996). Sandy's decision to move forward with co-teaching without a strategic plan may have been well-intentioned but it was ultimately detrimental.

One of the biggest issues stemming from the lack of a strategic plan was a schedule that did not include dedicated planning time. Creating schedules with dedicated planning time would fall under the aegis of organized and ongoing technical support and support networks (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996). Sometimes co-teachers had the same free period but often they did not. When they didn't have planning time, it became difficult to share lesson planning. In Sara and Mindy's classroom, Sara did virtually all of the planning. Mindy stated that the first year they worked together, they had the same free period and so they did some co-planning. But once they no longer had this time, the co-planning stopped happening. The only exceptions were brief moments of planning on the fly as students worked quietly at their desks or between class changes in a common but inadequate move to compensate for the lack of dedicated planning

time (Dieker, 2001; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Scuggs et al., 2007). Unable to plan together in a meaningful way, Sara and Mindy often used the one-teach-one-assist format (Cook & Friend, 1995), with Mindy, the special education teacher, most often in an assisting position – a common phenomenon across the literature (e.g., Austin, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007).

Gina and Jamie did plan more together, but this was because they were friends and would sometimes plan outside of school. They recognized their situation as unique because their co-teaching partnership had developed into an outside-of-school friendship:

The one thing that's been kind of hard is that we don't always have the same free time. That makes it difficult. Because [Gina] and I are friends outside of school, there have been times when we've gone together outside of school [to grade and plan]...but I know that's not the case without any other co-teachers except for us." – *Jamie, 9th grade English teacher*

The lack of a planning period made it less likely that co-teachers would share in planning instruction together. Districts and schools cannot anticipate or expect co-teachers to become personal friends who spend time out of school together. Subsequently, the arrangement of schedules to allow for planning time seemed like a tangible way in which co-teachers may have received better support at the school level.

4.2.5 Strength of Leadership

In light of the inconsistencies across Schaeffner and Buswell's (1996) ten critical elements of

inclusive education, my analysis of the strength of the school- and district-level leadership was ambivalent. On one hand, the district leaders were experienced in co-teaching and supportive of the co-teaching model. They also respected teachers as professionals and allowed them to be instructional decision-makers. On the other hand, there were clear examples of a lack of school- and district-level organization and support for teachers, which I describe in detail in Chapters 5, 6, and 7. The challenges to successful co-teaching that occurred due to insufficient school- and district-level organization and support for teachers at SJSHS reinforce the importance attributed to the role of school- and district-level administrators in the implementation of co-teaching - an importance that has been well-documented across the co-teaching and inclusion literature (e.g., Austin, 2001; Cook & Friend, 1995; Murawski & Dieker, 2004; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Sage, 1996; Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996; Scruggs et al., 2007; Walther-Thomas et al., 1996).

The challenges evident in the co-teaching model at SJSHS occurred despite the substantial co-teaching experience of administrators at both the district level and the school level. The experience of the administrators was helpful because they could empathize with teachers in similar partnerships. Sandy, in particular, had a long history as a co-teacher before becoming special education director for Stateline Public Schools and Jeff, SJSHS principal, had previously been a sixth grade mathematics co-teacher. Sandy stated that she and Jeff were able to better relate to the experiences of their co-teachers “because we did it.” Sandy and Jeff both understood the dynamics of co-teaching partnerships because they had been co-teachers in the past and had experienced the process that teachers go through to develop a co-teaching relationship. They knew that it took time to get used to another person’s teaching style and they had experienced the work it takes to negotiate each instructor’s role and responsibilities in the co-taught classroom.

However, just having been a co-teacher did not substitute for a strategic plan that anticipated and laid out a protocol for dealing with potential problems (e.g., Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996; Walther-Thomas et al., 1996).

This critical analysis of the implementation of coaching at SJSHS should not belie the positive qualities school- and district-level leadership had to offer. For example, Sandy brought zeal and positive enthusiasm for co-teaching to the district. She described how she originally became involved in co-teaching because she felt her students' needs were not being met in the self-contained classroom or through pull out instruction. Her experiences as a self-contained special educator, general educator, and finally co-teacher led her to conclude that the co-taught inclusive classroom was truly the best setting for most students with special needs. Co-teaching in Stateline was Sandy's initiative, an initiative driven by her own genuine beliefs in co-teaching specifically and inclusive education in general. It is my sincere belief that Sandy encouraged co-teaching so fervently because she had faith in the approach and believed it was best for students.

Despite positive qualities and intentions of administrators, however, the co-teaching model at SJSHS still faced the challenges outlined previously in this chapter and many of these challenges could have been avoided with more careful planning in advance of launching the co-teaching model and continual critical analysis of the model and how it was working once co-teaching had been implemented.

These findings indicate that the personal co-teaching experience of school leaders and their enthusiasm for implementing co-teaching may not be sufficient for ensuring that a co-teaching model runs smoothly. The complexities of co-teaching at a school-wide and district-wide level typically require a well-defined cohesive and strategic plan that accounts for a multitude of factors such as pairing teachers, training teachers, building planning time into

teachers' schedules, and articulating a process for addressing problems that may arise over time (e.g., Austin, 2001; Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996; Scruggs et al., 2007; Walther-Thomas et al., 1996).

4.3 SUMMARY

In conclusion, co-teaching at SJSHS was characterized by some clear strengths, several significant needs, and a complex network of actual successes, perceived successes, and hidden challenges that manifested in the inconsistent development of the co-teaching partnerships in this study. In general the school-wide culture of inclusivity and a philosophy that students with and without disabilities could succeed in the same classroom led to benefits for students with and without disabilities at this school (e.g., Cook & Friend, 1995; Griffin et al., 2007; Holdheide & Reschly, 2008; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996). On the surface, the co-teaching model appeared successful and the teachers in the advanced and intermediate co-teaching partnerships expressed general satisfaction with co-teaching at SJSHS, albeit with the acknowledgment that some changes, such as dedicated planning time, might further improve co-teaching at the school.

Upon deeper analysis, it became clear that the surface-level success of co-teaching at SJSHS actually obscured a number of challenges that prevented optimal co-teaching conditions. Stateline School District and SJSHS lacked a clear strategic plan for launching co-teaching and teachers received little initial training. A well-defined strategic plan that allows for teacher training, dedicated planning time, and planned support systems for dealing with potential problems (Austin, 2001; Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996; Scruggs et al., 2007; Walther-Thomas et

al., 1996) might have avoided some of the challenges that emerged over the course of this study. However, school and district leadership perceived that the co-teaching model at the school and district-wide was highly successful, which may have blinded them to some of the challenges to stronger co-teaching. For example, some teachers who ostensibly had strong co-teaching partnerships such as Mindy and Sara may have actually been enacting traditional roles, resulting in the common problem (e.g., Austin, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Scruggs et al., 2007) of the special education teacher consistently ending up in a more subordinate role. Due to the perception of success, such problems in an outwardly strong partnership may escape notice.

Likewise, a lack of developed support systems or ongoing and organized technical support (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996), such as explicit protocols for dealing with problems, made it more difficult for teachers to get assistance they needed when they experienced a challenge to successful co-teaching. In the case of the beginning partnership, a lack of communication (Rice & Zigmond, 2000) between partners echoed a lack of communication between administration and co-teachers for this partnership.

Although experienced as co-teachers and empathetic towards teachers, it appeared that district-level administrators such as Sandy and Nick and building-level administrators such as Jeff may have missed opportunities to support teachers in need of help, perhaps assuming teachers would figure out how to solve problems on their own. Ultimately better planning and strategies for dealing with potential problems as well a more critical lens for analyzing district practices might have avoided some of the challenges faced by teachers in this study.

5.0 CHAPTER V: THE ADVANCED PARTNERSHIP

In this chapter I describe the advanced partnership in the ninth grade inclusive ELA classroom at SJSHS. I collected data in this classroom during English teacher Jamie Rooney's* and special education teacher Gina Marconi's* fourth and fifth years teaching together. My observations in their classroom spanned a five-month time frame over two school years (April and May 2010 and September, October, and November 2010), yielding a set of twenty-four field observation notes (24 x 42 minutes = 16.8 hours). Additionally, I interviewed each teacher twice, collected several examples of classroom artifacts including assignment sheets, rubrics, and a set of student papers written as a culminating activity for a unit on the novel *That Was Then, This Is Now* by S.E. Hinton. In this chapter, I first explore the development of the relationship between the two teachers (Research Question 1) and then discuss the characteristics of the instruction they provided in their co-taught classroom in the areas of reading and literature instruction, discussion, and writing with a focus on the scaffolding processes in each area (Research Question 2).

5.1 RESEARCH QUESTION 1: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CO-TEACHING PARTNERSHIP: JAMIE AND GINA

I collected data on the partnership between Jamie and Gina through classroom observations and two interviews with each teacher – one near the beginning and one near the end of my data collection in their classroom. I coded these data using Rice and Zigmond's (2000) five areas of co-teaching compatibility (Table 3.3) as the primary lens. I also coded my data for co-teaching benefits described across several pieces of literature (Austin, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Rice and Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007; Wilson & Michaels, 2006) that appear in Table 3.2 and, where appropriate at the classroom level, Schaeffner and Buswell's (1996) ten elements of inclusive education (Table 3.1). Below, I discuss my analysis of the partnership, divided according to each of Rice and Zigmond's five areas co-teacher compatibility.

5.1.1 Area 1: Shared Views on Academic and Behavior Standards for Students

Over the years Jamie and Gina worked together, they reconciled their views on teaching in a manner that was complementary if not always the same. At the high school level, the classes were tracked into General and Academic classes. Both teachers liked the tracked nature of the inclusive classroom because they felt struggling students without disabilities benefitted from similar support as students with disabilities and having both groups together in the same classroom allowed the two teachers to design instruction in a way that they thought was most helpful for all of the students.

In regards to behavior, the teachers admitted they had slightly different expectations but felt these expectations were compatible nonetheless and likened their interactions with students to a family structure. Despite the fact that both were female teachers, they both stated that Gina took on the more traditionally gendered “father” role as the disciplinarian while Jamie took on the traditional “mother” role as the nurturer:

Some of [the students] call us “Mom” and “Dad.” They call me “Mom” because I’m the nurturing one, they say and they call Gina “dad” because she’s the strict one and she’s the one who will tell them, “No, you’re not allowed to do this” or whatever. And they’re funny because they’ll start to play us like a mom and dad relationship and if they want something they know if they come to me they’re going to get it but if they go to her, she’s going to tell them “no.” – *Jamie, 9th grade English teacher*

During classroom observations, I witnessed students make reference to the teachers as “Mom” and “Dad” (e.g., asking “Where’s dad?” when Gina was not in the classroom). The end of the school year student surveys on co-teaching also reflected that students noticed this dynamic of their partnership. For example, several students made reference to Gina’s disciplinary role in response to the survey question that asked what advice they would give to upcoming freshman:

“Don’t get smart with Miss Marconi.”

“Be on the ball! Don’t get Miss Marconi yelling.”

“Don’t make Miss Marconi mad!!!”

“Get on Marconi’s good side.”

Generally I didn’t notice any serious behavioral problems in the classroom and most of the behaviors that teachers addressed were minor – forgetting a pencil, not bringing in homework

packets, talking off task. Gina's role as a strict disciplinarian likely contributed to the strong sense of classroom management although both teachers still maintained a friendly sense of camaraderie with students, making jokes and laughing as appropriate. The two teachers and the students all seemed comfortable with a classroom atmosphere that was orderly but congenial. Gina and Jamie's comfort with and appreciation for their complementary styles is consistent with findings in the literature that show co-teachers find mutual enhancement to be a benefit of co-teaching (e.g., Austin, 2001; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007).

5.1.2 Area 2: Honest and Open Communication

Due to the lack of initial preparation for co-teaching by the district, the teachers had to negotiate the co-teaching partnerships largely on their own. Jamie and Gina had worked together in a limited way in the past (some of Jamie's students received resource support with Gina), but they didn't really get to know each other well until they were working together in the same classroom. The initial adjustment period was not always easy but Jamie made Gina feel welcome in her classroom from the beginning and made it clear that she was willing to share the teaching role with her, a factor both teachers saw as critical for the positive development of their partnership:

I think in Jamie's room I probably felt the most comfortable and I was able to do my own thing more in her room than I was in the other two classrooms because she made me feel more welcome and allowed me to do just as much as she was doing during with the lecturing and so forth. – *Gina, 9th grade special education teacher*

[W]hen she came into this classroom I'd put both of our names on all of the paperwork.

And she told me that small little thing made her feel so much more comfortable and really included. And that's one of the things that people – and Sandy, the special education director, have observed of us in the past. One of the things [Sandy] has commented on is that sometimes it's hard to tell who's the English teacher and who's the special ed teacher because we can be so back and forth about it... The kids truly look at both of us as the main teacher. – *Jamie, 9th grade English teacher*

Jamie and Gina established a positive partnership with each other not only at the beginning but consistently throughout their co-teaching partnership, checking in with each other on student progress and making joint decisions on how to assess students' work. In this way, they provided each other with useful feedback and contributed to each other's mutual learning (Austin, 2001; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007), which also better enabled them to ensure accountability for student learning (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996).

The development of their relationship came not only from communication but also from having attitudes conducive to co-teaching. Jamie, as the English teacher, had an attitude of acceptance and willingness to share her classroom with another educator and Gina, as the special education teacher, was willing to take on the responsibility of sharing the role of the English teacher - a role that required her to become more knowledgeable about the content (in this case English language arts). These attitudes are part of the flexibility what Schaeffner and Buswell (1996) determine to be critical for inclusive instruction to succeed. Gina and Jamie were both flexible in that they expressed openness to a new teaching experience - what Schaeffner and Buswell (1996) describe as being knowledgeable about but not paralyzed by the change process. They also exhibited a willingness to learn new ways of practicing their profession and a

willingness to share and communicate their experiences along the way with their partner in the change process.

As I will further discuss, their flexible attitudes allowed them to learn from each other and to share expertise, factors that have been found to contribute to the development of capacity in both general education teachers (in the area of learning how to accommodate students with disabilities) and special education teachers (in the area of building content knowledge) – one of the many benefits of a strong co-teaching partnership (Austin, 2001; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007). Mutual learning fulfills an especially important role at the secondary level, where general education teachers are usually not equipped to work with students with various disabilities and special educators usually do not have a high level of content knowledge (e.g., Keefe & Moore, 2004).

5.1.3 Area 3: Ability to Problem Solve Without Making the Problems Personal

One of the most salient examples of how these two teachers demonstrated effective problem-solving techniques was in how they created their own plan for transitioning from teaching separately to co-teaching despite the very loose district plan for implementing the co-teaching model. Together they devised a method for acclimating Gina to Jamie's English classroom and for gradually integrating Gina into the lead teaching position alongside Jamie. Jamie described how this process occurred during the initial year of their partnership:

Mostly how we did it the first year was we co-taught two periods, one in the morning and one in the afternoon and usually I would lead the class in the morning and she would observe and we would flop in the afternoon. And then she would lead in the afternoon

and I would be the one who filtered through the room and made sure that the kids were on task, help them to keep caught up. So we did the back and forth role a lot. You know I would be the main teacher and she would be the supporting teacher and then in the afternoon we would switch. And then after the first year, then we were able to really assimilate with one another in every period because she was more comfortable with the content and knew what was going on. –*Jamie, 9th grade English teacher*

Jamie's statement highlights how the teachers were able to work together to devise a plan to ease their way into co-teaching. Her statement highlights a few areas that could be potentially problematic for new co-teachers: figuring out the role each teacher will take on at different points during instruction; the need for the general education teacher to step back at times so the special education teacher can also take on an instructing role; and the need for the special education teacher to become more comfortable with the content.

Jamie and Gina addressed the needs of their own partnership and classroom where the district fell short– development of a common philosophy and strategic plan and development of support networks (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996). At the classroom level, these teachers developed a highly effective strategic plan that allowed both teachers to share the role of the lead teacher and to work together in a way that both felt was productive and allowed them to use and further develop their own pedagogical skills. Again, the ability to problem solve and work together in a productive way seems strongly linked to having a flexible attitude towards one's own teaching role and the what it means to share that role with another professional. Gina's description of what she believed was necessary for a successful co-teaching partnership captured this flexible attitude:

I really think that you're not going to have a successful co-teaching atmosphere unless both teachers are accepting of each other, both teachers are willing to carry the load, and both teachers are willing to let the other teacher share the load, if that makes sense... If [the special education teacher works with] teachers who aren't willing to give up their position or share it with [the special education teacher]...then I don't think it's going to be as successful as we have had it over the last few years. – *Gina, 9th grade special education teacher*

When two teachers do share the load and accept each other, as Gina and Jamie did, it appears much more likely that they will be able to work through a variety of situations – including difficult and challenging problems (e.g., not having planning time, receiving little training or ongoing professional development from the district).

5.1.4 Area 4: Equal Pedagogical Skills

As both Gina and Jamie agreed, sharing the teaching role in an equitable manner is critical for a successful co-teaching partnership. However, both teachers need to also have the ability to take on that teaching role. Equal pedagogical skills might, in this regard, be more accurately described as complementary teaching skills coupled with the willingness to learn from one's partner. When they began teaching together, Gina was somewhat apprehensive about taking on the secondary English language arts curriculum, especially teaching Shakespeare. Although she had a Master's in reading and had taught English language arts in the learning support room,

taking on the role of the English teacher in a general education classroom did initially seem challenging to Gina. As both teachers expressed, it was with Jamie's support that Gina gained confidence in teaching general education high school English:

The first year we taught, my sister had gotten married so I was out of school for three or four days and we were right in the middle of Romeo and Juliet. And [Gina] was like, "Oh, I don't know if I can do this without you!" And I left her very specifically typed notes and she always says, she'll tell other people, "Oh, yeah, now if Jamie's not there I feel like I can teach Romeo and Juliet." It's fine between the packets and the notes. –
Jamie, 9th grade English teacher

I never went to school for Shakespeare so it's a difficult thing to teach. If Jamie wasn't here a day or she hasn't been here a day, I'm fine teaching Romeo and Juliet because I've had four years of her guiding me with it to the point where I feel strong enough where I could teach it on my own. – *Gina, 9th grade special education teacher*

The process of becoming comfortable with the general education curriculum and taking on the role of the content expert does not happen automatically for the special education teacher, as content knowledge at the high school level is challenging and takes time to learn (e.g., Keefe & Moore, 2004). It is an ongoing process that is facilitated by working with and learning from a general education teacher who is comfortable with the content. Likewise, general education teachers not trained to work with students who have special needs may experience a learning curve when they begin teaching in an inclusive setting. In the same way that both teachers agreed

that Gina learned to be more comfortable with the curriculum due to working with Jamie, they also agreed that Jamie became more comfortable implementing strategies that met the needs of struggling students due to working with Gina. The knowledge Jamie developed in the area of working with struggling students became particularly important when, midway through their fifth year teaching together, Gina got a job in another state. Although both teachers felt a sense of loss in knowing they would no longer be teaching together, Gina felt confident that Jamie would be able to handle working with all of the students effectively even if she had to go without a co-teaching partner for awhile:

Jamie and I, when we started co-teaching, she honestly had no clue what to do, how to handle the kids, whether that's special ed or just in terms of struggling kids. And she will adamantly voice to me...I'm sure that it is great to have a co-teacher because you do learn to maybe understand kids at their level because when you're tasked with all of this knowledge and may not be able to understand that you're teaching something they're not getting, you need to bring it down to a certain level...I have total faith in Jamie because I know that after five years with me, she knows exactly what I do and she does what I do when I'm teaching. So she's going to have no problem. And I feel bad that she's going to be without a co-teacher for a few weeks probably but she will be fine and she knows there are other supports there if she needs to take advantage of them. – *Gina, 9th grade special education teacher*

The mutual learning and support demonstrated between Jamie and Gina aligns with several findings on the benefits of co-teaching presented in Table 3.2, including general education

teachers building knowledge of strategies for working with diverse learners; special education teachers building content knowledge; teachers providing each other with useful feedback; and teachers experiencing mutual learning and enhancement (Austin, 2001; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scurggs et al., 2007). Their partnership demonstrates how a strong co-teaching partnership can evolve into a meaningful learning experience for both teachers and can strengthen each teacher's pedagogical skills.

5.1.5 Area 5: Self-confidence, self-esteem, and the ability to take risks

At the start of their co-teaching partnership, Jamie and Gina each had areas of apprehension. Gina was about to take on teaching challenging secondary English language arts content; Jamie would need to learn how to work with students who had disabilities. Likewise, they would have to learn to share a classroom and teaching position with another educator and they would have very little preparation before beginning. However, they managed to develop a strong partnership despite these initial challenges. Analyses of the teachers' interview responses indicated that part of the reason for the success of their partnership was each teacher's confidence in her own professional abilities and her ability to make the partnership work. For Jamie, confidence meant a willingness to allow another teacher to share her role in the classroom and to give up some of the ownership that teachers typically feel for their teaching space. For Gina, confidence meant being willing to take on a leadership role despite apprehension about teaching in a general education English classroom. Jamie related in an interview an example that demonstrates how each teacher displayed confidence that strengthened the co-teaching partnership:

[T]he first year, towards the end of the year, she said, “Hey I have a novel. I have all the plans for it. Would you want to implement it?” And it was *That Was Then, This Is Now* by S.E. Hinton. And I was like, “Sure.” She had special ed money so she ordered the class novels and then she pretty much led the class on that because it was her planning that she did. So she did it all. She did the vocabulary. She did the tests, the quizzes. Because that was mostly hers, she did most of the grading with it. Things like that. – *Jamie, 9th grade English teacher*

Just as Jamie recognized the confidence it took for Gina to ask to bring in and take the lead on teaching her own unit in the general education English classroom, Gina recognized the confidence it took for Jamie to allow her to do this:

I brought a novel into the general education classroom that I had done in the past. So she was very accepting of me bringing in stuff that I’ve done in the past because I’ve taught English in the learning support setting. That made me feel really welcome, that she would allow me to bring in curriculum that I’ve taught that she hasn’t taught. That is something that some teachers might not be comfortable with. – *Gina, 9th grade special education teacher*

My observations in their classroom, coupled with what each teacher revealed to me during my interviews with her, demonstrated the strength of the co-teaching partnership between these two

teachers and emphasized how much that kind of partnership is built upon confidence in one's own and one's partner's abilities, open communication, and a feeling of mutual trust that develops over time.

5.2. RESEARCH QUESTION 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LITERACY INSTRUCTION IN JAMIE AND GINA'S CLASSROOM

Jamie and Gina felt the students in their classroom both with and without disabilities required similar kinds of support. Subsequently, the instruction in their classroom was most closely aligned with a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach—curriculum and pedagogy designed to be more accessible for students of all abilities that reduces barriers to instruction (Edyburn, 2010; Friend & Bursuck, 2006; King-Sears, 2009). For example, they developed guides for writing that included support for structuring an essay and implemented instructional techniques such as pairing oral questions with written questions. Such an approach is generally positive, aiding students in accessing tasks that may otherwise be at a level that causes frustration and impedes learning (Edyburn, 2010; Friend & Bursuck, 2006; King-Sears, 2009). Jamie and Gina were very concerned about the students in their tracked classroom (which included students with disabilities and students without disabilities who had lower achievement in ELA). As a result, they strove to give them sufficient support to access the tasks in their classroom. However, as explained in this chapter, the teachers' concerns over students' ability to access the curriculum led to a heavy emphasis on extensive scaffolding that often decreased the rigor of assignments and resulted in few examples of independent learning.

Although an overuse of scaffolding ultimately reduced rigor of many tasks and

opportunities for independent learning, the teachers' intentions were positive, stemming from efforts to be supportive of the students' perceived learning and socio-emotional needs. During my interviews with them, both Gina and Jamie expressed such perceptions of students' needs:

The majority of the kids in the room, whether they have an [Individualized Education Plan] or not, are struggling readers. They really need catered to, in a sense...I feel that I've seen tremendous success with kids becoming more responsible and kids being willing to accept the help and realize that they need the help. But then as they get it, they begin to nurture themselves in a way where they are becoming more responsible. – *Gina, 9th grade special education teacher*

I think I like having the [students with disabilities] in with other kids who are struggling but not identified [with a disability] because at least they all feel – they all feel each other's pain in the sense that if one of them is struggling they can look around and say, "Hey, all these other people are struggling along with me so it's okay that I'm struggling." – *Jamie, 9th grade English teacher*

Jamie and Gina's statements demonstrated a genuine concern for the students and both their academic and social-emotional well-being. However, their beliefs that struggling students need teachers to "cater to" their needs and that personal responsibility begins with a willingness to accept help likely drove much of the overuse of scaffolding that I observed on the part of both teachers.

Although consistent with several best practices for supporting students with special needs

such as modeling strategies, controlling for task difficulty, and providing explicit instruction in reading and writing (Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2003), the extent to which teachers employed scaffolding techniques did not create sufficient opportunities for students to engage in the kind of rigorous intellectual work cited in the literature as best practices for English language arts (e.g., dialogic discussions, Nystrand et al., 2003; writing literary analyses, Beck & Jeffrey, 2009). Below I describe the nature of the reading and literature instruction, writing instruction, and discussion in their classroom, explaining in detail how teachers ultimately struggled with providing the right amount of scaffolding to benefit student learning.

5.2.1 The Nature of Reading and Literature Instruction

Reading and literature instruction in Jamie and Gina's class was characterized by (a) the use of authentic texts that were appropriately challenging for the students; (b) a focus on whole class instruction; and (c) extensive use of the scaffolding features that reduced the difficulty of tasks - especially frustration control and reduction in degrees of freedom (Wood et al., 1976). Both teachers (as expressed in the interviews) perceived that their students needed a lot of intensive support to enable them to tackle challenging texts. To address this concern, they used reading guides that focused on controlling for task difficulty (Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2003 – See Table 3.4). The questions in these guides attempted to mediate student learning primarily through the scaffolding features of marking critical features, reduction in degrees of freedom, and frustration control (Wood et al., 1976).

During the time of my observations, the teachers read three longer texts with the students – the Shakespearean play *Romeo and Juliet* (included in an anthology but printed in the original language), *That Was Then, This Is Now* by S.E. Hinton, and *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson in

addition to a few shorter texts (e.g., poems). The most challenging of these three longer texts was *Romeo and Juliet*. For this text, the teachers adapted reading guides that came with a novel version of the play (version of the text used in previous years) to align with the current version in the anthology. Both the previous novel version and the current anthology version were full versions of the play written in the original Shakespearean language; subsequently the questions in the guides were still applicable to the play in the anthology with only minor changes (e.g., corrected page numbers) necessary to allow for use with the current version of the text. The reading guides focused heavily on assisting students in deciphering Shakespearean language by posing many comprehension questions that required a close reading of the text (“List two difficulties the lovers face. Write the page and line numbers for your answers in the column at the right.”) and by providing a segment of text and prompting students to translate the text into their own words (“After hearing the Nurse’s advice, Juliet says, ‘Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain.’ Explain what Juliet means.”).

Table 5.1 shows my analysis of all of the questions and prompts across the five *Romeo and Juliet* reading guides (n=201) and the features of scaffolding addressed by each type of question or prompt. An example of part of the guide for Act I can be found in Appendix D, illustrating some of the kinds of questions appearing on the guide.

Table 5.1 Analysis of Components of *Romeo and Juliet* Guides for Features of Scaffolding (Wood et al., 1976)

Component of Guide	Scaffolding Purpose	Act I Packet	Act II Packet	Act III Packet	Act IV Packet	Act V Packet	Totals (Total n=201)	% of Total
Background Development	Marking critical features; Frustration control	8	9	4	3	2	26	13%
Conceptual Development	Marking critical features; Reduction in Degrees of Freedom; Frustration control	7		3	5	3	18	9%
Text-Based Literal Comprehension Questions (“Teacher Test Questions”)	Reduction in degrees of freedom; Marking critical features; Frustration control	30	22	23	22	23	120	60%
Text-Based Inference and	Recruitment;	5	5	5	3	6	24	12%

Interpretation Questions	Marking critical features							
Authentic Teacher Questions	Recruitment; Marking critical features; Direction maintenance	2	4	4	2	1	13	6%

5.2.1.1 Components of the *Romeo and Juliet* Guides

In this section each component of the *Romeo and Juliet* guides is analyzed, with a focus on the kinds of questions or prompts in each section, the work each type of question or prompt asked students to do, and the features of scaffolding addressed by each kind of question or prompt.

Background Development

This section clarified concepts that were typical of the time period (e.g., arranged marriages) and explained technical terms students might not understand as they read (e.g., prologue). This section was brief and teachers did not spend a long period of time lingering over background information. Background development prompts accounted for **13%** of the questions and prompts across all guides. These prompts marked critical features (Wood et al., 1976) by pointing out background information that was important for comprehension of the text – for example, why

Juliet's parents could make her marry someone she didn't want to marry, and addressed frustration control (Wood et al., 1976) by clarifying ideas in the text that might otherwise impede students' general comprehension unnecessarily.

Conceptual Development

These questions developed academic vocabulary in ELA and included terms such as "character foil," "paradox," and "irony." Vygotsky (1986) explained that word meanings are concepts that defy facile definition, cannot be directly taught but rather evolve over time, and can be used as tools to mediate learning. The tasks around these concepts are therefore just initial starting points for the slow evolution of each concept. Like Beck et al.'s (2002) approach, the terms selected here tended to be scientific concepts (Vygotsky, 1986) that would be developed over the course of reading, guiding students to define and give examples of particular literary devices. For example, students developed an understanding of "irony" as they analyzed various examples of irony used by Shakespeare throughout the play.

These accounted for 9% of the questions and prompts across guides. They primarily served the purpose of marking critical features (Wood et al., 1976) by developing conceptual knowledge important for deepening comprehension of the text and to a lesser extent served the purposes of reduction in degrees of freedom and frustration control (Wood et al, 1976), since these prompts typically assisted students in the understanding of a potentially unfamiliar literary device that could make reading the text more challenging.

Text-Based Literal Comprehension or "Teacher Test" Questions

These were questions students needed to answer using the text. Most of the questions fell into the category that Nystrand et al. (2003) would call "teacher test questions" - questions that are

designed to elicit a certain “correct” answer. Nystrand et al. (2003) cautioned that when these kinds of questions become the basis for classroom talk, they lead to IRE (initiation-response-evaluation) formats with little opportunity for richer discussion of ideas in the text.

Overall, at **60%** of the prompts and questions, these questions dominated the five guides. The questions either required basic recall of facts (“Paris asks Capulet for permission to _____.; About what did Romeo dream?”) or asked students to explain the Shakespearean language in their own words (What does Juliet say when she learns who Romeo is? Write her exact words and explain what they mean. Page 1018, lines 154 – 157.). These questions served to reduce degrees of freedom and for frustration control (Wood et al., 1976) as they guided or checked understanding of multiple small segments of text throughout the play. Additionally, these questions sometimes focused on marking critical features (Wood et al., 1976) by drawing students’ attention to an important event or idea in the text. However, these questions focused on whether or not students understood rather than on how they interpreted the significance of the focal event or idea.

Text-Based Inference and Interpretation Questions

These questions required students to use the text in formulating their responses but also required them to make inferences about what they read. The questions frequently asked them to “explain” something that happened or “reveal” the nuances of a character or relationship (“What does [Capulet’s reasons for hesitating to give Paris permission] reveal about Capulet’s relationship with Juliet?; Why doesn’t Juliet want Romeo to swear by the moon? Explain.”). These kinds of questions accounted for **12%** of the questions and prompts across the guides.

Although these questions generally pushed students beyond literal reading comprehension, some questions could still be answered by just recounting part of the plot, with

the potential to go deeper depending entirely on how the student decided to respond. For example, one question asked: Explain what happens when Paris tries to “arrest” Romeo. A student might simply answer that Romeo kills Paris and that response would be technically correct. On the other hand, this question could be answered in a deeper way, making inferences from the text and forming a generalization – tying together ideas to build up a concept (Nystrand et al., 2003).

A student who formed a generalization might say that Romeo planned to commit suicide and warned Paris not to “tempt a desperate man” because even though he didn’t want to kill Paris, his suicidal plan also meant he no longer feared consequences for his actions. This would build up the concept of “desperation” and the subsequent danger that Paris faced by tying together the ideas that (a) Romeo was distraught over news that Juliet had died; (b) as a result, he planned to end his life; (c) because he planned to end his life, he no longer faced consequences for his actions; (d) he didn’t want to kill Paris; but (e) he would do it if pushed because there was no reason for him to fear punishment for his actions.

Therefore some of the questions in this category were coded as interpretive or inferential because they had the potential for more inferential, interpretive, and cognitively demanding answers even though they could also be answered at a very basic, literal level. These questions primarily served to scaffold students through recruitment (Wood et al., 1976), by getting them to think more deeply about particular ideas in the text, and marking critical features (Wood et al., 1976), focusing that deeper thinking on particular ideas or concepts. These questions focused students’ thinking on particular relationships or pushed them to analyze what characters did or said.

Authentic Teacher Questions

Some questions pushed students to give extended responses that moved beyond just making sense of the text. I coded these as “authentic teacher questions” because they did not have pretermed answers that teachers would expect and were therefore distinguished from “teacher test questions” (Nystrand et al., 2003). These questions required students to reflect on what they had read and to express their own thinking rather than find answers provided in the text (e.g., “The reader gets to know the Nurse better in Act II. What do you like or dislike about the Nurse? How would the story be different if she weren’t in it?”; “Do you feel sympathy for the Capulets, the Nurse, or Paris when they express grief over Juliet’s death? Why or why not?”). The potential for rigor was increased with such questions because, while primarily grounded in the text (to avoid the possibility of a student responding without actually reading and making sense of the text), they also required students to formulate informed opinions and make judgments about situations and characters based on what they learned about those situations and characters in the text. Such questions can lead students to analyze the text in a deeper manner (Nystrand et al., 2003)

The authentic teacher questions scaffolded students through recruitment and marking critical features (Wood et al., 1976) by engaging students in more extensive thinking about key events, characters, or ideas in the text. They also served the purpose of direction maintenance (Wood et al., 1976) by eliciting students’ personal interpretations about the text. Such questions could also be coded as representative of motivation and self-directed learning, which Biancarosa and Snow (2006) describe as techniques meant to increase student engagement with texts. Further, these questions held the potential for students to create what Smagorinsky (2001) called “new texts” – texts that “locat[e] meaning not only in the reader and text but in the cultural

history that has preceded and conditioned both, in the social practices that provide the immediate environment of reading, in the power relationships inherent to social participation, and in the relational experiences that make up each reader's life narrative" (p. 134). Subsequently, these kinds of questions created the opportunity for the teachers to gain insights into students' meaning making processes and to explore how the class together developed a shared understanding of a particular text in relationship to the context of the classroom and individual readers' lives. Such insights cannot be obtained through literal comprehension questions that serve best to prepare students for a test on the content of their reading.

Unfortunately authentic teacher questions only represented **6%** of the total questions and prompts across the five guides. Much more often, the guides kept students' thinking at a very literal level and did not encourage intertextual representations - those representations of ideas in a text that incorporate students' life experiences or allow them to draw comparisons across multiple print or multimedia texts (Smagorinsky, 2001). Further, kept only at the literal comprehension level, students may lose interest in the text, particularly if just comprehending the text requires a great deal of cognitive energy, as a lack of engagement in school-based literacy activities is common even among strong readers at the secondary school level (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006).

By giving the students more opportunities to develop their own interpretations of the text, Gina and Jamie might have increased student engagement during the reading process and the growth of interpretive reading. Including more authentic questions would also increase the cognitive demand of the reading guides overall by giving students more opportunities to engage in higher-level thinking skills such as generalization, analysis, and speculation, leading to better

quality tasks that promoted increasingly independent student learning (Matsumura et al., 2002, Nystrand et al., 2003).

If serving only as homework assignments and then used as a basis to extend thinking in class, the reading guides may have been more helpful for scaffolding student learning within their ZPDs. However, the reading guides also dominated the class discussions of *Romeo and Juliet* and served as preparation for exams on the text, which mirrored the guides. During a typical lesson on *Romeo and Juliet*, Jamie and Gina had students take turns reading aloud from the play (with different students assigned to different roles each time) and frequently stopped to use the questions in the reading guides as a blueprint for discussion of each section of text. This resulted in teacher domination of discussions in an attempt to help students understand what they read. The example below from my fieldnotes is typical of the way the task of reading a challenging text was approached in this classroom:

(These notes are based on an interaction between students and teachers as they moved through the questions in the Act II guide. The question discussed in this segment of the fieldnotes focused specifically on one question about Act II, Scene iii that appeared in the reading guide for this act: “The Friar is collecting ‘deadly weeds and healing flowers.’ As he does this, he compares earth to a _____ or a _____ and the plants to her _____. Explain why the earth and plants could be described this way.” Note that the answers to the three blanks were “tomb,” “womb,” and “children.”)

The students read from Act II, Scene iii where Friar Lawrence discusses the uses of certain plants. The two teachers explained that Friar Lawrence is an herbalist and that

this means he knows about medicinal uses of different kinds of plants. A student then began reading Friar Lawrence's role while Gina helped her out as she stumbled over occasional words. When the student became frustrated, Jamie finished her lines for her. Jamie then reminded students to read the footnotes and focused their attention on deciphering Friar Lawrence's lines, using question 1 for Scene iii in the Act II reading guide as a basis for discussion.

Jamie: A tomb or a womb? What is a tomb? What is a womb? (Students respond.) So what is he comparing the plants to? The plants are [Mother Earth's]...

Student: Children.

Jamie: So how can plants be described this way?

Students mumble some answers about how the plants grow from the earth and the earth provides what plants need to grow.

Gina interjects, summing up what she believes to be the gist of students' ideas.

Gina: Mother Earth takes care of the plants. Therefore she is the mommy.

In this example, completing the reading guide was the focus of the instruction rather than developing student interpretations of the text. The characteristics of scaffolding found in this example of class discussion were demonstration, marking critical features, reduction of degrees in freedom, and frustration control through controlling the difficulty of the task - in this case, the task being reading a challenging text. By unpacking the language of the text, teachers were demonstrating how good readers pull apart difficult language to make sense of a challenging text, providing students with direct, explicit comprehension instruction. The instruction,

however, did not engage students in the process of analyzing or interpreting the text; the teachers did this. Although direct, explicit comprehension instruction can support struggling readers (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006) and modeling the reading strategies of proficient readers through techniques such as think alouds can be helpful particularly for students with disabilities (Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2003), other approaches better aid in the gradual release of responsibility necessary so students can eventually become independent learners. For example, text-based collaborative learning, another approach described by Biancarosa and Snow and listed in Table 3.6, involves small groups of students engaging in discussion of a text together. This approach was notably rare during my observations. Biancarosa and Snow also suggest that struggling readers should be motivated to become more self-directed and eventually independent in engaging with challenging texts. The thirteen authentic teacher questions and some of the twenty-four inference and interpretation questions that appeared in the reading guides for *Romeo and Juliet* offered an opportunity for releasing more responsibility to students, especially if paired with a technique such as text-based collaborative learning or more independent reading tasks. Although there were isolated occasions when text-based collaborative learning did occur during my observations (e.g., during one class session, small groups looked for figurative language examples in the text *Speak*), the whole-group instruction described in the example above depicts the typical instruction I observed during my time in this classroom. This shows how overreliance on a particular approach, especially one so focused on reducing the difficulty of tasks for students, can unintentionally inhibit student learning.

Romeo and Juliet was the most difficult text tackled by the class during the time period of my observations; therefore it is important to note that teachers felt most concerned about students understanding this particular text. However, I found the teachers employed the use of similar

reading guides and techniques for teaching more accessible texts such as *That Was Then, This is Now* by S.E. Hinton and *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson. For example, in the reading guide for Chapter 3 of *Speak* (Appendix E), most of the questions asked for literal reading comprehension (“Why won’t Melinda’s former friends speak to her?”; “Why is Melinda doing poorly in school? How do her parents react to her grades?”) with a few questions requiring inference or interpretation (“How is Mr. Freeman, the art teacher, different from Melinda’s other teachers?”; “What kind of relationship did Melinda have with Rachel before this year? How does Melinda feel about the way Rachel treats her now?”). The reading guides for these novels guided in-class discussions for the texts as well.

Below is an example from my fieldnotes that shows part of a lesson on the novel *Speak*:

(The class was reading *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson.)

Gina: Let’s review what was going on in “Acting?” First of all, where is the scene in acting? Where is the location?

Student: Heather’s new room.

Gina: Right Heather’s house, in Heather’s new room.

Jamie: What group does Heather want to try out for?

(Students mumbled, seemed unsure.)

Gina: The musical, right?

Student: Melinda said they’re nobody and Heather flipped out and started crying.

(This response built on Gina’s comment about Heather’s desire to try out for the musical and pointed out Heather’s frustration over her social status at her new school.)

Gina: [Heather's] trying to make friends but she can't make friends. She doesn't understand why things can't be like they were at their old school.

Jamie: She was in the musicals and on the newspaper.

Jamie read the next section of the text.

Gina: Okay so basically folks going back to the whole title of acting there's a part where Melinda says she is a good actor because...look on page 33.

Gina read part of the text.

Gina: So those are all ways of acting to avoid what?

Student: Talking.

Gina read another section of text.

Jamie: Why are her parents mad at her? What's the problem?

Student: Grades.

Gina: Yes, grades. But what else. What is the problem?

Student: That she was a good student before.

Jamie : Why do suppose her grades are low?

Student: She's skipping classes.

Gina : Why else? What else is going on?

Student: She doesn't care about school anymore because she doesn't have any friends.

Gina: All the drama from the -

Student: Summer.

Gina: Summer. Causes all the problems with her social life.

In this example the teachers asked many "teacher test questions" (Nystrand et al., 2003) – literal

comprehension questions with predetermined answers - and student responses were mostly short, with the teachers occasionally answered their own questions (e.g., Gina answered Jamie's question about which activity Heather wanted to try out for because students appeared to have difficulty responding.). Student participation here was greater than in the example from *Romeo and Juliet*, but the teacher input was still much more substantial than the student input into classroom talk about the text. The teacher questions tended to be questions that could be answered directly from the text and stayed primarily at the level of literal comprehension questions. This example demonstrates the most common type of classroom talk about literature I observed throughout the months I spent in Gina and Jamie's classroom.

5.2.2 The Nature of Discussion

Gina and Jamie exposed their students to authentic, high-quality literary texts that offered many opportunities for learning. Well-written, complex texts need to be accessible to all students, including struggling learners, if all students are to meet high standards for learning. However, high-quality texts alone are not sufficient to promote optimal learning; the activities readers engage in as they read texts are also critical for deep comprehension (Snow & Sweet, 2003). The primary activity for engaging with texts in Jamie and Gina's classroom was whole class discussion.

The term "discussion" here is used loosely to describe classroom talk in general but in my observations, I did not typically find evidence of "discussion" as described by Nystrand et al. (2003), which is "characterized by the open-ended conversational exchanges of ideas largely absent of questions." I also found few dialogic spells, which are described as "a mode of

discourse, somewhere between recitation and discussion” (p.150). A dialogic spell begins with an engaged student question and is characterized by a lack of teacher test questions; rather the teacher takes on the duty of “directing conversational ‘traffic,’ focusing issues, and guiding students through the text to answer their own questions” (p.176). Under these circumstances, a text becomes a true “thinking device” rather than a just a tool for the transmission of information (Nystrand et al., 2003). This type of classroom talk and subsequent use of texts as tools for thinking differs from the transmission-focused IRE (initiation-response-evaluation) format that is much more common, particularly in lower-track classrooms.

Nystrand et al. (2003) refer to segments of IRE instruction as “monologic” spells, which are characterized by many teacher test questions (those with expected answers that show transmission of information) rather authentic questions with the possibility of multiple answers that get students thinking about texts in deeper ways and subsequently encourage the free exchange of student interpretations and ideas. Nystrand et al. (2003) posit that dialogic discussions are fostered through moves called dialogic bids and list several kinds of dialogic bids: authentic teacher questions that have multiple possible answers and open the floor to multiple interpretations; the uptake of students’ ideas by teachers, fostering further talk about those ideas; evaluation that pushes students to elaborate upon or further develop responses; engaged student responses to the teacher or to one another that demonstrate thinking about the ideas under discussion; and student questions that further engage the class in talking about students’ original ideas and interpretations.

Although there were occasional opportunities for students to intellectually engage with texts through classroom talk that furthered their thinking, more often than not, Gina and Jamie’s perceptions of students’ needs seemed to result in moves aimed at keeping students from

becoming frustrated with the texts they read. Too much attention to preventing frustration subsequently seemed to prevent many students from working in their ZPDs with the support of instruction that “marches ahead of development and leads it” (Vygotsky, 1986, 188).

The following tables show the kinds of student and teacher input I identified across 19 of my total 24 sets of fieldnotes. (Sets of fieldnotes not including text-based classroom discussions - e.g., writing workshops where students worked on individual writing assignments and teachers circulated providing individualized support - were excluded from analysis of classroom discussions.)

Guided by Table 3.6, I coded four categories of classroom talk by teachers that could qualify as dialogic bids according to Nystrand et al. – higher level authentic questions, encouraging students to form generalizations, analyses, or speculations about ideas in a text; lower level authentic questions, eliciting a record of what students thought, felt, or observed as they read; uptake of students’ ideas; and evaluation that pushed students to further develop ideas. Additionally I coded teacher test questions and teacher explanation of concepts in the texts to juxtapose how often these moves occurred compared to those moves coded as dialogic bids. Student data is coded into two categories of dialogic bids – engaged responses and student questions, which are considered a type of engaged response by Nystrand et al. I chose make a separate category for student questions, as student questions are considered an important feature of dialogic discussions and “can be pivotal to the character and course of classroom discourse, especially when the teacher responds by opening the floor to other students’ comments and questions” (Nystrand et al., 2003, p. 172). As a point of comparison, I also coded low engagement responses, such as responses to teacher test questions.

Table 5.2 features the breakdown of teacher input in Gina and Jamie’s classroom and Table 5.3

features a breakdown of student input in their classroom.

5.2. Teacher Input in Jamie and Gina's Classroom

Teacher Input	Total Count	% of Total Teacher Moves*	Total Count: Gina	Total Count: Jamie
Teacher Explanation	90	29%	48	42
Teacher Test Questions	92	29%	53	39
Low-Level Authentic Questions	27	9%	16	11
High-Level Authentic Questions	23	7%	12	11
Uptake	45	14%	24	21
Evaluation	15	5%	9	6
Evaluation with Follow Up	23	7%	15	8

Table 5.3. Student Input in Jamie and Gina’s Class

Student Input	% of Total Student Moves*	Total Count
Authentic Student Questions	4%	7
Engaged Response	37%	62
Low-Engagement Response	59%	98
Total Student Input	*All percentages rounded to nearest 100 th	167

Analysis of these two tables revealed several important findings: (a) teachers contributed nearly twice as often to classroom discussions as students; (b) the majority of teacher input consisted of teacher test questions followed by teacher explanation of what was happening in the text; (c) teachers asked many more teacher test questions – those with expected answers (e.g., “What is his remedy? Overall who knows about the marriage?”; “What do the Texans get sentenced to?”) than authentic questions that might have a variety of possible answers (e.g., “Do you think they’re in love? Do you think they should get married?”; “When the speaker of the song says that was then, this is now, what does that mean?”); (d) low engagement responses by students were more common than engaged responses; (e) student questions were very rare; and (f) the special

education teacher (Gina) contributed slightly more often to discussions than the English teacher (Jamie), primarily in the areas of evaluation and teacher test questions. Another important finding that is not obvious from just looking at Table 5.3 is that of the 62 engaged student responses I recorded, more than half (34) were recorded during two class sessions – the two class sessions when I coded what could at least loosely be described as dialogic spells. In both cases, the dialogic discourse occurred around a shorter piece of literature and was the product of the teachers trying a new technique for classroom talk about texts – a Socratic seminar about the Lord Byron poem “When We Two Parted” and a fishbowl discussion of the lyrics of the Monkees’ song “That Was Then, This Is Now.”

The typical talk about literature in this classroom most accurately fit what Nystrand et al. (2003) referred to as monologic spells – instruction that consists of teacher test questions and student responses to those questions. For most of the lessons I observed, the teachers led the discussion and students responded to teacher questions. I did not record many examples of the teacher evaluation more typical of IRE instruction, but that was likely due more to the fact that I was unable to audio record and therefore was often rushing to type a student response when teachers would have been giving evaluation. Also, these two teachers tended to repeat a student answer rather than evaluate it. The examples of teacher evaluation that I recorded tended to evaluate and acknowledge the student response through repetition of that response (“Right, that she’s better off dead.”). Several examples were also coded as higher level evaluation, which can be a dialogic bid and sometimes led to multiple student responses but most often just pushed the student who responded to elaborate a response (e.g., “Her laser vision...yes so she’s staring. And what about the force field?”).

Additionally, the teachers both explained to students what was going on in the text as the

class read together and this use of explanation appeared to be the teachers' attempt at the reduction in degrees of freedom, frustration control, and marking critical features aspects of scaffolding (Wood et al., 1976). Jamie and Gina's concerns about student comprehension of difficult texts led to the teachers doing much of the comprehension work that students should have been guided to engage in themselves. Teacher explanation in a more limited fashion can be helpful to students by modeling the processes of proficient readers as they engage with texts; this can be part of direct, explicit comprehension instruction, which Biancarosa and Snow (2006) cite as a technique that is helpful for struggling adolescent readers. However, I saw few examples of techniques designed to gradually release responsibility to students so they could eventually become more independent readers. Biancarosa and Snow also point out the importance of motivation and self-directed learning to help in this regard. Practices that encouraged self-directed learning were notably rare during my observations.

One way that teachers can promote motivation and self-directed learning is through a dialogic bid called "uptake" by Nystrand et al.(2003) – a teacher move that picks up a student idea and helps facilitate this idea to encourage classroom discussion. Although I did record some examples of uptake, they tended to mostly occur during the same two class sessions when the greatest number of clustered engaged student responses also occurred. Across all of the 19 class sessions that I analyzed, I recorded only 45 examples of uptake (14% of teacher input). This stands in stark contrast to the 92 examples of teacher test questions (29% of teacher input) and 90 examples of teacher explanation (29% of teacher input). Combined with the also relatively low number of authentic questions recorded (50 examples; 16%), less than half of which (23 examples; 7%) encouraged students to engage in the higher-order cognitive processes of generalization, analysis, and speculation, a portrait began to emerge of classroom talk that was

more teacher-centered and primarily reliant on scaffolding that reduced frustration for students rather than on scaffolding that was meant to facilitate gradual release of responsibility. From the interviews with the two teachers, it seemed the overreliance on teacher explanation to build students' comprehension and teacher test questions to test that comprehension came from a perception of these students as needing a great deal of teacher guidance or "catering to," as Gina stated.

Although only 45 examples (14%) of teacher input were coded as uptake, there were some other examples of teacher moves that attempted to build upon students' responses. Evaluation with follow up evaluation (23 examples; 7%) is a dialogic bid can also take up a student idea. This is different than uptake in that it begins with an evaluation of the student's response and then probes the idea further. Uptake and evaluation with follow up, however, may be less likely to encourage free flowing discussion when these moves are more directed at getting the student who responded to elaborate rather than pushing for elaboration by the whole group. The example below shows how the teachers would sometimes use uptake and evaluation with follow up evaluation to build on the engaged response of a student but in a way that really only pushed that one student to elaborate. In this example, a student suggested that Juliet might escape her problems with her parents by moving in with Romeo's family, which prompted Jamie to acknowledge and take up this student's idea:

Student: Since she's already married, couldn't she move out and live with the Montagues? **(authentic student question)**

Jamie: Do you think they'll accept her? They don't like the Capulets. **(uptake)**

Student: But she's a Montague now. **(engaged response – student speculation)**

Jamie: Yeah, well, I always got the impression that the Montagues are more

peaceful than the Capulets. Maybe that's because we don't see them as much in the play. **(evaluation with follow up – evaluation - “yeah” - followed by speculation on student's idea)**

The teachers were open to students' ideas and therefore the potential existed in this classroom for more frequent dialogic discourse. However, the overuse of teacher explanation and teacher test questions during typical class periods combined with few teacher moves that facilitated dialogic discussions with the whole class subsequently hampered the potential for discussions that better aligned with best practices in ELA research in Jamie and Gina's classroom.

As previously mentioned, on two occasions I observed discussion that became more student-centered and departed from the routine of teacher test questions, teacher explanation, and low-engagement student responses. These were a Socratic seminar on the poem “When We Two Parted” by Lord Byron and a fishbowl discussion of the song “That Was Then, This Is Now” by the Monkees.

The following is an excerpt from the discussion of the Lord Byron poem. Just prior to what I have coded as dialogic spell, the instruction had been proceeding in a manner more typical for this classroom - with teachers asking teacher test questions and students answering those questions. Below is the more monologic segment of the lesson leading up to the dialogic spell:

Gina: How many of you circled the word knell? If you didn't circle it you should be able to tell me what it means. **(Teacher test question)**

Jamie: I do know but only because I looked it up. Is it positive or negative? **(Teacher test question)**

Gina: Yeah, is it a good sound or a bad sound? **(Teacher test question)**

Student: A bad sound. **(Low-engagement response)**

Jamie: Yes, a bad sound. I know it's probably not a good sound. **(Evaluation)** A knell is like a funeral sound. Like funeral bells. A sad sound. "Funeral" I'll put in parentheses there. **(Teacher explanation)**

Gina: And look at the line that's following there. "A sudder comes o'er me."

Student: Maybe it's like a quiver. **(Engaged response)**

Gina: Like it's a sad shudder? **(Uptake)**

Jamie: And maybe it's like what [*student's name*] said... "a dank dew comes over me."

What does it mean [*student's name*]? **(Uptake)**

These two examples of uptake by the teachers led to a sudden and dramatic increase in engaged responses by students:

Student: Like maybe he regrets that she died. **(Engaged response)**

Jamie: What about you [*another student's name*]? **(Uptake)**

Student: Wouldn't they usually like execute the lower class [person in a relationship between an upper class person and lower class person]? **(Authentic student question)* officially marks the beginning of the dialogic spell**

Student: Maybe that's why he might regret it - because he got her killed. **(Engaged response)**

Student: Maybe he was a partier and she kicked him out. **(Engaged response)**

Jamie: Lord Byron was a partier. **(Teacher explanation – offers explanation but could also function as uptake because it builds on a student idea)**

Student: Maybe he's dating her and finds out that the next day that she's a little rough. **(Engaged response)**

Student: Maybe he picked her up at a party and didn't know who she was. **(Engaged response)**

Student: Maybe he killed her. **(Engaged response)**

Student: Maybe she was stalking him. **(Engaged response)**

Jamie: And that word "deceive." What does that word mean - "deceive"? **(Teacher test question)**

Student: Misled **(Low-engagement response)**

Gina: He was misled. Part of him wants to like someone else but he doesn't want to deceive his love for her. **(Teacher explanation)**

Gina relates anecdote about her grandparents. Her grandfather would never be with anyone else after her grandmother died.) **(Teacher explanation)**

Student: I was going to go somewhere else with the "misled" thing. Maybe she was stalking him. **(Engaged response)**

Gina: Maybe like [*student's name*] was saying about that whole social status thing..."If I should meet thee after long years, how should I greet thee."

Technically he saying he wouldn't know what to do. He'd just cry, be silent. **(Uptake)**

Student: I think maybe she cheated on him and he loved her so deeply. After so many years have gone past he sees her. **(Engaged response)**

Gina: And they regret...**(Uptake)**

Student: And if she cheated the vows are broken. **(Engaged response)**

Gina: And if she died the vows wouldn't be broken. **(Uptake)**

Jamie: Unless it was suicide. **(Uptake)**

Student: Maybe one night he found her cheating and he killed her. **(Engaged student response)**

Student: Maybe with the suicide thing, he regrets that she killed herself because he really did love her. **(Engaged response)**

Student: Maybe she didn't like being with him and took off with some other dude. **(Engaged response)**

I identified this example as a dialogic spell as it began with an authentic student question, was marked more student than teacher talk, and uptake was the most common teacher move during the dialogic spell, used to guide and focus student talk rather than control it. Under the pure guidelines of Nystrand et al.(2003), this exchange fell short of a dialogic spell because according to their definition, an authentic student question should be followed up by two or more student questions. There was also a momentary return to the IRE format (beginning with Jamie's question about the word "deceive"), but teachers then allowed students to offer their own interpretations again after this very brief monologic spell. In this sense, the example may have been closer to a discussion. However, the series of speculative remarks seemed to be more of a student effort to make sense of the larger general question about the poem: What did the narrator regret? Since the short exchange was interspersed with monologic bids by teachers, it wasn't quite a full, freely flowing discussion. However, the potential for dialogic discussion in Jamie and Gina's classroom emerged from this example.

In this example, students primarily made their own interpretations of the poem while

teachers mostly built upon those ideas and showed an openness to the various student interpretations. Most of the scaffolding served the purposes of recruitment and direction maintenance and released more responsibility for analyzing and interpreting the texts to the students. In this excerpt, the teachers generally refrained from imposing their own interpretations on the students, allowing students to do the bulk of the intellectual work. They also avoided most scaffolding focused on marking critical features, reducing degrees of freedom, and frustration control, generally focusing this kind of scaffolding only on new vocabulary. The poem was by no means an easy text, which explains the initial focus on ensuring students made sense of specific words and lines. However, once basic comprehension had been established, the students were allowed to move beyond the level of basic comprehension and into the development of personalized interpretations, an essential skill in ELA instruction (e.g., Smagorinsky, 2001).

This example of instruction could be classified as motivation and self-directed learning as well as a text-based collaborative discussion (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006), even though it occurred with the entire class rather than in a small group. The teachers kept students focused on interpreting the poem and assisted them in building upon one another's ideas (focusing on the features of scaffolding moved students in the direction of gradual release) and students were given the opportunity to do the bulk of the intellectual work. Teachers provided additional scaffolding that could lead to gradual release in this example by providing students with an annotated version of the poem, marked with the interpretations made by students in the class (Appendix F). This annotated poem served both the demonstration feature of scaffolding (through showing students how to annotate a text with their thinking as they read) and direction maintenance (reminding students of how they interpreted the text so they continue to engage in this kind of interpretive reading independently).

The example above demonstrates the potential Gina and Jamie's classroom had for becoming more student-centered and the capability of the students for engagement in authentic, interpretive discussions of challenging texts. I posit that the teachers' concerns regarding students' ability to take on academically rigorous texts and tasks led too often to scaffolding that inhibited the kind of student participation shown in this example. Gina's statement that the teachers needed to cater to the students was indicative of the prevalence of monologic spells in the classroom. The discussion of the Lord Byron poem arose from Jamie's desire to try a Socratic seminar – a technique she had recently learned in one of her graduate classes.

The other example of more dialogic discourse also emerged from an attempt to try a new technique – a fishbowl discussion. I chose to include the example of the discussion of the Lord Byron poem over the fishbowl discussion of the song because the students in the outer circle of the fishbowl (the observers) accurately noted that the teacher leading the inner circle discussion (Jamie) participated too much and that three students dominated the discussion. This example better shows a wider group of students engaging in a dialogic discussion. Most of the students (roughly ten of the fifteen students in the class) were actively engaged in the discussion of the poem.

The use of new techniques as a gateway for increased student participation and academic rigor suggest that better access to professional development may have had a positive effect on student learning and that at least these two co-teachers would have been receptive to trying out new techniques. Matsumura et al. (2002) emphasized how districts could benefit from mining current classroom practice to determine directions for professional development:

Indicators of classroom practice also are needed that draw attention to the features

of classroom practice that are germane to student learning (Linn & Baker, 1998). This is of critical importance for helping districts and schools choose how they might want to focus their professional development resources. Specifically, this is important in terms of providing information to schools and districts about specific areas of strength and weakness in classroom practice, and what changes in instruction may have the greatest impact on student achievement. (p.208)

Using classroom practice as an indicator, these teachers would have likely benefitted from and been receptive to professional development focused on increasing dialogic classroom talk. However, the teachers were expected to seek out their own professional development opportunities (e.g., graduate classes, conferences) because the district provided little professional development support to co-teachers and therefore opportunities to learn and try new techniques were dependent on the teachers' initiative to find these opportunities. Subsequently whether or not professional development with the potential for increasing student achievement occurred was dependent on what teachers chose or could afford to do on their own.

5.2.3 The Nature of Writing Instruction

Writing instruction in Jamie and Gina's classroom had much in common with the reading and literature instruction and discussion. Concerned that the students would struggle, the teachers focused on giving the students a structure for their writing and scaffolding that was so extensive that much of the intellectual work was done for the students (in the case of writing, choosing a structure for the writing and making decisions about what to include in that piece of writing).

The task and student work are analyzed below, using the four categories in the task analysis

protocol adapted from Matsumura et al. (2002) as the four major areas for analysis. (See Appendix B.)

5.2.3.1 Clarity of Learning Goals

The culminating task for the unit on *That Was Then, This Is Now* by S.E. Hinton was an essay on a particular character in the novel. For this assignment, the teachers gave students a step-by-step guide for writing their essays (Appendix G) and wrote a model essay with the class, using the essay guide as a template. The primary learning goals appeared to be the development of a five-paragraph essay and understanding as much as possible about a particular character. The essay guide was designed to lead students through the steps of a five-paragraph essay in a systematic way and was similar to other previous essay guides they had used. (The essay guide states that they will follow the same format they had used for their *Speak* essays.) This learning goal, although not explicitly stated as such, was clearly articulated through the essay guide and classroom instruction that aligned with the guide. The other goal, learning about a character in an in-depth manner, was articulated to students from the beginning of the unit. Students knew they would eventually have to write about a character and were thus guided to collect information about that character in an ongoing way, as Jamie described during an interview:

So we sort of build the characters up as being major and noteworthy....And we tell them from the beginning that ultimately they are going to write an essay about one of the characters so that they should be looking to see who they like, who they relate to, who they understand...So if they know in Chapter 1 that they really like M&M, then they should start guiding their Post-It notes [strategy taught for the purpose of taking notes on

characters] to really focus around him and ultimately that's going to become helpful. So hopefully throughout the course of the novel, they're thinking and taking notes about important things about that character, so when they go to write that essay they already have a group of notes they can go to so they can say, "Okay, I'm going to do this and do this and do this. So I could say that M& M is naive." - *Jamie*

Further analysis of the task and the student work produced by the task demonstrated that the learning goals for this task - following steps to create a five-paragraph essay and relaying information gathered from the text - led to a task that was less cognitively challenging.

Additionally, the high level of scaffolding provided for this task, particularly in the areas of reducing degrees of freedom and demonstration, transformed the task into a more prescriptive exercise rather than an example of process writing.

5.2.3.2 Scaffolding

During my observation of the lesson that prepared students to complete the task, the primary scaffolding feature used was demonstration, an important feature of Wood et al.'s (1976) approach. The demonstration feature of scaffolding bears much in common with approaches that include modeling specific writing strategies to help students develop as proficient writers (e.g., Atwell, 1998; Graham & Perin, 2007; Vaughn & Linan-Thompson). (See Tables 3.4 and 3.7 for coding categories that address modeling and/or demonstration.) In Jamie and Gina's classroom, however, the modeling or demonstration that I observed guided students towards creating essays

that were nearly identical and required little independent thinking and learning on the part of the students. This prescriptive kind of modeling is best illustrated through the example below from my fieldnotes. At this point in the lesson, the teachers had discussed the steps of the assignment with the students (as listed in the essay guide) and were modeling how to write a thesis statement, using Gina as the “character” for the class essay:

Jamie: Okay, lets go through the steps together. I will pretend that Ms. Marconi is a character in *That Was Then, This Is Now*. Can you give me some adjectives to describe Ms. Marconi?

The students offer several adjectives, eventually agreeing on “loud,” “sassy” (a vocabulary word for the unit), and “stylish.”

Jamie wrote these adjectives on the board.

Jamie then asked: How many of you know what a thesis statement is?

When no one responded, she prompted them again.

Jamie: Haven’t you heard of a thesis statement before?

Gina: Didn’t Ms. X do this with you last year? Where do you find a thesis statement?

Finally a student responded “at the beginning.” Another suggested it might be found at the end.

Gina: Folks, I think you should have your notebooks out and you should be writing exactly what Ms. Rooney is writing on the board.

Jamie: Basically a thesis sentence is a specific sentence that tells the reader exactly what the essay is about.

She writes this definition on the board.

Jamie: The thing is you don't want to use the same sentence we have on the board today. You don't want it to be repetitive or redundant. So if I am going to write this essay about Ms. Marconi, I have to make sure that these three traits – loud, sassy, and stylish – are in the thesis.

Thinking aloud, Jamie then wrote on the board and spoke aloud the sentence:

“Although Ms. Marconi has several personality traits, the three that stand out the most are loud, sassy, and stylish.”

Although the use of modeling is aligned with best practices in special education (e.g., Graham & Perin, 2007) and English language arts education (e.g., Atwell, 1998) and represents an important step in Wood et al.'s (1976) scaffolding process (demonstration), as I analyzed my data a less desired side to modeling began to emerge. Jamie and Gina, out of genuine concern for the students' writing skills, focused their efforts on such extensive modeling that students had difficulty breaking away from the narrow models presented in class and through the guide for the characterization essay. The modeling, besides demonstration, also appeared to be an attempt to reduce degrees of freedom, or to simplify the task. Although reduction in degrees of freedom is part of Wood et al.'s (1976) approach to scaffolding and Vaughn and Linan-Thompson (2003) cite controlling for task difficulty as an approach helpful for students with disabilities, the gradual release of responsibility was again less evident in this classroom. As a result, the cognitive challenge of the task was further reduced.

5.2.3.3 Cognitive Challenge of Task

Process writing, which is advocated as a best practice in ELA (Atwell, 1998; Graham & Perin,

2007) and special education (Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2003), makes salient the otherwise invisible processes that writers go through as they compose texts; these processes may otherwise elude novice writers (Flower, 1979; Flower & Hayes, 1980, 1981). Modeling can help clarify that process (Atwell, 1998; Graham & Perin, 2007). Although the scaffolding for this writing task provided by Gina and Jamie offered some limited insight into the writing process and could be coded as demonstrating and marking critical features of that process, the reduced degrees of freedom feature stood out most prominently for this task. The reduced challenge of the task led to a prescriptive way to carry out writing and subsequently to student work that was very similar and in some cases nearly identical.

This phenomenon was most prominent in the construction of thesis statements for the characterization essays. Despite Jamie's instruction to students to not use the same sentence written on the board in class, all of the students with disabilities and most of the students without disabilities wrote thesis statements that were nearly identical to the one modeled during the scaffolding lesson for this assignment. Below are the thesis statements constructed by the students with disabilities:

Student 1: Although Bryon has several personality traits, the three that stand out the most are caring, risky, and honest.

Student 2: Although Bryon has several personality traits, the three that stand out the most are smart, caring, and cheerful.

Student 3: Although Mark has several personality traits, the three that stand out the most are tough, brave, and smart.

Student 4: Although Mark has a lot of personality traits, the three that stand out the most are brave, sneaky, and loyal.

Student 5: Although Cathy has several personality traits, the three that stand out the most are caring, gutsy, and smart.

These thesis statements are identical to the one modeled in class with students only substituting the name of their chosen character and adjectives to describe that character. The thesis statements written by the students without disabilities featured more variation in structure but they also aligned their statements closely to the thesis statement written in class.

The examples below show that the variations in the thesis statements of students without disabilities were primarily in the form of wording and syntax changes but the content of the thesis statements remained the same – a character was introduced and three adjectives were given to describe the character:

Student 1: The character Mark is very diverse in his personality traits, but the three that stand out to me the most are temperamental, easy-going, and strong.

Student 2: Mark has the best personality. Three adjectives to describe him are sneaky, dangerous, and loyal.

Student 3: M&M has many different personality traits, the ones that show the most are that he is trusting, stressed, and quiet.

Student 4: Although Bryon has several personality traits, the three that stand out the most are smart, caring, and tough.

Student 5: Bryon seems to be the type of guy that is aware of himself and has a great love for his family and friends this shows that Bryon is a very wise, caring, and strong person.

Student 6: Cathy has a lovely personality there are so many characteristics to describe her, but how respectful, innocent, and determined she is sticks out the most.

Student 7: Mark has a lot of personality traits, but the three that stand out the most are ornery, sneaky, and perilous.

Student 8: Several of Bryon's traits stick out, but the ones that stick out the most are smart, thoughtful, and tough.

An overuse of scaffolding, in this case, produced student work that seemed to follow a formula. Further, because a "thesis statement" was not defined by the teachers as an argument created by the students but rather as "a specific sentence that tells the reader exactly what the essay is about," it was therefore positioned as a short summarization of the writing. Students may have subsequently developed a misunderstanding of what a thesis statement entails, and, more broadly, how to develop a thesis-support essay, the typical form of argumentation found in ELA classrooms (Beck & Jeffrey, 2009).

Lack of cognitive challenge in writing instruction appeared to be tied to the lack of cognitive challenge during reading and literature instruction as well. Misunderstandings about how to construct a literary argument can be partially due to challenges in interpreting text, as Beck and Jeffrey (2009) noted in their interviews with secondary students about challenges they faced in their writing:

What seems to be most challenging for these [high school] students, then, is not remembering information or facts, but transforming their understanding of these facts into a coherent and meaningful assertion about them. This is essentially an interpretive problem...all of these [analytic writing] tasks share the common requirement of

synthesizing information in relation to an interpretive statement. Thus, even though [the students do not explicitly use the term *interpretation* [during interviews], they seem to be suggesting interpretation as an obstacle to writing. (p.255)

Here there is an explicit link between reading and writing. During reading instruction and discussions about literary texts, the students in Jamie and Gina's classroom had fewer opportunities to engage in interpretation of text, with more emphasis placed on recalling information and facts. Therefore, it is logical that students would be more comfortable relating recalled information and facts than formulating an interpretive statement – a literary argument – and then supporting that argument with textual evidence. Further, the task was designed to elicit description and recall of facts rather than the development of an argument. Although the students did have to find evidence in the text that supported the adjectives they used to describe the characters, this was more a matter of proving that the character descriptions were based in the text rather constructing a literary argument. The cognitive challenge of the writing task aligned the typical cognitive challenge of reading and literature tasks in the class.

The similarities among the essays suggest that the nature of the task and the scaffolding provided reduced the opportunity for students to develop the skills necessary for structuring their academic writing and developing original arguments. Students subsequently had less opportunity to work through the mental processes of composing written work, which is the foundation of developing as a writer (Flower, 1979; Flower & Hayes, 1980, 1981). As a result, this raises concerns about whether or not students would be able to compose written work without the extensive scaffolding they received in Jamie and Gina's classroom.

5.2.3.4 Clarity of Grading Criteria

Students were graded on a rubric that had clear criteria. They were graded on five dimensions, defined as follows: focus, content, organization, style, and conventions. These dimensions were defined in the rubric and each student could clearly see where she or he lost points on the rubric. However, since much of the focus, content, and organizational work was so scaffolded for students, style and conventions were typically the only two areas students had to struggle with independently. Teacher feedback was primarily about word choice, sentence structure, issues with grammar and conventions, and the extent to which each quote was explained. The deeper aspects (e.g., coherence of ideas, organizational choices) of writing were not addressed, as students had so much structure for their writing that they didn't need to do much additional work to establish a focus, select content, or organize the writing.

The formulaic nature of student writing in response to this assignment was evident in even papers earning the highest grades, suggesting that even the more advanced writers were adhering to the structure established in the writing guide for the assignment. Table 5.4 shows the similarities among the paper earning the highest grade written by a student with a disability (“Rick”) and the two papers earning the highest grades in the class overall (“Kristen” and “Hunter”):

Table 5.4. Similarities Among Highest Achieving *That Was Then, This is Now* Essays

	Rick (disability)	Kristen (no disability)	Hunter (no disability)
Grade	85	90	90
Number of Paragraphs	5	5	5
Introductory Sentence	S.E. Hinton is a very exciting author.	S.E. Hinton is a very skilled author.	The author S.E. Hinton has written several novels for teenagers.
Thesis statement	Although Mark has several personality traits, the three that stand out the most are tough, brave, and smart.	The character Mark is very diverse in his personality traits, but the three traits that stand out to me the most are temperamental, easy-going, and strong.	Although Bryon has several personality traits, the three that stand out the most are smart, caring, and tough.
First Sentence of Paragraph 2	Mark is tough because the day of the court hearing he wasn't scared or worried of anything, not even jail.	The first trait Mark has is temperamental.	The first word to describe Bryon is smart.
First Sentence of Paragraph 3	Another word to describe Mark is brave.	The next trait that stood out the most was his easy-going nature.	Another way you could describe Bryon is caring.

First Sentence of Paragraph 4	Another word to describe Mark is risky.	The last trait that stood out the most in Mark was his strong mind.	One other way to describe Bryon is tough.
Number of Pieces of Textual Evidence Cited	3	4	3
Sentence in Conclusion Rewording Thesis	Tough, brave, and smart are the three personality traits that describe Mark.	Temperamental, easy-going, and strong are just three of Mark's many personality traits.	Smart, caring, and tough are three words to perfectly describe Bryon in the novel <u>That Was Then, This Is Now</u> by S.E. Hinton.

The teacher feedback on these three essays focused primarily on transitions (“You need to transition between these ideas – drugs to stealing cars.”); encouragement to better explain ideas (“Add more explanation as to why this is temperamental.”); choice of textual evidence (“Not the best quote – you can easily say that in your own words. In fact you did before you quoted it!”); and adjective choices and general wording and phrasing choices (“I’m not sure someone can be temperamental and easy-going. Would impulsive work better?”; “You also have some great word choices – indicate, cower, etc.”). Although much of this feedback could be helpful for the students, students did not receive feedback on the structure of their essays or encouragement to depart from the format introduced in class.

As Table 5.4 demonstrates, even the three students earning the highest grades on the assignment wrote essays that adhered strictly to the in-class model and the steps in the writing

guide and therefore were very similar to essays produced by other students. Although this task provided students with a basic structure for writing and therefore could serve as a model for how to organize an essay (especially for the most struggling students), it also did not offer much opportunity for students to think through the composing process on their own. Essentially, the cognitive work of composing an organization for the writing had been done for the students by the teachers. As such, they did not get to engage in the process of drafting a literary analysis based on an original argument stemming from their own interpretation of ideas in the text, the type of ELA writing task they would more likely encounter in the later grades of high school and in college (Beck & Jeffrey, 2009).

Additionally, several students who wrote thesis statements that were worded differently from the model thesis statement received feedback that pointed out run on sentences, comma splices, or other grammatical problems in their thesis statements while students who followed the exact structure shown in class did not receive any criticism of the choice to copy the model. Inadvertently the message send to students was that following the model exactly was desirable while trying to write in a more unique way or to compose independently was less desirable. Students therefore may have been less likely to use the rubric to guide writing than the step-by-step writing guide and the model created in class. (See Appendix H for the student papers and rubrics for this task.

5.3 SUMMARY

As previously stated, the overuse of scaffolding in this classroom was rooted in the teachers' genuine concern for students' academic skills and their socio-emotional well-being. Although the

challenge of tasks was often reduced to a point of making the tasks too simple for ninth grade students, the teachers also demonstrated many effective teaching techniques. For example, they taught students to cite textual evidence to support ideas presented in their written work and subsequently all students included properly cited textual evidence in their final essays. The teachers also conferred with students as they wrote, spending time to give individualized feedback to each student during the writing process, an approach that aligns with Atwell's workshop model (1997) and provided modeling, which is supported by Atwell, the Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) model for writing (e.g., Graham and Perin, 2007), and the demonstration step in the scaffolding process (Wood et al., 1976).

Additionally, although they often resorted to a format for discussion of literature that resembled monologic spells described in Nystrand et al. (2003), their openness to student ideas allowed for opportunities to increase dialogic discussions in this classroom. This was most evident in the example of the Socratic seminar on the Lord Byron poem "When We Two Parted."

Even in the area of writing, it is important to show that there were some opportunities for students to grow as writers over the course of the year. The essay on *That Was Then, This Is Now* was completed in November, during the first part of the school year. It is important to emphasize that teachers may have felt more pressure to provide a great deal of guidance for student writing earlier in the year. The previous school year, I had observed near the end of the year. Students had the opportunity to write an essay near the end of that school year called "The Soundtrack of My Life." Although the teachers provided a model and a writing guide, students were able to do more independent composing as they selected and wrote about songs that held significances for them at particular points in their lives. (See Appendix I for the writing guide and model.) This

difference, however, can also be partially attributed to the fact that the soundtrack assignment was a narrative writing assignment based on students' own experiences rather than a literary analysis. The characterization essay on *That Was Then, This Is Now* represented the only example of extended analytic literary writing that I observed in my time in Jamie and Gina's classroom. Overall, in Gina and Jamie's classroom, I saw potential for students to do more independent work that was inhibited by a lack of gradual release of responsibility.

One limitation of this study was that I was not able to conduct interviews with students and therefore I was unable to ask students about their views on what they were learning and the degree of intellectual challenge they experienced in this classroom. However, Jamie and Gina conducted a survey of co-teaching and the instruction in their classroom at the end of every academic year and they shared this data with me. One question they asked on the survey was about how challenging students perceived the class to be and why they either did or did not find the class challenging. According to the survey the teachers administered at the end of the 2009 – 10 academic year, most of the students found the class less challenging or only moderately challenging. Asked to rate the class on a scale of 1 -10 with "1" being easy and "10" being difficult, of the thirty-three legible student surveys I was able to collect from Jamie and Gina (two co-taught classes), fifteen students rated the class as an easier class (1- 3), fourteen rated the class as moderately difficult (4-6), and only four students rated the class as difficult. Among students who found the class easy, some commented that the level of support from teachers was a contributing factor to the ease of the class (e.g., "2 because there was a lot of help and I know most stuff from [former school]; 2 because we mostly went over everything in class"; "1 - it was really easy because we did most of the stuff together") while others commented that if students paid attention, participated, and completed work, they would do well in the class (e.g., "2 It

depends if you do your work and listen”; “2 because if you turn in your work and participate you will have an ‘A’”; “1 because I think it was easy as long as you participate and be here”). Among students who rated the class as moderately difficult or difficult, the amount of work and struggle to complete work seemed to be the primary contributing factor (e.g., “5 because it was easy to do the work but sometimes I wouldn’t want to do it so it made it seem more difficult”; “8 At times this class was so easy but in this class I have noted that due dates are closer than they appear”; “5.7 The things we do aren’t that hard but they are due at the same time”). Some students also found the projects more challenging (“5 – It really wasn’t that bad except for the projects”; I think it’s really a five because some things are really easy to do. Some projects were hard for me”). Even within the tracked classroom, these students exhibited a range in how difficult they considered the class, with indications that students who were more able to complete the work independently found the class to be relatively easy. The number of students who found the class easy raised questions for me about how much these students developing in their literacy learning.

Although the missed opportunities for intellectual challenge may be discouraging, it is important to note that both teachers wanted to move students toward becoming more independent learners. However, striking a balance between encouraging independence and providing sufficient support to keep students engaged was a challenge with which the teachers grappled. Gina stated in my second interview with her:

It’s more that they just understand the reading. They’re comprehending it, and they’re getting it. We always do reading guides. We continue reading guides. And those are just ongoing questions...When I do Shakespeare with them we do reading guides ongoing because they’re reading that scene and they have questions that help them read that scene.

And that breaks it down with Shakespeare, too. – *Gina, 9th grade special education teacher*

This concern with “breaking it down” so students could comprehend a text or assignment appeared to be an underlying cause of the overuse of scaffolding during reading and literature tasks. On the surface, students benefitted from co-teaching in the ways identified across the literature and represented in Table 3.2: they benefitted from instructional adaptations, a reduction of stigma, teacher help during lessons, and exposure to different teaching styles (Austin, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007; Wlison & Michaels, 2006). However, the degree of extra help and instructional adaptations made these two identified benefits less helpful. Adaptations and teacher help are generally positive but when offered in a way that eventually tapers off over time as students become increasingly independent.

The tension between providing students with enough support to approach tasks and challenging them enough to push them forward in their thinking and literacy learning continued to be a theme that manifested itself in the way Gina and Jamie taught writing and led discussions in this classroom. In both reading and writing instruction, the teachers had the best intentions for providing helpful scaffolding, but the degree of scaffolding appeared to be associated with an inaccurate assessment of what students could accomplish independently (i.e., interpretive discussions) and an unintentional decrease in academic rigor for many students. Through analysis of this partnership it became clear that even strong co-teaching partners may have areas where they still struggle and can improve. For this improvement to happen, however, they need to be aware of those areas for potential growth. When a co-teaching partnership is characterized only as successful by the co-teachers and the leadership, there may be a missed opportunity for

those co-teachers to become even more proficient educators and, concomitantly, a missed opportunity for their students to receive greater instructional benefits in the co-taught classroom.

6.0 CHAPTER VI: THE BEGINNING PARTNERSHIP

In November 2010, Gina Marconi, the special education teacher in the ninth grade classroom, left Stateline for a job in Michigan. This left Jamie Rooney, the ninth grade English teacher, in the position of facing a new partnership after five years of co-teaching with the same person. As discussed in Chapter 5, Jamie and Gina had a particularly strong co-teaching partnership and had become close friends as well. Soon after Gina's announcement that she would be taking the out-of-state job, Jamie learned that she would soon be working with a new co-teacher, Dave Harris, - a Stateline native and alumnus of SJSHS. He began working in the ninth grade classroom during January 2011, halfway through the school year. This transition proved to be difficult and led to challenges in the new partnership.

I began collecting data in Jamie and Dave's classroom at the end of January 2011, after giving them a few weeks to transition based on Jamie's recommendation. (Initially, they were finishing the unit on *Speak* and Jamie thought Dave would not be able to do much in the way of supporting this ongoing unit.) I collected data through the end of April, yielding a set of fourteen field observation notes (14 x 42 minutes = 9.8 hours). Additionally I interviewed each teacher twice. I interviewed Dave once in January when he first arrived at SJSHS and once in early May, on the last day of school. I interviewed Jamie once in early March when I began collecting data on Jamie and Dave's partnership

and once in early May as the school year came to a close. Although the data I collected were limited compared to the other two partnerships I studied, I was able to develop a sense of how the early partnership was taking shape and some of the challenges that arose as the partnership began. The first half of this chapter describes this early partnership, addressing Research Question 1. The second half of the chapter explores Research Question 2, focusing on the nature of the literacy instruction and scaffolding in this classroom under the direction of a new co-teaching partnership.

6.1 RESEARCH QUESTION 1: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CO-TEACHING PARTNERSHIP: JAMIE AND DAVE

Jamie and Dave's partnership, during the time of my data collection, got off to a rough start. Considering the lack of initial training and support, the fact that Dave arrived mid-year, and Jamie's feelings of loss over the ending of a strong co-teaching partnership, a rough start was not surprising. What was more surprising came out during the interviews I conducted with Jamie and Dave, especially the second round of interviews at the end of the school year. In my conversations with Jamie and Dave, it seemed as if each person were talking about a different classroom and a different partnership. At the close of the year, Dave was optimistic and seemed to think the partnership had gotten off to a relatively good start although he wanted to play a more active role in the classroom than he had so far. Conversely, Jamie ended the year feeling very negative about her new partnership and did not seem optimistic that the situation would improve. In short, it was surprising to hear the same partnership described in such different ways. This led me to

believe that a lack of communication and subsequent lack of problem solving built a wall between the two teachers, which would be very difficult to break down. These two areas – open communication and the ability to solve problems effectively – are cited by Rice and Zigmond (2000) as two critical components of co-teacher compatibility. In this section of the chapter, I analyze the partnership through the lens of Rice and Zigmond's five areas of co-teacher compatibility (Table 3.3) and make links to other findings across the co-teaching and inclusive instruction literature, including Schaeffer and Buswell's(1996) ten critical elements of inclusive education (Table 3.1) and the co-teaching benefits listed in in Table 3.2 (e.g., Austin, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2007, etc.).

6.1.1 Area 1: Shared Views on Academic and Behavior Standards for Students

Initially, it seemed that despite the circumstances (midyear transition, Jamie's loss of her long-term co-teaching partner), the new partnership would develop in a positive way. During my first round of interviews about this partnership, Jamie expressed a willingness to put effort into making the partnership work and Dave was optimistic and had clear ideas about how he and Jamie might co-teach together:

I mean you can take a small group. You can break them up. That's an advantage of having two teachers in the room. You don't have to take all the special ed students. That's not to say they're not going to be struggling. You can take anybody, you can take that group and you can do a flexible group. It doesn't always have to be we're both up front. We're both walking around teaching. It could be Jamie's here, I'm here; I got the high group, she's got the low group. And

tomorrow the groups switch because we're talking about a different topic...It's just that flexible grouping depending on what topic it is and what you're working on. – *Dave, 9th grade special education teacher*

Dave's ideas were clear but described a room that fit more with a DI approach (Tomlinson, 2001) - providing different kinds of scaffolding and support depending on individual or small groups of students' needs - than the UDL (Edyburn, 2010; Friend & Bursuck, 2006; King-Sears, 2009) approach to whole-group instruction favored by Jamie and Gina, which was based on lessons with built-in support and multiple entry points to allow for most students to access the same instruction. Entering midyear, Dave's clear approach may have posed a challenge. Jamie and Gina not only had a rhythm that they felt worked over the years, but they had established that rhythm in the current school year with the current students. The students in the ninth grade class were tracked – struggling learners without disabilities together with students who had diagnosed disabilities. For this reason, Jamie and Gina both expressed during interviews that the way they taught the class was designed to help the entire class since they felt all of the students struggled with the curriculum and both expressed that they preferred to have a more tracked class since it was easier to provide the same supports for all of the students that way.

I'm going to be honest with you, for me, I don't adapt. I don't do anything in here that... Their adaptations don't really change in any way in my view for this classroom. I think that the kids are all treated the same way. And we expect from special ed kids in here what we do from the regular general population. – *Gina, 9th grade special education teacher*

And so even though you have a lot of kids in here that are not identified, maybe they should be. Or they need the extra assistance. – *Jamie, 9th grade English teacher*

Gina and Jamie's statements verified what I observed in their classroom – a lot of whole group instruction and tasks that included scaffolding for all students rather than less scaffolded tasks with adaptations made for students who had particular difficulty. Dave's vision of how he and Jamie might teach together therefore did not seem to be aligned with the way Jamie and Gina had taught throughout the current school year and for several years prior.

Dave may not have had a vision of co-taught instruction that matched the way it had been done up until that point in the ninth grade classroom, but he did have some understanding that continuity would be important, especially since the change in teachers happened in the middle of the school year. In his first interview with me, Dave stated that he intended to use materials left by Gina to ensure the transition went smoothly and anticipated that he would be comfortably co-teaching with Jamie and his other co-teaching partners within the first month or so:

Well, I know that Gina left me a lot of stuff to let me hit the ground running. Even just a list of students. My difficulty right now is learning the students' names. And it's hard. I mean, you've got a list of the students who have IEPs during that co-teaching period and you're like "I know him" and you're looking around and you

don't want to interrupt the classroom to call your names out like it's elementary. But I think I'm going to try to get a seating chart, ask them, make sure they sit in the same spot, which most of them do anyway and just, you know, slowly...It takes me about probably three to four weeks... – *Dave, 9th grade special education teacher*

Jamie also initially thought the transition to the new partnership might be smoother than it turned out to be. In her third interview with me, she reflected on how she initially saw Dave as eager to be a partner. Dave's eagerness, desire to "hit the ground running," and ability to articulate how he thought he might work with Jamie suggested he might have the self-confidence, self-esteem, and risk-taking ability cited by Rice and Zigmond (2000) as important for co-teaching compatibility. She saw Dave's initial eagerness as positive and was accepting of the fact that it would probably take Dave some time to catch up with the curriculum in a way that would allow him to take on more responsibility:

[T]hings started out kind of promising I think. When Dave first started, it seemed like he was going to be okay and I think that I was feeling a lot more positively about it than I had anticipated because I was kind of dreading it. And it seemed like when he first started he was a little gung ho. And I think that I was maybe, my attitude was maybe a little bit more lax, because he came in the middle - right toward the end of us reading *Speak* so I figured he didn't really know what was going on. I kind of was like whatever. We were finishing up *Speak* so I was like he's not going to

really know what's going on, it's going to take him a couple of weeks to get on his feet. – *Jamie, 9th grade English teacher*

Jamie's attitude demonstrated that although she had "dreaded" the transition in co-teaching partners, which was unsurprising considering the close partnership she had with Gina, she was also willing to try to make the change a positive one. In this sense, she demonstrated two elements of successful inclusive education according to Schaeffner and Buswell (1996) – flexibility and being knowledgeable but not paralyzed by the change process.

However, as time progressed, Jamie became less optimistic about working with Dave. It seemed they did not have shared expectations for how they would divide the responsibilities in the classroom. When Jamie and Gina started co-teaching, Gina took the initiative in wanting to help with co-planning and active involvement in teaching. She didn't find that Dave took initiative in the way Gina did. This led to frustration for Jamie, which increased as she discovered Dave did not read ahead or prepare for class during implementation of the *Romeo and Juliet* and *To Kill a Mockingbird* units:

And so then we start *To Kill a Mockingbird* and then by that point, I was done trying to make excuses for him. Because he just...clearly he could have prepared himself for that and he didn't at all. He didn't read ahead. He had no idea what was going on. He didn't know what was going on in class from one day to the next. He would come in in the morning and [say], "Oh, so what are we doing today?" And I'm like if you really cared then you should have found that out days ago, what

we're doing today. You could have actually prepared yourself...And it just started to get to the point where it was driving me crazy. And so then I think I got like, whatever, I don't care about you. Just sit there and stay out of my way, which was unfortunate. But now it's to the point where I don't even see him. Like I don't know, I haven't seen him...like the other day...he didn't ever come. And like five minutes to the end of class he finally came strolling in. – *Jamie, 9th grade English teacher*

Her description of Dave being initially “gung ho” and later not preparing for class and sometimes simply not showing up for class could have been the result of Dave feeling that Jamie did not really want to develop a partnership with him. Therefore, it became difficult to tell if the problems in this partnership arose more from differences in pedagogical approaches or from difficulties that were due to Jamie’s reluctance to take on a new partner and Dave’s reactions to that reluctance.

The problems may also have been a result of different ideas about how the special educator would be involved in instruction. For example, in the seventh grade classroom, Sarah, the English teacher, planned all of the lessons. Mindy, the special educator, did not necessarily know what would be happening that day but just jumped in and helped the students as she picked up on what was happening in the lesson. Both Sarah and Mindy accepted the arrangement and expressed that although it would be helpful to have time to actually plan together, the way they did things was generally working for them. Jamie, who had been used to a more even division of planning and teaching responsibilities, faced a greater transition than someone like Sarah might have faced if her co-teacher were to leave. In this sense, a lack of a shared philosophy on how co-taught instruction

should occur likely contributed to problems with this transition (Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996).

In addition to frustration over Dave's lack of preparation for class, Jamie also had other concerns about Dave. Students were not getting work finished in study hall, the time period when the special educators were supposed to help and support students with disabilities in a resource type of setting. She thought the tests he adapted looked visually confusing and led to frustration among students with special needs rather than creating more support for them. Further, she found they had different behavior standards for students. In the example below, Jamie described an incident that she felt exemplified his failure to follow through on matters of discipline. A student had not completed his vocabulary assignment on a day when Jamie was absent and Dave was in charge of the class. Dave made a joke about the incident and this left Jamie feeling annoyed and less confident about Dave's abilities in classroom management:

[H]e was making it like it was a joke or whatever...But the next week we were to the point where we were doing vocab again and same student, same situation. And he wasn't writing down the vocab words. And so I like flipped out on him a little bit and I like lost my mind...And I told him, you might think that that's cute and you can get away with it when I'm not here, but that's not going to fly when I am here. And I made some sort of comment about [how] apparently I needed to be here to make things happen...And I know that Dave, he took that personal - I didn't mean to personally attack him but I know that he got the fact that I was holding him personally responsible for the fact that this was happening. And after

class he stayed and he goes to me, “Okay we'll get them tomorrow. We'll make sure everyone has their vocab and if they don't have it we'll give them detention.” And I said to him that's fine but you can't decide that you're going to have discipline with them one day and then not the next. So if you want to check their vocab and give them detention then that's fine, but then you have to do that every single time we do vocabulary. – *Jamie, 9th grade English teacher*

Here two issues were at play. First, Jamie was concerned because Dave joked about a student not doing what he was supposed to do and then suggested they might remedy the situation by becoming stricter about punishing students for not doing the work they were supposed to do in class. Jamie saw this as inconsistency. Second, Jamie made it clear in front of the students that there was a rift between her expectations and Dave's expectations. Students likely picked up on this rift between the two teachers and Jamie admitted that Dave likely perceived her comment as a personal attack. This example alone demonstrates problems in two areas of co-teacher compatibility according to Rice and Zigmond (2000) – shared views on academic and behavior standards for students and the ability to problem solve without making the problems personal.

6.1.2 Area 2: Honest and Open Communication

The most striking finding from my interviews with Jamie and Dave was the fact that they seemed to be talking about two completely different teaching partnerships. Jamie's dissatisfaction with the partnership was clear and she had numerous concerns about Dave and how the partnership was developing (or not developing) – concerns which she shared

with me during each interview. Conversely, Dave did not express any such strife in the partnership. In my last interview with him at the end of the school year, he described what seemed to be a generally positive start to his co-teaching partnership with Jamie. He expressed some concern about a lack of planning time and subsequently a loss of opportunity to assume as much ownership over the curriculum as he would have liked. However, he seemed to think this issue could be resolved once he and Jamie started the new school year in the fall:

I got the chance to modify a lot of the tasks. That was mostly my responsibility...Hopefully we'll have more time to plan next year. We did but like I said before it was planning on the fly. Hopefully, depending on what the schedule is like next year, I'll be able to take ownership over more of the curriculum. Be able to teach more, teach and assist. I think a relationship is set up so far, for the time we've had anyway. – *Dave, 9th grade special education teacher*

Dave's comments implied that he felt the relationship was off to a relatively good start and attributed any transition difficulties to not having planning time and to subsequently needing to "plan on the fly." A lack of planning time is a common concern of co-teachers cited in the co-teaching literature and can lead to a less active role for the special education teacher, since the general educator tends to be the person to assume responsibility for planning and instruction when time is not available or not used effectively for co-planning (e.g., Austin, 2001; Cook & Friend, 1995; Dieker, 2001;

Keefe & Moore, 2004; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Scruggs et al., 2007, Walther-Thomas et al., 1996). Dedicated planning time and some training or guidance on how to use that planning time (which may have been provided by someone like Sandy, the special education director) possibly would have led to better collaboration between Dave and Jamie in regards to planning for instruction (Austin, 2001; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Walther-Thomas et al., 1996).

He did reveal, however, that he felt the year had already been planned and seemed to think that his participation was at a level that made sense for his mid-year transition. He also perceived that he had taken on more responsibility with later units as he became more acclimated to his new position and the curriculum:

With *Speak* it was kind of like I was on the outside looking in basically because I could pick up on it and read up on it but you can't all of a sudden read ten chapters of a novel in one night to get to the point where you need to be. So it was kind of hard in that essence and I think that was the most difficult. And when we went through *Romeo and Juliet* it really wasn't that bad – and I've read it maybe several times before, so that wasn't too bad at all. Really I modified tests for that as well. I enjoyed doing that. I enjoy doing that for the kids and they got excited about it. And then with *To Kill A Mockingbird*, you know it was the last thing we did. It was – they did well with that, too. It was kind of like I took on more responsibilities.- *Dave, 9th grade special education teacher*

Dave's description of how he took on more responsibilities as the year progressed is in stark contrast to Jamie's description of how the year progressed. Where Dave perceived that he had acquired increasing responsibility for teaching later units, Jamie did not express the same sentiments. Rather, she expressed that she initially was understanding with him because she knew it was probably difficult to transition midyear but later lost patience and stopped "making excuses" for him as it became clear to her that he simply wasn't preparing.

A possible reason for Dave's reluctance to take on more teaching responsibility was that he thought Jamie had already planned the year and therefore felt he shouldn't suggest changes. In Dave's final interview he described the curriculum for the year as "set up" and not requiring much of his input:

As far as planning goes it was really set up. She has it set up and ready. So it's not like we really need to plan for anything.- *Dave*

The sense of ownership general educators tend to feel for the curriculum is a common phenomenon cited in the co-teaching literature is the (e.g., Austin, 2001; Scruggs et al., 2007). When coupled with a special education teacher's lack of expertise in the content (e.g., Keefe & Moore, 2004), the results often mirror Dave's statement. The special education teacher may see the curriculum as already planned and belonging primarily to the general educator and therefore the special educator may be reluctant to try to make changes – especially if making changes would require expertise in the content. Although

Jamie would have likely been receptive to Dave's input as she had been with Gina – in fact, she likely would have welcomed an attempt to take initiative in planning – Dave's limited experience with inclusive education and informal co-teaching may have led him to expect general educators to be territorial. Even in his statement about wanting to take on more ownership the following year, he used the language “teach and assist,” which may indicate that he primarily saw the role of the special education teacher as an assisting role.

What began to emerge was a situation that grew from a significant lack of communication between the co-teachers and a difference in the expectations for the role the special educator would play in the classroom. Jamie thought Dave was unprepared; Dave thought Jamie had everything planned the way she wanted it to happen and therefore his role was more one of adapting assignments. The opportunity to talk about expectations for the transition before the transition took place might have prevented subsequent problems, but with the lack of time in the schedule to talk to each other, Jamie and Dave had little opportunity to have discussions of this nature.

This is a good example of where the district and school might be more strategic about integrating a new co-teacher into the school and into his or her partnerships. In this way, the district showed room for growth in the areas of developing a common philosophy and strategic plan and providing organized and ongoing technical support – two of Schaeffner and Buswell's (1996) key elements for successful inclusion. If the district had a plan in place for training new teachers, perhaps through a technique such as Boudah et al.'s (1997) Collaborative Instruction, or CI Model, Dave might have been better prepared to take on the expected role of a co-teacher rather than an assistant.

Coupled with dedicated planning time and training in how to use that time (e.g., Austin, 2001; Walther-Thomas et al., 1996), this partnership may have had a better chance of a positive start.

6.1.3 Area 3: Ability to Problem Solve Without Making the Problems Personal

As previously addressed, several problems were clearly present as Jamie and Dave embarked on their partnership but the lack of communication led one teacher (Jamie) to view the problems as more significant than the other teacher (Dave) viewed the problems. Dave was not completely unaware of difficulties in the partnership, but he attributed these difficulties to a lack of planning time and the general challenge of beginning a new position midyear.

Dave also was not only embarking on a new partnership with Jamie but also new partnerships with two other teachers as well because he was the only English language arts special education co-teacher for the high school. He had to develop knowledge of the curriculum for each grade level on top of the task of developing these partnerships. As a result, Dave may have been a bit overwhelmed with the magnitude of the tasks he faced as he transitioned into the position. Gina had the same workload but had the advantage of having managed this schedule for multiple years. Additionally, Gina had been teaching 10 – 11 years during the time of the study while Dave was only in his second year of teaching, not including his student teaching experience. Dave attempted to create a schedule for himself and carried a clipboard, but nonetheless, he described learning the curriculum as the greatest co-teaching challenge he had faced:

Big challenges coming in to start a co-teaching relationship? I think the biggest challenge is learning the curriculum, because I didn't go to school for English. I took different classes. I think my biggest accomplishment was trying to relearn everything basically. Trying to catch up on it...Honestly the twelfth grade was the easiest because it was the most recent to me and I had the teacher I was co-teaching with. And I had the class. Everything was – I had already seen before...I'd like to plan everything out for at least a week ahead of time so I know what's going on. In case she was absent or somebody was absent, that way I'd know right away this is what's going on tomorrow and I'd try to stay organized. So I could essentially write out the whole week on a piece of paper – period 1 what we're doing, all the way through so that way I know where we're at and I can look. Because it's hard to transition. You're going from this class to this class to this class. So I just carry that clipboard around. Period 2, this is what we're doing so I can refocus my mind on what we're going to be doing next. – *Dave, 9th grade special education teacher*

The challenges Dave discussed in his interview were related to adjustment and taking on new content that he found unfamiliar. He attempted to manage his workload, but seemed overwhelmed by a difficult situation. Coming in midyear, it became very difficult to catch up, particularly since he was working with different teachers at different grade levels who were teaching different curriculum. As a newer teacher and one without much training in the area of English education, Dave found these challenges particularly tough to manage.

Better developed support networks for co-teachers and organized and ongoing technical support (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996) may have been helpful for Dave as he struggled with the scope of his new position. For example, he might have been paired in a mentoring relationship with another special education teacher like Mindy, who had experience managing a workload that included collaborating with several general education teachers and doing this without having dedicated time to co-plan. Alternatively, either Jeff or Sandy, as administrators with co-teaching experience, might have provided Dave with guidance, perhaps helping him to create a schedule with time carved out for reading texts he would be teaching. He attempted to do this on his own but his efforts were ultimately not successful. This example again emphasizes the importance of having a plan for training teachers (e.g., Walther-Thomas et al., 1996).

Co-teaching with multiple teaching partners can prove quite daunting to special education teachers (Dieker, 2001); Gina's ability to co-teach with several partners in a meaningful way spoke to her experience, dedication, and expertise. Dave, with significantly less experience and expertise, was clearly overwhelmed and needed to be better supported as he adjusted to his job. Jamie initially tried to provide this assistance herself, even if only through planning on the fly, as she relayed to me in our first interview about the new partnership:

I think that come Monday...we'll definitely have to have a moment. It will probably be right at the end of the day, after the ninth period. He usually hangs at that time...I mean the thing with Gina is that she and I went into it new together. So we were trying to figure it out at the same time. And so now, it's like I already

know and now I have to start teaching him. And it's been hard for me to do that because I have lost a sense of recognizing what Gina actually did. So now that we've been together and now I see - not where things are failing but not working - now I'm like, "Okay, that's what Gina did." Now I have to be with Dave like, "This is what you need to do. You need to filter through the room and you need to make sure that when we're giving answers that they're writing them down." –
Jamie, 9th grade special education teacher

At the point, near the beginning of Jamie and Dave's partnership, Jamie was still sympathetic towards Dave and acknowledged how starting midyear without guidance or planning time was problematic. She also realized that this new partnership was occurring under different circumstances than the old partnership. Rather than entering into a new partnership as novice co-teachers together, Jamie was entering as an experienced co-teacher and Dave was entering as a new co-teacher as well as a new teacher in general. Jamie therefore had a sense of responsibility towards Dave, realizing he would need guidance to navigate the partnership. Despite the lack of dedicated planning time, she made an effort to find time to talk to Dave when they could – after school, before class, during class transitions. Dave also made an initial effort to hang out after class so they could talk. In the beginning, Jamie wanted to offer Dave some direction to help him understand what he needed to do as a co-teacher. However, it seemed unrealistic that conversations held in briefly after class might substitute for the more substantial training that Dave needed – and that was not available at SJSHS.

Jamie's attitude changed towards the end of the year, as Dave's struggles continued. By the end of the year, Jamie had lost her patience with Dave. She became increasingly frustrated with Dave's continued failure to prepare for class and what she saw as his lack of initiative to share the teaching load. Due to her perception that Dave was putting insufficient effort into the partnership, her willingness to try to solve problems with Dave in positive ways began to wane. She felt their discussions did not lead to sustained changes, even if there were some short-term improvements:

But I just felt like it just got to the point where okay, I don't have any more sympathy for you. And I would be more than happy to help you, to sit down with you, to plan with you. But he doesn't - but you can't help him if he doesn't want to be helped. And it's like I'm not going to try to go out of my way to try to make him a good co-teacher if he doesn't want to be a good co-teacher. Because I kind of feel like in one sense, I don't think that's really my job to have to...I don't know. And I feel like as far as the special ed stuff is concerned, you know I had him adapt tests for our life skills student. And honestly, I think I could have adapted it more appropriately and I never went to school for special ed. – *Jamie, 9th grade English teacher*

Jamie's characterization of Dave as someone who did not want to be helped conflicted with his statements that he wanted more time to plan and work together so he could take more ownership over the curriculum. Additionally, where Dave seemed to think he had done a reasonably good job in making accommodations for the students with special

needs, Jamie did not agree that he was successful in this area. Additionally, Jamie's statement that it was "not her job" to make Dave a better co-teacher is well-supported in the literature; providing Dave with training should have been the responsibility of the school or district (e.g., Austin, 2001; Holdeheide & Reschly, 2008; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996; Scruggs et al., 2007; Walther-Thomas et al., 1996).

A lack of communication underlying this difficult transition, these two co-teachers were having difficulty "being able to 'stand apart' from a problem...to facilitate reaching a resolution" (Rice and Zigmond, 2000, p.194). Instead, Jamie's growing intolerance and lack of patience towards Dave seemed to be building a wall between the co-teachers that would be difficult to bridge. At this point it seemed the two teachers were not developing the kind of partnership that would allow them to provide each other with useful feedback and enhance each other, two important benefits of co-teaching cited in the literature (e.g., Austin, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007).

6.1.4 Area 4: Equal Pedagogical Skills

As Jamie became more frustrated with what she saw as both a lack of initiative and a lack of skills in Dave, she tried to recall how Gina became more skilled at teaching ELA over time, Jamie thought back to what she remembered Gina doing early in their partnership. Jamie cited Gina's willingness to "imitate" her as a major factor that helped Gina learn what it meant to be an English teacher. She expressed that Dave did not imitate her as Gina did, and subsequently was not developing the skills he needed to teach English:

[W]hen Gina first started, she literally would imitate me to the point where I would teach in the morning and she would teach in the afternoon and she would mimic everything. I mean to the point where she'd use my same lines. And he doesn't do that. And I feel like even when he does take over, I have problems with it because I'm like, "But you didn't say what I said and you didn't give them the information that I gave them. And I get that you are who you are but at the same I know that there are certain pieces of information that you need to focus on because I know that that's what they need to know because I wrote the tests." And so I find even if I let him lead the instruction, I still don't feel free enough to move around the room because I still feel I need to focus on what's going on because I have to compensate where he doesn't say the things that I'd say. So like where Gina was very good at imitating me, he's not as good at imitating me. – *Jamie, 9th grade English teacher*

Jamie, although willing to share the teaching position in her classroom with a co-teacher, was concerned that the co-teacher would teach in the same way she taught. Gina brought curricular materials and her own ideas into the classroom, but she was also willing to mimic Jamie's teaching moves, right down to saying the same lines. Interestingly, Gina's way of developing expertise as an ELA teacher bore striking similarities to Boudah et al.'s (1997) CI Model. In the CI Model, one teacher acted as the presenter and the other as the mediator. The special education teacher typically started out as the mediator but took on the presenter role as well once expertise was developed in the content. The goal of this model was for both teachers to eventually share the teaching

position. Gina's understanding of how to essentially train herself without any guidance was unusual (e.g., Scruggs et al., 2007) and indicated her expertise as a teacher in general and special education teacher in particular. Jamie was correct in her assessment that Gina had a special "personality" that made her an exceptional co-teacher. However, expecting all teachers to know what to do intuitively, as Gina seemed to know, is unrealistic – particularly for newer teachers like Dave – and again reinforces the need for organized teacher training and support (e.g., Austin, 2001; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Scruggs et al., 2007; Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996; Walther-Thomas et al., 1996).

Jamie's expectations for a special education co-teacher had been set by a highly experienced and skilled special educator. Gina and Jamie built a sense of trust with each other based largely upon respect for each other's professional expertise. The trust that was such a critical aspect of Jamie and Gina's partnership did not exist in Jamie and Dave's partnership because Jamie was concerned that Dave did not have the skills necessary to teach ELA to the students or even to properly support the students with special needs. Dave realized he had much to learn, but thought he was trying his best as a new teacher. The difference in the way Jamie perceived Dave's pedagogical abilities and the way in which he perceived his own abilities were part of the larger concerns about these two co-teachers' problematic early partnership.

Although some of Jamie's concerns about Dave were valid (there was evidence that he was not putting much effort into becoming a better co-teacher – e.g., not coming to class), some of her concerns were also linked to unrealistic expectations for what a new teacher should be able to do without any training. This is also further evidence that

the two teachers were not engaging in open and honest communication and effective problem solving (Rice & Zigmond, 2000).

6.1.5 Area 5: Self-confidence, self-esteem, and the ability to take risks

Dave realized his own challenges when he first arrived at SJSHS. However, Dave did seem initially confident about his ability to do well in his new position. Although a newer teacher, he had some (albeit less organized) co-teaching experience and thought that although limited, his previous experience would be sufficient to serve as a foundation for his new job. However, his previous co-teaching experiences were not representative of the types of partnerships encouraged in the Stateline Public Schools. He described his previous co-teaching as casual and not conducive for forming true partnerships:

They didn't tell me to go co-teach. I just did that throughout my schedule. And I mean [it was] basic because I wasn't able to be in there everyday. My schedule allowed three days at most when I could be in there. So some weeks I wouldn't be there at all, some weeks one day, some weeks two days. I mean basic in the fact that if you're there Monday, Wednesday, Friday, it's hard to know what's going on when you're not there three days in a row. So you kind of just pop in, the one-teach-one-assist model more than it is two teachers. – *Dave, 9th grade special education teacher*

Dave's confidence about co-teaching may have been more of an overconfidence, an assumption that he was familiar with this model of providing special education services

when in reality he didn't have the kind of experience that would prepare him for the expectations at SJSHS. Although confidence and the ability to take risks is considered an important factor in developing strong partnerships (Rice & Zigmond, 2000), it seems important that a teacher also be able to assess what he or she is prepared to do and where assistance and guidance may be necessary. This ties into Schaeffner and Buswell's (1996) assertion that a hallmark of successful inclusion is not only a celebration of successes but also the ability to view challenges as learning experiences. Dave understood that he faced some challenges in regards to his preparation for his new role, but seemed to underestimate the amount of new learning that would be necessary for a successful transition into that role.

Additionally, there was some evidence that Dave was either too overwhelmed or perhaps unwilling to put greater effort into tackling challenges in a positive and productive way. Most saliently, it seemed Dave was not willing to plan outside of school hours, which was perceived by Jamie (who regularly worked above and beyond the school day with Gina) as a sign that he lacked dedication. This sentiment was also shared by at least one other co-teacher who worked with Dave - Andrea, the 11th grade teacher - as Jamie explained to me in our last interview:

Andrea changed textbooks, the tenth and eleventh grade textbooks swapped. So she taught from one book this year but she's going to teach from a different book next year. So she made a comment to Dave that maybe they could get together in the summer sometime to plan because everything's going to be different and he was like, "Well we have eight hours before we come back to school. Can't we just

do it then?” And she was like, for one thing we're going to have other things we have to do during that time and she's like nevermind. So I think she's tried to reach out and he's just, “Well why do we have to do that?” And she's like nevermind then because if that's the attitude then I would rather just do it myself. – *Jamie, grade 9 English teacher*

Andrea, a former student of mine who had recently been hired at SJSHS, shared with me privately that she had been having difficulties with Dave and felt he did not prepare ahead and was not willing to use personal time to plan. Although Dave legitimately was faced with a number of challenges in his new position, it was also becoming clear that his co-teachers did not perceive him as being dedicated to his new position.

Although he did not state during interviews that he felt a loss of confidence or self-esteem or even that there were any significant difficulties as he tried to adjust to his new position, it is possible that a loss of self-esteem and confidence due to being overwhelmed by the demands of his position led to Dave's increasing reluctance to work with his co-teachers and eventual withdrawal from the focal classroom. However, if he felt overwhelmed, he was reticent to admit it. The closest he came to admitting such feelings to me was when he emphasized the difficulty of learning the curriculum. Unfortunately, because Dave did not communicate any such feelings or concerns to Jamie, there may have been missed opportunities to address the challenges he faced as learning experiences that might be supported by Jamie.

Moreover, mourning the loss of her co-teaching partner may have made Jamie less open to a new person taking on that role and less willing to serve in a mentoring role for a newer, less experienced co-teacher who was likely overwhelmed by his new job. In describing the transition, she implied a grieving process:

My heart is broken and I want Gina back, you know what I mean? And it's hard because I think Gina and I had such a good thing going and I think that we really helped kids...-*Jamie*

The loss of the partnership that had been so much like a marriage – “Mom” and “Dad” – clearly had a profound effect on Jamie. Although it initially seemed like Jamie was knowledgeable but not paralyzed by the change process (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996), upon further analysis it seems she might have been paralyzed by the process after all.

Twice in interviews she used the term “whatever” in describing her attitude towards developing her partnership with Dave. In the first interview she stated that because the class was already immersed in the *Speak* unit when he first started: “I figured he didn't really know what was going on. I kind of was like whatever.” During the second interview, she made a harsher statement using this same term: “And so then I think I got like, whatever, I don't care about you. Just sit there and stay out of my way...” Her use of the term “whatever” seemed to imply a lack of commitment to making the partnership work despite her initial insistence that she did make an effort to develop the partnership.

It became more evident that Jamie was likely struggling with conflicting feelings – on one hand, wanting the new partnership to be successful and on the other hand, feeling reluctant to make that effort because she missed her former partner. The problems with this partnership reinforce Keefe and Moore's (2004) assertion that schools should provide support for new teaching partnerships rather than "just leaving each new partnership to 'muddle through' the process" (p.87).

The perception of co-teaching success among administrators in Stateline may again have been one of the key problems – especially in regards to teachers who were considered strong, experienced co-teachers. Jamie stated that Sandy had visited Andrea's classroom because of concerns but that she had not spoken to Jamie about Dave. Jamie felt this was due to the fact that the 11th grade teacher was a new teacher while she was an experienced teacher.

Jamie thought Sandy assumed Jamie could handle the situation on her own. However, even strong teachers with experience may need intervention once personal feelings get involved. When teachers are left to "muddle through" (Keefe & Moore, 2004) the process, miscommunication, personal feelings, and frustration may make it difficult to approach problem solving in a clear and objective way, which is an important element of co-teaching compatability (Rice & Zigmond, 2000).

6.2 RESEARCH QUESTION 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LITERACY INSTRUCTION IN JAMIE AND DAVE’S CLASSROOM

When I began observing in Dave and Jamie’s classroom, the class was reading *Romeo and Juliet*, using the same reading guides used by Jamie and Gina the year before. I also observed a subsequent unit on *To Kill a Mockingbird*. It was during this unit that Jamie had hoped Dave would begin taking on responsibility for instruction, but as indicated in the previous section, this did not happen in the way Jamie had originally hoped it would. The following description of the instruction in the classroom therefore represents in many ways a continuation of the work done by Jamie and Gina with less input from Dave. Despite the considerable challenges to the development of the co-teaching partnership between Jamie and Dave, Dave made attempts to get involved in the instruction and expressed a desire to “take ownership” of the curriculum in a more meaningful way. The focus for Research Question 2 in this chapter is subsequently on how Dave attempted to become involved in the instruction of the classroom and the influence of the new partnership on that instruction.

6.2.1 The Nature of Reading and Literature Instruction

I began observing Jamie and Dave’s partnership just as the class began reading *Romeo and Juliet*. Overall, during the *Romeo and Juliet* unit, I continued to notice the same three salient characteristics of reading and literature instruction in Jamie and Dave’s class as I had in Jamie and Gina’s class: use of authentic, grade-appropriate texts; primarily whole

group instruction; and a great deal of scaffolding aimed at marking critical features, frustration control and reduction in degrees of freedom (Wood et al., 1976).

However, I did note some differences in the way typical classroom talk about literature occurred. These differences became most clear when the teachers taught a unit on the screenplay version of *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. The increased student involvement with *To Kill a Mockingbird* was likely partially due to the fact that it was a less challenging text than *Romeo and Juliet* and therefore the teachers saw less need to provide very extensive scaffolding. During the unit on *To Kill a Mockingbird*, some tasks were selected from the McDougal Littell Literature Connections series but these were not detailed sets of questions used to guide discussions like the reading guides for *Romeo and Juliet*. Rather, as shown in Appendices J and K respectively, these tasks asked students to do things such as find evidence from the text to support particular conclusions about characters or give examples from the story to support a variety of themes.

These tasks didn't lead to the same kind of rigid discussions as the guides for *Romeo and Juliet*. The tasks facilitated the reduction in degrees of freedom and frustration control features of scaffolding (Wood et al., 1976) and represented ways of controlling for task difficulty (Vaughn & Linan-Thompson) by providing students with analyses of characters and themes. This kind of scaffolding seemed less conducive to supporting students in being able to do the kind of interpretive work necessary for completing more rigorous tasks such as writing a literary analysis (Beck & Jeffrey, 2009) than scaffolding that might instead help students formulate their own character analyses or theme statements. However, these tasks did not pose the same impediment to dialogic

discussions as the guides for *Romeo and Juliet* because they weren't used as a blueprint for class discussions.

The less challenging nature of the text and less rigid associated tasks, however, cannot fully explain why the nature of discussion changed during the unit on *To Kill a Mockingbird*. In Jamie and Gina's room, I had also observed an overuse of scaffolding with less challenging texts such as *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson. Deeper analysis of the data also revealed that students were actually more engaged in the discussion of *Romeo and Juliet* than they had been the year before despite the use of the same questions. Of the total responses I captured in my fieldnotes, 42% of student responses were low-engagement responses during the time that Jamie and Dave taught *Romeo and Juliet* unit while 58% percent were engaged responses. Comparatively, the year before under the guidance of Jamie and Gina, the low-engagement responses had made up 69% of the total number of responses captured in my fieldnotes for the *Romeo and Juliet* unit while only 31% were engaged responses. Engaged responses increased by 27% compared to the year before for *Romeo and Juliet*. Moreover, for the *To Kill a Mockingbird* unit, only 29% of the responses were low-engagement responses while 71% were high engagement.

My analyses of these data suggested an additional and unexpected possible reason for the increase engaged student responses during the time when Jamie and Dave co-taught – a less actively involved special education co-teacher. I explain this finding in depth in section 6.2.2 of this chapter.

In general, whole group reading and literature instruction continued to dominate in the ninth grade classroom. There were fewer examples of techniques such as text-

based collaborative learning and self-directed learning that are documented as effective for struggling readers (Biancarosa and Snow, 2006); these techniques might better lead to gradual release of responsibility to students because they focus more on students intellectually engaging with texts in collaboration with other students or on their own, respectively.

However, as discussed in section 6.2.3 of this chapter, students engaged in a final project for this unit that allowed them to do more independent interpretive work by writing a theme statement in their own words (albeit adapted from the provided theme statements); selecting a particular character who represented that theme statement; selecting a quotation from the book and two symbols that showed the relationship between the character and theme statement; and then writing an explanation tying together all of these elements. The final task therefore demonstrated the kind of creative interpretive activity that, although not an example of an academic argument, can be helpful in scaffolding students towards literary analysis (Beck & Jeffrey, 2009).

6.2.2 The Nature of Discussion

As discussed in the last section, the reading and literature instruction was still a product of Jamie and Gina's planning. However, since classroom talk was the primary mode for making meaning of texts in the ninth grade classroom, an analysis of that classroom talk was essential for gaining a better understanding of the literacy instruction in this classroom.

The nature of discussion in Jamie and Dave's room was markedly different than the nature of discussion in Jamie and Gina's room. Since Dave was much less actively

involved in the implementation of lessons, the frequent exchanges between Jamie and Gina were replaced with a class structure that featured Jamie as the main teacher and Dave in a minimally supportive role – the common and undesirable phenomenon of special education teacher as aide (e.g., Austin, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Scruggs et al., 2007).

At first, I thought Dave’s minimal participation was a normal part of the adjustment period for him as a new co-teacher. Indeed, Sandy, the special education director, had stated that initially special education teachers would have to take on more of an aide’s role but that with time the teaching would be shared more. Gina and Jamie confirmed that Gina started out in more of an assisting role but gradually took on more of the instruction, using Jamie as a model. It seemed likely that this would also be the case for Dave.

But as *Romeo and Juliet* gave way to a new unit on *To Kill a Mockingbird* – a unit Jamie had hoped would be co-led by Dave in a more evenly divided manner – Dave’s presence was still sparse. In fact, as Jamie stated in our third interview, he became less rather than more involved as the school year progressed. Jamie began to view Dave as unmotivated and lacking in initiative. However, it also seemed Jamie hadn’t given Dave much guidance about what he was supposed to do. This may have had two causes. First, the lack of dedicated planning time made it difficult for them to sit down and plan together in an organized way. Rather, any guidance was given informally and casually “on the fly” before or after class or during transitions. Second, in Jamie’s partnership with Gina, she didn’t have to provide much guidance because Gina took a lot of initiative

on her own. Jamie described in our first interview how Gina gradually took on more of a teaching role in the co-taught classroom:

Well, I think at first she wanted me to be the leader because she wasn't sure what was going on and then once she started to feel like she knew what was going on, then she was able to - she asked, "Let me lead this time"... When she felt like she was really ready to take over she was like, "Hey do you mind if I lead this?" And I was like "okay." – *Jamie, 9th grade English teacher*

Gina, an experienced teacher in general and experienced inclusion if not co-teacher specifically, knew when and how to ask to share the teaching role when she and Jamie began their partnership. Although Dave initially seemed to display the self-confidence and risk taking ability cited as an important element for co-teaching by Rice and Zigmond (2000), he was only a second year teacher. Jamie stated that she knew she had to “teach” him but she neither had the time nor the training to do so. As a result, Jamie typically led the classroom discussion on her own with Dave chiming in occasionally in an assisting role.

Table 6.1 shows the unequal division between Jamie’s and Dave’s participation in leading the class discussion.

Table 6.1 Teacher Input – Jamie and Dave

Teacher Input	Total Count	% of Teacher Moves	Total Count: Dave	Total Count: Jamie
Teacher Explanation	90	21%	13	77
Teacher Test Questions	109	25%	9	100
Lower Level Authentic Questions	24	6%	6	18
Higher Level Authentic Questions	31	7%	10	21
Uptake	103	24%	29	74
Evaluation	22	5%	3	19
Evaluation with follow up evaluation	52	12%	3	49
Total Teacher Input	431		73	358

Across fourteen sets of fieldnotes, I only recorded 73 examples (17%) of Dave providing input in class while I recorded 358 examples (83%) of input from Jamie. The classroom was more aptly Jamie's classroom where Dave sometimes took an assisting role. Even these numbers must be considered in light of a statement Jamie made to me – that Dave participated more when I was in the room but actually participated less when I was not observing:

I think that he'll tell you that it's going great because I think he won't think that you know better. And because even how I told you the one time, the days that you were here, he was way more involved.- *Jamie, 9th grade English teacher*

Overall, the data show that Dave's role in the classroom was very limited and that the limitations of his role probably stemmed from a combination of a lack of district- and school-wide support in the form of training, planning time, and mediation (if necessary) and his own unwillingness to make the time to connect with his co-teachers. This perceived lack of dedication in Dave led Jamie to not trust in Dave's ability to lead the class, as she felt he was typically not prepared to do so. Subsequently, she felt she needed to be the one to lead the lessons. Although this uneven participation could be viewed as part of the normal process of a burgeoning partnership, where the new teacher needs time to learn the routines of the classroom, it also reflected challenges in several areas – most saliently honest and open communication, equal pedagogical skills, and the ability to problem solve without making problems personal (Rice & Zigmond, 2000).

Finally, since Dave did not begin teaching until mid-year, the students were more familiar with Jamie, leaving Dave in the position of a newcomer attempting to enter an already established community. Dave's most frequent way of participating was through uptake – taking up an idea already presented by a student. This evidence supports the idea that Dave's attempts at participation were primarily attempts to join the classroom community and may also support the idea that he did not know the texts well. In my third interview with Jamie, she expressed that she felt Dave mostly repeated students' ideas rather than adding something new to the discussion:

And I felt like any time he ever tried to get involved, he would echo what the kids would say. And instead of it being an original thought, if one of the kids made a comment then two seconds later he would pretty much just reiterate what they said and think he was great for coming up with it when I'm like he just said that five seconds ago. And it just started to get to the point where it was driving me crazy. – *Jamie, grade 9 English teacher*

Even Dave's attempts to join the discussion were viewed in a negative light by Jamie, as she saw his attempts as further evidence of his lack of preparation and effort to become a true co-teaching partner.

Although Dave's meager participation was not encouraging, an interesting phenomenon did emerge. Class discussions, when led by Jamie and Gina, often became discussions of the text by Jamie and Gina with less engaged participation by students. Student responses tended to more often be responses to teacher test questions rather than engaged responses – responses that feature students “freely voicing their own ideas and asking engaged questions”(Nystrand et al., 2003, p.188). These kinds of responses were

the ones that led to more interpretive, analytic, and inferential cognitive work by students. When Gina left, Jamie found herself without her regular discussion partner and Dave was not in the position to replace Gina in this way.

In lieu of exchanging ideas with Gina and bringing the students into the discussion mostly through teacher test questions, I noticed Jamie posing more authentic questions to students than she had in the past. Although teacher test questions were still one of Jamie's main ways of engaging students in talk about texts, and these kinds of questions still dominated during the unit on *Romeo and Juliet* (which was aligned with the reading guides analyzed in Chapter 5), during the second half of the year Jamie began using more of the dialogic bids that Nystrand et al. (2003) suggest may serve as "kindling" for students' engaged responses. Most notably, her use of uptake increased quite a bit, nearly rivaling her use of teacher test questions. She was taking on students' ideas more often and students were in turn attempting to formulate their own explanations of what they encountered in the text. A comparison between Tables 6.2 and 5.2 below shows that student participation in general and students' engaged responses in particular were more frequent after Gina left. Although students still were not in the habit of asking many authentic questions, even these doubled and students seemed more on their way to having the kind of dialogic discussions advocated by Nystrand et al. (2003).

Table 6.2 Student Input – Jamie and Dave Table 5.2 Student Input – Jamie and Gina

Jamie and Dave		Jamie and Gina	
Student Input	Total Count; %	Student Input	Total Count; %
Authentic Student Questions	14 4%	Authentic Student Questions	7 4%
Engaged Response	211 62%	Engaged Response	62 37%
Low- Engagement Response	114 34%	Low- Engagement Response	98 59%
Total Student Input	339	Total Student Input	167

The examples below illustrate how students were becoming increasingly engaged in meaningful classroom talk. The first example is from one of my early observations of Jamie and Dave. I selected this example because it is one in which Dave participated a bit

more actively and it includes numerous examples of students' engaged responses.

Although not quite a dialogic spell, marked by student questions, or a dialogic discussion, where students freely exchange ideas and there are few or no questions asked (Nystrand et al., 2003), this example of classroom talk also did not follow a typical IRE format. Rather, the type of talk demonstrated here seemed to be moving towards something between monologic and dialogic talk. This intermediate kind of talk was characterized by an increase in authentic teacher questions, a decrease in teacher test questions, and more engaged responses by students.

In the first example, students were discussing Shakespeare's poem "All the World's a Stage," which outlines seven stages in a man's life. The poem was used as an introduction to Shakespeare and Shakespearean language before beginning *Romeo and Juliet*. This selection was a good choice for analysis because it features discussion of a text written in Shakespearean language without the constraints of the reading guides used for *Romeo and Juliet*:

Jamie: What can you tell me about the lover? (**Lower-level authentic question**)

Student: I think he's hot for somebody. (**Engaged response**)

Student: He has a woeful ballad. (**Engaged response**)

Jamie: What's a ballad? (**Teacher test question**)

Student: A sentimental song. (**Low-engagement response**)

Jamie: Ah, you used the footnote.

Student: He just got dissed and is in a bad mood. (**Engaged response**)

(After a bit more focus on the lover, they began discussing the soldier.)

Jamie: Now, think about the soldier. What kind of oath might he make?

(Evaluation with follow up authentic question – speculation)

Student: A promise to arms. **(Engaged response)**

Jamie: Okay, explain that. **(Uptake)**

Student: Like, he makes an oath to pledge his life to fight for his country.

(Engaged response)

She then asked about the meaning of the line “bearded like the pard,” referring to the soldier. **(Higher level authentic question – analysis)**

Student: He’s getting older and he’s searching for the youth kind of, like pard means leopard. **(Engaged response)**

Dave: Say that again

Student: He’s kind of like he’s getting older but he’s still trying to be a youth. **(Engaged response)**

Dave: So he’s trying to be something he’s not? **(Uptake)**

Jamie: Have you ever heard the phrase, “A leopard can’t change its spots?” So I think maybe it’s the opposite...If you’re trying to grow a beard, are you proud of it? So maybe the soldier is trying to seem older than he is. **(Uptake)**

Dave then points out the line, “seeking the bubble reputation.”

Dave: How would you think if you’re in a bubble? Narrow minded, closed off? **(Lower-level authentic question)**

Jamie: Think of someone you know in the military. Do they have a lot of contact with the outside world? **(Lower-level authentic question)**

This led to some student discussion of people they knew who served in the military.

In this example (which is reflective of the instruction for the full lesson), Jamie and Dave provided some scaffolding by marking critical features (directing them to analyze particular lines in the text such as “bearded like the pard”) and making some moves that were more focused on frustration control (such as checking understanding of the word “ballad”), but overall the lesson focused more on eliciting students’ own interpretations of the text, a meaningful and critical part of engagement with literature (e.g., Beck & Jeffrey, 2009; Nystrand et al., 2003; Smagorinsky, 2001). The examples of uptake and subsequent engaged student responses demonstrated a move towards gradual release of responsibility to students during classroom discussions. For example, when students responded in a minimal way (“a promise to arms”), the teachers used uptake as a move to push students to elaborate (“okay, explain that”). This is an example of the scaffolding feature of direction maintenance (Wood et al., 1976) and aligns with best practices in reading instruction for struggling readers – motivation and self-directed learning – as cited by Biancarosa and Snow (2006).

The previous example featured a short but complex piece of text – similar to the Lord Byron poem discussed in Chapter 5. However, I also saw more engaged discussions of longer texts occurring as well as some limited incorporation of text-based collaborative learning (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006). The following example demonstrates how students were engaged in a discussion of *To Kill a Mockingbird* during one of my later classroom observations. This example features both whole group and partner discussions:

(As they had now reached the end of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, this lesson focused on a return to the theme statements from the initial advance organizer the teachers used prior to starting the novel. In this lesson, they were revisiting those theme statements to find evidence for those statements in the novel.)

Jamie: What you're going to do is for every one of those statements, you are going to find evidence in the book to support each statement. Let's do the first one together. "Prejudice and superstition can lead to injustice." Where do you see this happening? **(Higher-level authentic question -analysis)**

Student: In the courtroom **(Engaged response)**

Jamie: How so? **(Uptake)**

Student: Because the jury was all white farmers and the defendant was a black man. **(Engaged response)**

Jamie: Tell me more. **(Uptake)**

Student: They were racist. **(Engaged response)**

Jamie: How were they racist? **(Uptake)**

Student: Because they found Tom Robinson guilty because he was black even though there was enough evidence to show he was not guilty. **(Engaged response)**

Jamie: That is an example of how prejudice leads to injustice. Tom was found guilty more because he was a black man than because there was evidence against him. **(Teacher explanation)**

She then had them do some partner work to find evidence for other statements.

As students worked together, they were prompted to work collaboratively with

their partners.

As the students worked with their partners, the teachers provided scaffolding as needed by each pair of students. For example, Dave prompted two students who with the questions, “Who's trying to protect the innocent? Who's going above and beyond in the story to help Tom Robinson?” (**Teacher test questions**)

Jamie assisted two students who were having difficulty making sense of the statements.

Jamie: Okay so number three. "One person's wrongdoing can release evil into the entire community." That means if one person does something wrong it's going to affect a lot of people. (**Teacher explanation**)

Who did something wrong? (**Teacher test question**)

Student: Bob Ewell (**Less-engaged response**)

Jamie: Okay and who did he affect? Students name the people. (**Uptake**)

The initial whole group discussion began with a higher-level authentic teacher question that encouraged the analysis of a theme in the text, that prejudice and superstition can lead to injustice, by first getting students to identify examples of how this theme was conveyed in the text (“Where do you see this happening?”) and then using uptake to push students to deepen their analysis (“How were they racist?”). Although teachers still incorporated some scaffolding moves that focused on the marking critical features, frustration control and reduction in degrees of freedom features of scaffolding (Wood et al., 1976), these moves were used more sparingly to support smaller groups of students who struggled more with the task. In this way, support was more aligned with the

strategic tutoring approach advocated by Biancarosa and Snow (2006) – scaffolding focused on individuals or very small groups of students according to their specific needs.

Under the guidance of the new partnership, particularly with the unit on *To Kill a Mockingbird*, there was more of a focus on the recruitment and direction maintenance features of scaffolding through use of authentic questions (e.g., “Why do you suppose Tom ran?”; “What’s happening with Jem’s character?”) and uptake (e.g., “Give an example.”; “What do you mean by that?”) that led to more engaged responses from students (e.g., “I think they might try to get Tom and start a fight and Atticus will talk his way out of it.”). Overall, in the second half of the academic year, when Jamie taught with Dave, I began to see more movement towards gradual release of responsibility in the areas of literacy instruction through classroom talk that was not quite dialogic but not quite monologic either. The increase in authentic questions and uptake by teachers and, concomitantly, engaged responses by students, suggested that there was an opportunity for this class to move towards having more dialogic classroom discussions.

This move away from IRE instruction seemed to be an unintended side effect of less involvement from the new special education teacher. Although Gina and Jamie had a strong partnership and shared the responsibilities of teaching in a very equitable manner, in a sense their strength was also their weakness: they were both so involved in the text discussions that they dominated the discussions together, leaving fewer opportunities for student input. Conversely, Dave’s minimal participation forced Jamie to engage more with the students. The type of scaffolding Dave provided was most often direction maintenance. This may well have been because he was less familiar with the curriculum and still just negotiating the norms of a new environment. However, the increased student

participation was a positive phenomenon that emerged from what was otherwise a negative situation.

These findings do not suggest that a minimally involved special education teacher is a positive factor in a co-teaching partnership and should not be misconstrued as such. Rather, they indicate a pitfall that co-teachers in strong partnerships may encounter and which subsequently requires increased awareness. Co-teachers who are both very involved in discussions may fall into patterns of discussing the text more with each other than with the students without realizing that this is occurring. Further, if both teachers view the students as students in need of a great deal of scaffolding, extensive explanations of ideas in a text by the teachers and an overuse of modeling how to engage with a text may be seen as positive and necessary. Students may, as a result, not experience a gradual release of responsibility that allows them to more independently engage with texts.

Had Jamie and Gina been aware of this phenomenon in their classroom, they would likely have planned together to take action to begin bringing students more actively into the discussion. The two examples of more dialogic discussion under the guidance of Jamie and Gina both occurred when the teachers were trying a new technique – Socratic seminar and fishbowl discussion. As they engaged in a new way of discussing literature they were likely more aware of the moves they made to engage students.

More self-awareness on the part of teachers and an understanding of which kinds of teacher moves best lead to increased dialogic discussions could be sufficient in getting experienced teachers like Gina and Jamie to increase the dialogic talk in their classrooms. This is also an example of where support from an administrator (e.g., Sandy, the special

education director who would occasionally observe classes) in the form of observation and feedback might have been helpful, even for teachers with a strong co-teaching partnership. The teachers might even be recruiting into developing a protocol they could use to for self- or partner-observation.

Drawing on Matsumura et al.'s (2002) recommendation that directions for effective professional development should be grounded in the practices occurring in classrooms, administrators like Sandy, Jeff (principal), or Nick (curriculum director) might also plan effective professional development sessions around observed classroom needs (e.g., ways to implement dialogic discussions). Jamie and Gina could have possibly been trained to become teacher leaders with a model classroom if teachers and administrators agreed it would be helpful to engage in professional development on dialogic discussions at a school-wide level.

For Jamie and Dave, the increased student engagement came not from a conscious effort to better engage students in discussions of texts but rather as an unintended benefit from a negative situation. Unfortunately it was a situation that became increasingly more serious as the year progressed. Dave continued to withdraw from participation as the year came towards a close and eventually he began to miss classes entirely. Despite the gains in student involvement in discussion, it is important to note that students were not getting some key benefits of co-teaching that can occur when a partnership is strong – particularly more teacher help during lessons and exposure to different learning styles (e.g., Keefe & Moore, 2004; Scruggs et al., 2007; Wilson & Michaels, 2006). As a result, although the increased student involvement in the second half of the year was

encouraging, this phenomenon does not suggest that Jamie and Dave actually had the beginning of a positive partnership.

6.2.3 The Nature of Writing Instruction

During the second half of the year, when Jamie and Dave began co-teaching, students did not complete a longer writing project like the “Soundtrack of My Life” paper that they had completed the previous year or the paper on *That Was Then, This Is Now*, which they completed during the first half of the year. The students did, however, complete a shorter writing project on *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The students were asked to write a theme statement in their own words, relate the theme statement to a character from the novel, and then select a quotation from the novel, a larger symbol, and a smaller symbol (used as a border around the larger symbol) to develop the theme in relationship to the character. The writing aspect of the project consisted of a short explanation of how each component developed the theme in relationship to the character.

Although this writing project was short and did not represent the same scope of writing as the essay completed for *That Was Then, This Is Now*, some degree of gradual release is evident in the student work. At this point in the year, the students were allowed more opportunity for creativity and to demonstrate interpretation of the text. They were not writing theme statements completely independently; rather they were adapting existing theme statements and writing them in their own words. However, they still did a significant amount of intellectual work in relating the theme to a character, selecting symbols and quotations, and writing an explanation that tied everything together. Below

the task and student work are analyzed according to the categories in Appendix B. adapted from Matsumura et al. (2002).

6.2.3.1 Clarity of Learning Goals

Students received a packet for their final projects on *To Kill a Mockingbird* that included the objective, a step-by-step guide for completing the project, and a diagram to show how the final project should look (Appendix L). The objective was somewhat open to interpretation: “to convey a main idea and a theme of *To Kill A Mockingbird* and to show comprehension of a specific character in regards to that theme.” Students may have had difficulty figuring out the difference between “main idea” and “theme” and may not have fully understood what it meant to “show comprehension of a specific character in regards to that theme.” However, the step-by-step guide offered more clarity for how students would meet the objective. Below are the steps as outlined in the final project packet:

Step 1 – Write a theme statement in your own words (you should not be copying one of my theme statements from the agree disagree sheet.) This sentence must be a statement; it cannot be a question.

Step 2 – Create a non-textual border that relates to the theme statement.

Step 3 – Choose a symbol that represents a chosen character.

Step 4 – Find a quotation that reveal’s the character’s stance on the theme.

Step 5 – Write one paragraph that explains each of your elements. Paragraph must be typed, Times New Roman font, 12 pt, and double spaced.

Finally, the last page showed students through a diagram how they should arrange their theme statement, symbol for the character, character quotation, border, and paragraph.

Overall, these directions, which Jamie also reviewed with the class before they started the project, made the completion of a somewhat complicated task clear and easy to follow.

6.2.3.2 Scaffolding

Prior to completing the final project, students received significant scaffolding through the completion of tasks that had them both analyze characters and themes in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Additionally, in section 6.2.2 of this chapter, the second classroom example of discussion in Jamie and Dave's class shows how students discussed themes with the teachers and also with their partners. The nature of this assignment was interpretive and therefore students needed opportunities to develop their own, culturally-bound representations of the text (Smagorinsky, 2002). Through the use of an anticipation guide at the start of the unit, students were introduced to the theme statements that they later analyzed in relationship to the text through the whole class and small group discussions. The use of these theme statements addressed both the scaffolding features of demonstration and marking critical features (Wood et al., 1976) by providing models of what their theme statements were expected to look like and by pointing out some of the big ideas in the text. Although there was less focus on the process of writing for this project, the task helped students make salient connections between deeply understanding a text and being able to express that understanding in writing – a critical component of academic writing in ELA (e.g., Beck & Jeffrey, 2009).

6.2.3.3 Cognitive Challenge of Task

Although short, this written work for this task required students to engage making sense of multiple pieces of information and then pull those pieces of information together in a

coherent way. They had to gather what they learned about theme, characters, symbolism, and use of evidence from the text to support their assertions and turn it all into both a visual project and a written explanation. The thinking process required to do this coherently encouraged students to work through the mental processes of composing writing (Flower, 1979; Flower & Hayes, 1980, 1981) as they explicated a theme statement in relationship to a character from the text. These projects therefore represented intellectually challenging student work despite the brevity of the writing.

Although these projects did not demonstrate the more rigorous kind of argumentative essays expected from high school students based on recent educational initiatives such as the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), they did represent an opportunity to scaffold students towards more extensive academic writing. Creative writing tasks, particularly when drawing from textual evidence, have the potential to serve as scaffolds for longer, analytic written work later on (Beck & Jeffrey, 2006). Particularly because they had to draw upon multiple sources to create a coherent project, it seems that this task was cognitively challenging and student work produced showed evidence of what students could do in the areas of both comprehension of the text and explanatory writing. In this way, the work produced by students could be used to monitor student progress (Vaughn and Linan-Thompson, 2003) and ensure accountability for student learning (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996) in reading and literature instruction as well as writing.

6.2.3.4 Clarity of Grading Criteria

There was a rubric for this project with five areas in which students could score up to six points each (for a total of up to thirty points). Each area was clarified in the form of questions students could ask themselves as they revised and edited their work:

Theme Statement – Is the statement true of the novel? Is it explained well?

Non-Textual Border – Does it relate to the theme? Is it clearly visible? Is it neat and aesthetically pleasing? Is it explained well?

Character Symbol – Does it accurately represent the chosen character? Is it neat and aesthetically pleasing? Is it explained well?

Quotation – Does it portray the character’s stance on the theme statement? Is it legible? Is it explained well?

Paragraph – Is it typed, double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt? Is it free of grammar errors? Does it provide analysis of the project.

Each of the five areas of the rubric corresponded directly to the five steps in the directions packet for the project. The clarity of the learning goals were there for tightly connected to the clarity of the grading and supported students in understanding the overall objective of the project.

Table 6.3 below represents the work produced by three students for this project: one student without a disability (Charlotte) and two students with disabilities (Alicia and Christopher). For this project, both Charlotte and Christopher adapted existing theme statements from the original advance organizer, putting it in their own words. Charlotte

changed the statement “People often fear what they don’t understand” to “People tend to judge before they completely understand someone or something.” Christopher’s theme statement – “Individual persons are obliged to protect ALL races even when, most likely they won’t succeed” – was a variation on the statement “Individuals have a responsibility to protect the innocent.” Alicia – a “life skills” student with an intellectual disability – on the other hand, did not change her theme statement at all. She was not penalized for not changing the theme statement to put it in her own words, but this was not unusual since tasks were sometimes modified for her due to the nature of her disability.

As evident in the Table 6.3, these students completed projects that varied in ways the more extensive essays on *That Was Then, This Is Now* did not. This demonstrates that the students were able to do more interpretive written work when given the opportunity. Further it shows that students were able to pull together multiple ideas in a short piece of writing using several pieces of evidence to support their assertions. The student work produced provides a more accurate portrait of what students could do in relationship to both understanding literature and writing than the *That Was Then, This is Now* papers due to the less rigid structure, reduced modeling, and more cognitively demanding task of pulling together ideas and evidence from several sources to create one coherent piece of writing. The student work samples and rubrics can be found in Appendix M.

Table 6.3 Analysis of *To Kill a Mockingbird* Projects

	Alicia (disability)	Christopher (disability)	Charlotte (no disability)
Theme Statement	Courage is doing what is right even when the odds of succeeding are poor.	Individuals persons [sic] are obliged to protect ALL races even when, most likely, they won't succeed.	People tend to judge before they completely understand someone or something.
Symbol	Scale	Peace sign with dove	Two women gossiping
Border	Lion	Smaller peace signs with the word "peace" and a small dove and heart	"The Scream" painting by Edvard Munch
Quotation	"Anyway, I'm simply defending a Negro, Tom Robinson. Scout...there are some things you're not old enough to understand yet. There's been some high talk around town to the effect that I shouldn't do much about defending this man."	"My goodness gracious, look at your flowers. Did you ever see something more beautiful?"	"Dill, I don't want you playing around that house over there. There's a maniac living there and he's dangerous."
Explanation	Atticus shows equality, fairness, and justice because	"Individuals persons are obliged to protect ALL persons even	I chose the theme statement, "People tend to judge before

	<p>he is a lawyer. Atticus wants fairness and quality for Tom Robinson. Atticus wants the same fairness and would have. Atticus is courageous when he is in court. We are all equal like on the scale picture. I chose a lion for the border because Atticus is courageous.</p>	<p>when, most likely, they won't succeed." I chose the smaller peace sign on the outside because Mr. Finch was a lawyer and fought for peace between everyone. The bigger peace sign symbolizes Atticus's strive to have peace and not war between all races. African American, Caucasian, Indian, etc.... I thought "My goodness gracious, look at your flowers. Did you ever see something so beautiful?" was a good quotation because Atticus Finch sensed when there was friction between persons. He always tried his hardest to resolve the problem as quickly as possible.</p>	<p>they completely understand someone or something." This book has a lot of judging in it. One main example is how Miss Stephanie judges Boo Radley. At one point she says, "Dill, I don't want you playing around that house over there. There's a maniac living there and he's dangerous." This quote relates back to the theme statement because she is saying that Boo Radley is crazy, but she doesn't really know him. That's the reason why she is scared of him. She has never talked to him, has no idea what he would do, or can do. I chose a picture of girls gossiping, because Miss Stephanie gossips a lot about Boo Radley. My non-textual border relates back to the theme statement because it is of the</p>
--	---	---	--

			famous painting “The Scream.” This painting has a man, who is obviously afraid of something. He might be afraid because he may not understand the thing he fears.
Grade	67%	83%	100%

Feedback was provided for each student through the rubric. Although the rubric offered clarity in regards to how the student fared in each area (e.g., theme statement, character symbol), in some cases not enough feedback was offered to provide clear guidance for how to improve in a particular area. For example, Alicia only scored a “67” on the assignment but her written feedback was limited. She lost the most points for her quotation. In this area, she scored only 2 out of a possible 6 points because she didn’t explain her quotation. However, the written feedback simply states “you haven’t explained it.” It is possible that Alicia thought she was explaining her quotation when she states: “Atticus wants fairness and equality for Tom Robinson.” Here it may have been more helpful to give Alicia additional feedback on how she should explain her quotation. Alicia likely would need scaffolding in the form of demonstration and marking critical features (Wood et al., 1976) to develop a better understanding of what it means to explain a quotation.

Conversely, Christopher (who had a higher score) received feedback that seemed more explicit although it still didn’t quite provide the scaffolding he likely needed to

construct a stronger literary argument. He lost the most points on his non-textual border, scoring 4 out of 6 points in this rubric area. Jamie responded: “I see what you’re going for, but I’d like it to be a more direct connection and different from the character symbol.” He had selected a peace sign as both his theme and character symbol and Jamie wanted him to choose different symbols for each. Although the rubric doesn’t directly state they need to be different symbols, it does state that the character symbol needs to represent the character and the theme symbol needs to reflect the theme. On Christopher’s paper, Jamie offered further feedback: “Okay but this [symbol] should reflect your theme – I’m not sure that it does.” This helped clarify why Christopher lost points in this area of the rubric, although the comment alone did not explain why there was a lack of connection between the symbol and the theme. More specific feedback paired with a conference between Jamie and Christopher would likely lead to a much stronger understanding of what it means to represent a theme symbolically. By pointing out critical features of how symbols represent themes paired with direction maintenance and frustration control (Wood et al., 1976) as needed to support him in finding a symbol that better represented his theme, Jamie may have capitalized on the opportunity to mediate Christopher’s concept formation of “theme” and “symbolism” (Vygotsky, 1986).

Finally, Charlotte received very little feedback but she also scored a perfect “100” on the project. Her feedback was simply praise for the work she had done: “Great work! Finally someone followed directions! Wonderful!”; “Perfect!” However, even strong writers benefit from feedback. As Atwell (1997) notes: “Our responsibilities as evaluators involve collecting and sifting through the evidence that reveals what a student can do and can’t do, understands and doesn’t understand, has accomplished and needs to

accomplish” (p.314). Atwell (1998) advocates providing students with two or three “high-priority goals” based on a thorough assessment of what they are able to do and what they cannot do yet. Students like Charlotte may be doing well on class assignments but also benefit from guidance so they can become even stronger writers. Feedback for Charlotte that focused on her higher (compared to Alicia or Christopher) ZPD might be in the form of a conference that guides her towards finding additional evidence from the text supporting the argument that people feared Boo Radley because they didn’t know him and then better tying the argument into her choice of the painting “The Scream,” as her explanation for choosing this painting actually was rather vague (that the man in the painting might be screaming because he is afraid). A student like Charlotte may require only minimal scaffolding in the form of direction maintenance (Wood et al., 1976). She could also work towards writing a full literary analysis paper, since she seems ready to do this even if other students are not. In this way, the use of self-directed learning opportunities (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006) might have kept some more students working in their ZPD.

6.3 SUMMARY

After Gina's departure and Dave's arrival in the classroom I observed a number of changes and disruptions. Due to a lack of communication exacerbated by a lack of planning time and limited administrative support for the transition process, Jamie and Dave did not have a promising start to their co-teaching partnership. They showed evidence of difficulty in all five of Rice & Zigmond's (2000) areas of co-teaching compatibility, most notably in the areas of honest and open communication, equal pedagogical skills, and the ability to solve problems without making them personal. Jamie was reticent to accept a new co-teacher after the years of effort she had invested towards developing her partnership with Gina, and Dave underestimated the scope of what it meant to build a true co-teaching partnership. Entering mid-year and co-teaching at multiple grade levels, Dave was overwhelmed with the task of learning the curriculum and reading the texts necessary to prepare for each class. His lack of preparation made it more difficult for him to participate as an equal partner in the classroom. Further, Dave resisted opportunities to plan outside of the school day, which led Jamie to perceive him as less dedicated to his position.

Despite these difficulties, some unintended benefits arose from this unfortunate situation. Experiencing the loss of her discussion partner, Jamie ended up engaging students more in classroom discussions of the texts. The students, in turn, demonstrated increased examples of engaged response. Although not quite engaging in dialogic spells or dialogic discussions (Nystrand et al., 2003), the class engaged in talk that was less monologic in nature. Additionally, Jamie gave students opportunities to write in more intellectually challenging ways during the second half of the year, albeit for a more

abbreviated assignment. This is consistent with the previous academic year, when Gina and Jamie engaged students in a writing project near the end of the year that allowed them to delve into the mental composition processes important for the development of novice writers (“The Soundtrack of My Life”). The instruction in Jamie and Dave’s classroom, however, could more accurately be characterized as a continuation of the instruction in Jamie and Gina’s classroom with changes more due to Gina’s absence than Dave’s presence. Dave’s role, due to the factors described in this chapter, was relegated to an assisting role that diminished as the year progressed until near the end of the year he was often not coming into the classroom at all. This example of what can happen when a partnership runs into difficulty early on demonstrates that even in a district known for a strong co-teaching program, a lack of a cohesive plan or training and supporting co-teaching partners can lead to negative outcomes for general and special educators and the students with whom they work. This example made salient which of Schaeffner and Buswell’s (1996) elements for successful inclusive instruction were weaker in this district and school: the development of a common philosophy and strategic plan; development of support networks; and organized and ongoing technical support.

7.0 CHAPTER VII: THE INTERMEDIATE PARTNERSHIP

During the time I spent at SJSHS, I observed co-teaching in two classrooms: a ninth grade classroom (first co-taught by Jamie and Gina and then by Jamie and Dave) and a seventh grade classroom co-taught by an English teacher, Sara, and her special educator partner, Mindy. These teachers were in the second and third years co-teaching together during the study. My findings for this partnership demonstrated a different and more common (e.g., Austin, 2001; Keefe & Moore, Scruggs et al., 2007) example of co-teaching. The partnership between Sara and Mindy, while characterized as positive by both teachers, was more of a traditional partnership with the English teacher in the role of lead teacher and the special education teacher in a support role.

A few contextual factors distinguished the seventh grade classroom from the ninth grade classroom. One major distinction was that the middle school classes, unlike the high school classes at SJSHS, were not tracked. During first year of the study, Sara and Mindy had a full range of students with various abilities. The following year, the classroom was less diverse because the math classes had become tracked. Due to scheduling issues, this resulted in a handful of very advanced students who were taking eighth grade math in the same classroom alongside what was otherwise a class of mostly struggling students. Another difference during the second year was a change in to block in the middle school, giving teachers additional time with their students. The high school

continued to have 42-minute periods while the middle school moved to having 67-minute blocks – an additional twenty-five minutes.

Other district and school factors as affecting co-teaching paralleled those for the high school. Like the high school teachers, these teachers also did not have planning time together during the time of my observations. The way they dealt with the situation, however, differed from what I saw in Jamie and Gina's room. Sara was the lead teacher; she did all of the planning and the curriculum was a result of her ideas. Mindy took on the role of the traditional special educator, supporting students with disabilities to ensure they were able to keep up with the work in the classroom. In the first half of this chapter, I describe how this partnership – successful in terms of Rice and Zigmond's (2000) areas of co-teacher compatibility – also represented a partnership that was less true co-teaching and more a traditional English teacher-special educator inclusion partnership.

7.1 RESEARCH QUESTION 1: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CO-TEACHING PARTNERSHIP: SARA AND MINDY

Sara Jenkins and Mindy Smith were identified by Sandy, the special education director, as successful co-teachers and recommended by her as participants for this study. Like Jamie and Gina, Sandy suggested that these two teachers had formed a strong and effective partnership. From my observations this seemed to be generally true. They worked in complementary ways in the classroom, both facilitating discussions, helping students, and giving students feedback on their work. Students were engaged in reading authentic texts, collaborating in small groups, and completing some creative and

academically challenging tasks that aligned with best practices in ELA instruction (e.g., Atwell, 1998; Beck & Jeffrey, 2009; Freedman et al., 2005; Smagorinsky, 2001). My first interviews with them revealed that each had positive feelings towards the other teacher and they were pleased with their partnership overall.

However, in my observations I found Sara and Mindy's partnership reflected what seemed to be a division of responsibilities that aligned more with traditional English and special education teacher roles rather than a co-teaching partnership that blurred the roles (like Jamie and Gina's partnership). This led me to question whether it was truly a co-teaching partnership rather than a more general inclusion arrangement. In this sense, the partnership faced a common problem. As Scruggs et al. (2007) assert:

If the qualitative research to date represents general practice, it can be stated that the ideal of true collaboration between equal partners – focused on curriculum needs, innovative practice, and appropriate individualization – has largely not been met. (p.412)

The lack of planning time figured prominently into this partnership's division of responsibilities, as they had planned together in the past when their schedules allowed for a shared free period but once they no longer had that shared period, the shared planning also diminished. Mindy relayed this change to me during our first interview:

Last year we had common planning time so we did a lot more planning together and talking and meeting and things like that. This year didn't work out quite as well as either one of us hoped that it would. But it's easier I think to teach

two classes because sometimes if we're still on the same page she does the first class and I'll take the second class. – Mindy, *7th grade special education teacher*

Although I did some observing in the spring of the first year of the study, the bulk of my observations were during the second year, at which point the middle school had changed from 42-minute periods to 67-minute blocks. As a result, Mindy and Sara only taught one block together in the morning during second year of the study and Mindy could no longer use the morning period to prepare for the afternoon, making the lack of a common planning period all the more problematic.

In the first section of this chapter, I detail both the strengths and some of the more salient needs of this particular partnership, drawing connections to Rice and Zigmond's five areas of co-teacher compatibility (Table 3.3 – categories used to organize the first part of this chapter); Schaeffner and Buswell's ten critical elements of inclusive education (Table 3.1); and the benefits of co-teaching across the broader field of literature (Table 3.2). These analyses were done with an eye towards what the partnership revealed about co-teaching at SJSHS.

7.1.1 Area 1: Shared Views on Academic and Behavior Standards for Students

Similar to my findings with Gina and Jamie, I found that Sara and Mindy had complementary though not necessarily fully aligned views on academic and behavior standards. As Sara stated during our first interview:

You know, I would [have a similar philosophy to Mindy's] on the surface perhaps, but Mindy and I have very different philosophies. She's much more conservative, a much different teacher than I am...No, I don't think an aligned philosophy is important at all. I think the ability to respect each other's philosophy and accept each others strengths to grow off is more important than alignment, I guess. – *Sara, 7th grade English teacher*

Although it may be unlikely that two teachers placed together will have the same perspectives on how teaching and learning should occur, it seems important that they can find areas of the agreement, compromise, and respect, which Sara emphasized as so important for a strong partnership.

Mindy and Sara may not have agreed on all aspects of teaching, but Sara went on to state that they were compatible in the areas that she thought were necessary for two teachers to share the space of the same classroom. In my third interview with her, Sara further explained the relationship she had with Mindy, focusing this time on the fundamental areas in which they found agreement.

She knows my style. I know her style. I think that she gets it. I get it. We get each other. ...I think it was almost natural. We both are very laid-back people...The things that are most important to her in a classroom – you know, kids feeling safe, kids taking risks – are the same things that I feel are most important in a

classroom. So she's just doing what she's doing and I'm just doing what I'm doing and it works. – *Sara, 7th grade English teacher*

Mindy, in her interviews, echoed this same sense of a natural and relaxed development of the partnership – a way that fit the personalities of these two teachers. When I asked about growth over the course of this intermediate partnership (I observed during their second and third years teaching together), Mindy resisted the idea that the partnership had “grown,” referring to the process of forming a partnership as more natural:

Sara and I have a good relationship but I don't know if things have really grown.

I think it's just a natural thing for us to together. There's always room for growth ...but we worked well enough together from the beginning. – *Mindy, 7th grade special education teacher*

Although Mindy and Sara both described the “natural” way in which their partnership developed, positive partnerships do not always occur naturally. Rice and Zigmond (2000) emphasize the challenges inherent in adjusting to working with another educator, particularly when teacher training has historically focused on the role of teachers as independent agents responsible for a classroom of students rather than as collaborative partners. In Mindy and Sara's partnership, there was a foundation of shared core values for supporting students and mutual respect for each other despite the fact that they didn't always have a shared point of view. For example, while Sara was a strong supporter heterogeneous classes with a wide range of student abilities, Mindy was more ambivalent

about the value of heterogeneously grouped classes. These differences did not cause rifts in the partnership, however.

One reason Sara and Mindy's partnership worked was because they both tacitly agreed to take on their traditional roles in the classroom. Sara was the curriculum planner, the one who led the core reading, literature, and writing instruction. This is not to imply that Mindy did not have input. In fact, as the more experienced teacher (Mindy was in her thirteenth and fourteenth years of teaching during the study while Sara was in her third and fourth), Mindy had started the partnership in a mentoring role towards Sara. As Sara gained expertise, this mentoring role faded away:

She'd bring me a concept and ask, "How should we do it?" It was more planning. Now the planning's there so it's more focusing on how to teach it You understand what I mean? We would just plan the whole thing versus now it's planned so then we just talk about changing – like different activities to do. – *Mindy, grade 7 special education teacher*

The initial mentoring occurred during the first year when Sara and Mindy had a common free period and represents one of the benefits of co-teaching cited in the literature - general education teachers build knowledge of strategies for working with diverse learners (e.g., Austin, 2001; Scruggs et al., 2007P). However, by the 2010 – 2011 school year, their second year co-teaching without planning time, Mindy was no longer involved in the planning process. Sara lamented that they no longer had time to prepare together. On the hand, Sara described (and I observed) a rhythm she and Mindy found that allowed

them to improvise and share the enactment of the lesson even if they couldn't plan it together:

You know, I wish we had...time to sit down and discuss. But we don't. There's no co-planning involved. There's no anything. I mean, she shows up and does what she does and then leaves. I mean there's nothing else involved in our relationship. So a lot of it is just a matter of knowing each other and stepping back and letting her go or if she sees I'm not going where she wants, where she thinks I should go...you know, it's just a matter of feeling comfortable enough to dip in. – *Sara, grade 7 English teacher*

Although Sara and Mindy didn't have the kind of close partnership that Gina and Jamie had, they had an arrangement that, while not ideal, worked for them. In this sense they were aligned in their expectations for each other. These two teachers had developed a common plan (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996) for their co-teaching partnership if not a fully aligned philosophy in regards to teaching and learning. Sara, as the English teacher, took over planning. Mindy, as the special education teacher, focused on how individual students fared and stepped in to provide support as needed. The use of a model focused primarily on differentiated instruction (Tomlinson, 2001) – students chose their own texts, teachers conferred with students frequently to provide individualized support, students had options for tasks, differing levels of scaffolding were offered depending on individual students' needs – allowed Mindy to still play a significant role in instruction despite her lack of involvement in planning. In this way the teachers demonstrated

flexibility and provided each other with a mutual support system (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996) despite the not fully sharing the lead teacher role and struggling with a lack of planning time.

7.1.2 Area 2: Honest and Open Communication

Although they did not have common planning time, Mindy and Sara were adept at communicating with each other “on the fly.” Sara’s approach to teaching was flexible and subject to change, focusing primarily on independent reading and writing work with a few key texts chosen throughout the year. Sara described her approach to teaching as somewhat unique and subject to her personal choices, meaning it was important for the teachers to have some level of communication so Mindy could keep up with Sara’s decisions:

I have to deal things out myself. And I don’t ever teach the same thing twice. I don’t even ever teach the same book twice. I get to know my kids and then from there I figure it out. I have a basic goal or basic objective headed into every unit and that’s not always even the same. And then based on where the kids are, then that’s how I make decisions about what we need to help scaffold many times. –
Sara, 7th grade English teacher

Sara’s unique and independent approach to planning instruction meant staying on top of what was happening each day was challenging for Mindy. There was a need to touch base with Sara, if only briefly, to stay abreast of how each unit of instruction might take shape.

For Mindy and Sara, this meant finding any moment of time that might be available, but perhaps due to their “laid back” personalities, they didn’t officially carve out time for this to happen. Mindy in one interview related to me that she and Sara had done some brief planning in the summer:

Sara and I had sat down in the summer and talked about things and I said, “Well I’d like to see them turning something in for their independent reading projects that would help them go through [their texts] and we would know what they’re reading...[the eighth grade teacher] does the same thing but she calls it summary and analysis. – *Mindy, 7th grade special education teacher*

In this way, Mindy describes how she had input into what ultimately became the weekly Read, Review, Respond writing tasks for students. Each student had to summarize a section of an independent reading book and then write a personal response to the literature. The Read, Review, Responds bolstered the independent reading projects they did every nine weeks by giving the teachers consistent evidence of where students were in the process of comprehending and interpreting independently read texts. It was encouraging to discover that the two teachers had made time to communicate and do some level of planning together. This appeared to be not only an example of honest and open communication (Rice & Zigmond, 2000) but ways that the two teachers developed a mutual support network and demonstrated flexibility (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996). When I pressed to learn more about how they had made this decision to meet and plan during the summer, however, I learned that it was a chance meeting that occurred when

the two teachers simply happened to be at the school doing some preparatory work for the coming year. It was not a scheduled meeting.

The opportunity taken during the chance meeting in the summer was reflective of Mindy and Sara's ongoing approach to communicating. They tried to capture and utilize available moments to touch base and connect but didn't have an organized way to ensure that communication occurred on a regular basis. Sara stated in our second interview:

You know, we don't really plan together but we discuss and do a lot of reflecting back on [student learning], you know what I mean? Looking back like, "Oh, you remember when he said that." That kind of thing. Like that. Maybe in passing.

Not like a 45-minute planned period but maybe a three or four minute conversation at the beginning or the end of the day. – *Sara, 7th grade*

English teacher

The two teachers may not have been allotted dedicated time from the district and may not have carved specific time periods out themselves, but they both seemed content to capitalize on opportunities to communicate as they arose. In regards to maintaining honest and open communication (Rice & Zigmond, 2000); addressing Schaeffner and Buswell's (1996) elements of effective inclusive education, including deliberate processes to ensure accountability for students, the development of a mutual support network, and flexibility; and enjoying the literature-identified co-teaching benefits for teachers of useful mutual feedback and mutual learning and enhancement (e.g., Austin, 2001; Scruggs et al., 2007), these two teachers appeared to be successful in their casual

approach to collaborating. However, the fact remained that Mindy was not helping with the bulk of the instructional planning. Even if both teachers communicated regularly and were comfortable with their arrangement, it still seemed problematic to me that ownership of the curriculum rested mostly with Sara while Mindy provided substantial and useful but nonetheless ancillary support. Mindy was not quite in the role of “helper” like the teachers in Keefe & Moore’s (2004) study; she certainly was doing more than making copies and checking homework. However, she seemed more like a consultant in the room – albeit an active and involved consultant – rather than another lead teacher. This was in distinct contrast to Gina’s role in the ninth grade classroom, where she took on more of a leading role. Although Gina and Jamie had a longer partnership, it also seemed that Mindy and Sara were complacent with their current arrangement and perhaps Sara was reluctant to let go of the degree of autonomy she enjoyed over developing the curriculum independently.

7.1.3 Area 3: Ability to Problem Solve Without Making the Problems Personal

Sara and Mindy overall enjoyed a positive partnership. Although they expressed that the situation in regards to planning time was not ideal, they each seemed genuinely satisfied with the other as a co-teaching partner. Where I saw a possible problem was not in their ability to problem solve but in their complacency with Mindy’s less active role in shaping the classroom instruction. Much of this seemed to stem from Sara’s strong ownership over the curriculum. Sara emphasized in our interviews how much she enjoyed and appreciated the freedom she had to create the curriculum for the class as she saw fit:

And I have been given – so far we have been given, knock on wood, given freedom. I mean total freedom over what [the curriculum] is. You have to find something that's going to relate to everybody while we're fortunate enough to have that opportunity. Yeah, a lot of the stuff I usually pull from the [Youngstown State University] English festival. – *Sara, 7th grade English teacher*

Sara's focus on modern young adult literature and plenty of student choice was very much rooted in her own experience as a high school student. She had been disengaged from reading the texts she encountered in high school even though she enjoyed reading independently chosen novels on her own. Her goal was one of engaging students through use of texts she thought they would find engaging and allowing them a great deal of choice.

Overall, as explained in detail in the second half of this chapter, Sara's approach was generally successful. However, the curriculum was so driven by Sara's decisions, it seemed there was little room for Mindy's input. This was a problem in that it prevented the two teachers from truly sharing the lead teacher role in an equitable way. In describing an earlier inclusion (but not co-teaching) partnership, Mindy described her role as the special education teacher as a job that entailed keeping students with disabilities on track and making modifications and adaptations as necessary to meet their needs.

Although Mindy perhaps took on a greater role in facilitating discussions and offered more support to general education students compared to what she did during her time as an inclusion teacher, it seemed Mindy's role did not change much as a co-teacher.

She still was not engaged in co-developing curriculum and instruction with her partner but rather provided adaptations and support as needed for students who struggled. In this senses, calling the model in this classroom “co-teaching” was problematic because the instruction in the classroom was primarily based on the planning of the English teacher and only supported by the special education teacher. In this way, Mindy and Sara’s partnership was reflective of many other partnerships represented in the literature, such as those in Austin’s (2001) study. Austin characterized the finding that general education co-teachers took on more responsibility than special education co-teachers in co-taught classrooms and that these teachers typically divided responsibilities according to assumptions that special education teachers knew more about making adaptations while general educators knew more about the content as “[p]erhaps the most compelling outcome of this study” (p.252). I posit that although Sara and Mindy’s partnership was typical according to findings in the co-teaching literature and considered successful by both the co-teachers and district administrators like Sandy, the uneven division of the lead teaching role was a problem that should have been addressed but wasn’t because both teachers and administrators were relatively satisfied with the situation as it was. Across the literature there is a general consensus that although an uneven division of teaching duties is common, it is problematic because the special education teacher’s knowledge and expertise do not get incorporated into the planning of instruction and students with disabilities may suffer as a result (e.g., Austin, 2001; Cook & Friend, 1995; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Murawski & Dieker, 2004; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al, 2007). Despite Sara’s use of DI (Tomlinson, 2001) and her dedication to providing students with support as needed, she was not a special education teacher and did not have

the same level of expertise in regards to planning instruction for students with disabilities compared to Mindy. Although the educational practices in this classroom were generally strong, students with disabilities would likely have benefitted even further if Mindy had a role in helping to plan instruction.

7.1.4 Area 4: Equal Pedagogical Skills

Sara and Mindy, like Jamie and Gina, also had complementary rather than equal pedagogical skills. It is logical that this would be the case since Sara and Jamie were trained as ELA teachers while Mindy and Gina were trained as special education teachers. At the onset of the co-teaching model in Stateline, Mindy had felt the same reservations as Gina regarding teaching the ELA curriculum:

When we started out [the special education teachers'] role was kind of like real reserved because we didn't know the curriculum. We didn't know what we were doing. – *Mindy, 7th grade special education teacher*

Unlike Gina and Jamie, Mindy and Sara didn't start out together. Rather, Sara joined the faculty at SJSHS a couple of years after the co-teaching model began. Mindy had, at that point, been moved around quite a bit and had not yet gotten the opportunity to develop a more established partnership. Sara was a newer teacher, in her second year when she began, so although she had a background in ELA instruction from her college experience, as a newer teacher she respected Mindy's extensive classroom experience. (Mindy had been teaching ten years longer than Sara had been teaching.) Over time, Sara became more confident in designing and implementing instruction on her own, so Mindy was no

longer in that mentoring role by the time I began observing during the second half of their second year together.

One area of knowledge that these teachers both seemed to understand in detail was the process for providing scaffolding in ways that supported but did not over-support struggling students. Whereas I saw an overuse of scaffolding in Gina and Jamie's class, this was not true in Sara and Mindy's class. Sara and Mindy each offered a detailed description for how they used scaffolding in the seventh grade classroom, with a focus on how gradual release of responsibility to the student was achieved for both group and independent projects:

On independent projects

I am always a give a big picture [teacher] and then figure out what I need to do to get them to where I want them to be. So I probably always present the highest step and then step down, step down, step down, step down. And I guess when I present a project or an idea or something like that, I'll present it at the highest level and some kids can go with it at that point and I'll allow them to go. And then we'll take it and maybe explain it maybe at another level, maybe break it up into two parts or maybe then break it up into three parts. And I guess I just always present the one thing and then two things and then three things. And wherever the kid can drop off and begin doing [it], that's just what we allow them to do. And sometimes it gets to the point where it's very obvious it's not going to happen in a class period for this kid. That's when they...maybe get some of that organizational [support], get some of that outline, get some of that stuff done in a

resource period....We are not a bottom up scaffolding team. We start [high] and then scaffold backward. – *Sara, 7th grade English teacher*

On group work

I think sometimes group work is good, sometimes it's not because I think the kids can feed off each other also and see the different looks from every kids perspective...And a lot of these kids are good [enough] with group projects that there's minimal assistance...[I]n the beginning it's more support. You keep backing off, backing off because once they have their ideas and the concept down, then it's just a matter of drawing and finding your quote. So at the beginning of the project there's always a little bit more interaction with the kids. And then after that you just kind of sit back and let them do the work and teach each other. – *Mindy, 7th grade special education teacher*

Both Sara and Mindy could articulate the process of gradually releasing responsibility to students. These teachers had a sense for the end goal of independent student performance. Further they both realized that once students were able to do something independently, there was no reason to provide a significant amount of scaffolding for all students. Rather, it made more sense to begin with a largely unsupported task and then provide additional scaffolding to students who needed it according to each student's level of need.

In this sense, the two seventh grade teachers demonstrated equal pedagogical skills (Rice & Zigmond, 2000) in the area of providing appropriate support and differentiation.

Further, the description of their teaching practices combined with evidence gained from my observations and analysis of artifacts suggest that these teachers showed evidence of effective teaching practices and deliberate processes to ensure accountability (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996). I suggest further that these well-defined and articulate statements of how to provide and then peel back scaffolding are indications of the co-teaching benefits providing mutual feedback and mutual learning and enhancement for teachers and benefits from instructional adaptations for students (e.g., Austin, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007; Wilson & Michaels, 20006). Despite the unequal distribution of planning responsibilities and more casual approach to communicating, these two teachers seemed to be reinforcing some positive and effective ideas about scaffolding through their classroom interactions and “on the fly” collaboration that might have been even further developed and enacted through more systematic and organized co-planning.

7.1.5 Area 5: Self-confidence, self-esteem, and the ability to take risks

Sara and Mindy each had confidence in their own abilities as teachers and from my observations, this confidence reflected demonstrated skill in their areas of teaching. Sara, as only a third and fourth year teacher, took the initiative to create her own materials, seek out texts independently, and develop tasks that got students to engage with texts in creative and often intellectually rigorous ways. Mindy, despite not knowing what the lesson for the day would be prior to walking into class, was able to quickly pick up on

what Sara was doing and joined in, supporting the lesson in a seamless fashion that belied her lack of prior preparation.

In regards to risk taking, Sara seemed to like the amount of control she had over the curriculum and letting go of this control would likely be difficult for her. Although she stated that she wished she had more time to sit down and talk to Mindy about plans for the class, she also used language that indicated she was happy to have ownership of the curriculum and the freedom to change it or let it evolve as the year progressed. In our interviews she made statements like the ones listed below that demonstrated this ownership and need for freedom - and perhaps a reluctance to allow Mindy too much influence, since she considered Mindy to be a “much more conservative” and “much different teacher” from her:

“She never helps plan. I put together all my units.”

“Every year I have to do something different...which is why probably with the planning, she and I don’t really plan together because I just make those decisions as I go.”

“It’s just how I work. But I’m not a big lesson person. I’m a big idea, meet with each [student], see where they fall, and what they need to advance.”

Mindy acquiesced to Sara’s ownership of the curriculum and unlike Gina who asked if she could try out her own unit (*That Was Then, This Is Now*), she was content to allow Sara to continue in the role of lead English teacher. This echoed a common phenomenon in the co-teaching literature - the reluctance of the general educator to relinquish

ownership over the curriculum and the reticence of the special educator to challenge the general educator's authority in the general education classroom (e.g., Austin, 2001; Scruggs, 2007). Perhaps Mindy's experiences as an inclusion teacher prior to the co-teaching model had led her to frame co-teaching as closer to a typical non-co-taught inclusion class, where the content teacher remained the lead teacher and the special education teacher provided support. (Although, in fairness, Gina had also taught inclusion without co-teaching and did not approach co-teaching in the same manner that Mindy did.) Mindy's approach was to provide students with individualized support or to provide additional support to small groups of students through minilessons during the resource period. For example, she described how she scaffolded the work of the student's with disabilities on the Read, Review, Respond projects through a minilesson conducted in the resource room:

So I did a whole minilesson on a Read, Review, Respond and how it should look ...and everybody did wonderful Read, Review, Responds together. And then [the students and I] would go through and they would interpret to me what happened as the review is like the summary. And so I would write it and say read mine and see the detail in there. And so they would say "this happened" and I'd be like "what else" and they'd go on and I'd say: "Nah, nah, nah. You have to tell me *exactly* what happened in between there. You're skipping parts. I haven't read this book. I need to know everything. – Mindy, 7th grade special education teacher

Their responses during interviews indicated to me that Sara and Mindy were likely comfortable in their respective roles and it would be difficult to get them to change. However, by not fully collaborating, they were not receiving the full benefits of co-teaching by which the general and special education teacher begin to learn the other person's role and the roles begin to blend; they experienced mutual enhancement in their current situation but that mutual enhancement would likely have been much greater if they had taken joint ownership of the curriculum (e.g., Austin, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007). To make this happen, each teacher needed to take a greater risk in stepping outside of her familiar role.

7.2. RESEARCH QUESTION 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LITERACY INSTRUCTION IN SARA AND MINDY'S CLASSROOM

As addressed in the previous section, Sara and Mindy's classroom was characterized by differentiated instruction (Tomlinson, 1999) that accounted for a wide range of students with different abilities through an emphasis on student-selected texts, tasks that offered the opportunity for student decision-making, and scaffolding that was incrementally increased according to individual students' needs. This was a different approach compared to the ninth grade classroom, where the co-teachers used primarily whole-class instruction and provided a great deal of scaffolding up front in anticipation that most students would have difficulty with classroom tasks.

One reason for this difference (besides different teaching philosophies) may have been the different composition of the two classrooms. In the ninth grade classroom, the

students without disabilities also struggled academically since the high school divided English classes into General and Academic English. In the seventh grade classroom, the composition of the class featured a full range of students with different abilities (albeit less of a full range in first year compared to the second year). Teachers with lower-tracked classes tend to teach differently than those with untracked classes, providing students with less rigorous instruction (e.g., Freedman et al., 2005; Nystrand et al., 2003).

In this section of the chapter, I explain in detail how literacy instruction took place in Sara and Mindy's classroom and discuss implications of these findings in connection to the existing literature on best practices in special education and ELA instruction, as listed in Tables 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, and 3.7.

7.2.1 The Nature of Reading and Literature Instruction

The reading and literature instruction in Sara and Mindy's room consisted of three major components: (1) Read, Review, Responds; (2) independent writing projects; and (3) whole-class instruction around common texts. Each component is analyzed in the sections that follow.

7.2.1.1 Read, Review, Responds

Sara was a strong proponent of independent reading. As a result, much of the reading students did was through self-selected texts that they could read on their own. Students were provided with a blank rubric, prompts, and a model Read, Review, Respond written by Sara at the beginning of the year. The Read, Review, Respond task aligned well with Biancarosa & Snow's (2006) recommendation that motivation and self-directed learning

be incorporated as an element of effective adolescent reading instruction; this approach addresses the direction maintenance feature of scaffolding (Wood et al., 1976).

In addition to letting students self-select texts, Sara also involved students in the rubric-writing process. Below is an excerpt from the class I observed when the Read, Review, Respond task was first introduced:

Sara: You are going to be doing a Read, Review, Respond every week. Let's read aloud a model I created for *Where the Red Fern Grows*.

A student began to read Sara's model. Sara stopped the student after the basic information at the top of the page. Sara then asked questions about what information was included on the paper and students responded— name, book title, author, pages read. The student then began reading the “review” section of the paper.

Sara: Which part of that – the part that she just read – what part was that?

Student: Review.

Sara: Why do you say that?

Student: Because it's what happened.

Sara directed them to the blank rubric and asked how many points they thought her model should receive.

Student: I think it was a “5” because you summarized the chapter and what everyone was doing.

Sara: Okay, so a 5-point review summarizes everything that happened. How long was that review?

Student: Half a page.

Sara: So a 5-point review is about half a page. What about the writing quality?

Student: Specific content.

Student: Good writing quality.

Sara: What do you think a 3-point is? I'll tell you one thing. It's shorter than half a page. So what else is 3 points? If a 5 point review has specific content?

Student: Not specific?

Sara: So general content. So shorter than a page, general content. What about the writing quality?

Student: Mistakes

Students offer examples of mistakes: misspelled words, disorganized, badly written sentences.

Sara: Yeah, so we're going to make some mistakes. So incorrect spelling, poor sentences, sentence structure, organization. Does anyone remember what we need for good organization?

Student: Beginning, body, conclusion.

This continued, with Sara writing on the board and students filling out their own rubric guides along the way, until they fleshed out the rubric. Through the use of her own model Read, Review, Respond, Sara offered students the chance to analyze a model that allowed them to clearly see what they would be expected to do each week. Modeling is a research-identified best practices for students with disabilities (e.g., Vaughn and Linan-Thompson, 2003) as well as a best practice for ELA instruction (e.g., Atwell, 1998), representing the demonstration and marking critical features (Wood et al., 1976) aspects of scaffolding.

Modeling was also used in the ninth grade class but in a more structured way that tended to lay out an exact blueprint for the students to follow. Gina stated in an interview that sometimes you needed to “model it to death.” This was not the way Sara and Mindy approached modeling or scaffolding in general. The vignette above from my field notes shows the least scaffolded stage of instruction and was conducted by Sara. She provided students with a model and a blank rubric, then incorporating the recruitment (getting students involved in analyzing the model), marking critical features, and direction maintenance features of scaffolding (Wood et al, 1976), she led them through unpacking why the model would score a high score. For some students this seemed to be sufficient scaffolding. For others, more support was provided on an individualized basis through conferences or small group instruction (typically in the resource room with Mindy).

During conferences and small group instruction, teachers could deploy scaffolding that addressed the reduction in degrees of freedom and frustration control features of scaffolding (Wood et al., 1976) for students who needed this level of support. Teaching small interactive groups, a technique used frequently by Mindy to address the needs of students who struggled the most, is considered a best practice in the area of special education (Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2003) and aided the teachers in ensuring that all students received sufficient support to learn within their ZPDs. The use of interactive groups to ensure student learning is both an example of deliberate processes to ensure accountability for student learning (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996) and ongoing progress monitoring (Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2003).

In addition to the model and the rubric, the students received a list of prompts meant to help them get started writing the response part of the Read, Review, Respond.

These served the scaffolding features of recruitment and marking critical features (Wood et al., 1976). There were four categories of prompts (including a description of what each category entailed) and each category included three or four prompts in question form.

Listed below are the categories of prompts, the teachers' description of each category, two examples of each kind of prompt, and a description of the cognitive level (Nystrand et al., 2003) elicited by prompts in each category. All of the prompts were authentic

1. Experiential Prompts

Description: These prompts tap into your prior knowledge, experience, or previous readings, promoting text-to-life or text-to-text connections.

Examples: How are some of the events in the story similar to your own experiences?

What are the parallels between what happens in the story and current events?

Cognitive Level (Nystrand et al., 2003): All four prompts were analytical prompts. Students were asked to breakdown details of one experience (e.g., a personal experience or current event) and compare the details of that experience to one in a text. These prompts were all asking students to make intertextual (Smagorinsky, 2001) connections across texts or between a text and a real life event.

2. Aesthetic Prompts

Description: These prompts tap into your emotional response to the text.

Examples: How does the story make you feel?

What is your perspective on how the main character handled a particular situation?

Cognitive Level (Nystrand et al., 2003): Although most of these prompts represented lower level cognitive skills (e.g., asking for current thinking or feelings about what was read) one prompt did encourage students to make a generalization. The prompt asked students to offer a personal perspective on how a character handled a situation, which required connecting ideas in the text related to the way the character handled the situation and building a personal perspective on that situation based on the evidence in the text.

3. Cognitive Prompts

Description: These prompts require you to think about what you have read and predict and infer what might happen next in the story. You may also be asked to consider the conflict facing a character in the story and provide possible resolutions.

Examples: What do you predict will happen next?

What assumptions can you make about why the main character behaved the way he/she did?

Cognitive Level (Nystrand et al., 2003): Two of the three prompts were speculative, asking students to make a conjecture. One prompt asked students to analyze the behavior of a character, carefully considering assumptions about that character that led to a particular behavior.

4. Interpretive Prompts

Description: These prompts call on you to interpret the message/lesson in the story and make judgments about a character's actions or intentions.

Examples: What big idea (lesson/moral) is the author trying to convey?

What qualities led you to believe the main character is a good/bad person?

Cognitive Level (Nystrand et al., 2003): These prompts could all be categorized as generalization or analysis. For example, one prompt asked students to make a generalization by determining a big idea in the text. This required students to pull together multiple subordinate ideas to determine an overarching idea. Another question, asked students to breakdown the qualities of a main character and make judgments about those qualities (analysis) to ultimately determine if a character was either good or bad (generalization).

These prompts addressed the scaffolding features of recruitment, marking critical features, and direction maintenance (Wood et al., 1976). They were also the kinds of prompts meant to encourage detailed writing, as opposed to short answers (e.g., the questions in the reading guides in the ninth grade classroom). Some students may have needed additional support or may have tried to answer the prompt in a less extensive way, but conferring with student and small group instruction as necessary allowed teachers to provide strategic tutoring (Biancarosa and Snow, 2006) to address any such issues as they arose.

Several of the prompts for the response section of the Read, Review, Respond task held the potential to facilitate meaningful interpretations of texts in ways that allow the students to develop a textual representation that is integrated with the broader cultural contexts in which they interact, work, and communicate; “new texts,” as Smagorinsky (2001) calls them. Prompts were created to encourage knowledge integration and to push

students beyond simple recall of what happened in the text. For example, the prompt that asked students to explore the qualities of a character that led them to believe the character was good or bad required students to use their own ideas, knowledge, and judgment to categorize personal qualities as either positive or negative and then, based on these judgments, make an overall judgment about the character. Other prompts asked students to engage in tasks such as drawing parallels between an event in the text and current event or to give their personal opinion on how a character handled a situation.

These examples illustrate intertextual connections (Smagorinsky, 2001) because they push students to beyond just comprehending what the text says to actually integrating what they've learned from the text with knowledge of coming from their own life experiences or other texts. Engaging in this kind of intellectual work is more challenging than just stating what is happening in a particular text; students have to consider why something happens or pull together ideas to determine an overarching idea that emerges (Nystrand et al., 2003). In this sense, students were guided towards using texts and teacher questions as tools to promote concept formation within their personal ZPDs (Vygotsky, 1986).

It is possible that the Read, Review, Responds activities (as well as with the independent writing projects, which are discussed in the next section), because of their emphasis on student-selected texts, may have led struggling students to consistently select texts that were not challenging. Students who consistently chose “easy” texts therefore may have maintained rather than furthered their independent reading levels by not tackling sufficient complex texts necessary for them to move forward within the ZPD (Vygotsky, 1986). The class read some texts together but the student-selected texts

represented the heart of the curriculum. The current push to have all students reading complex texts and a more balanced mix of literary and informational texts (Coleman & Pimental, 2012) seems at odds with a curriculum based primarily on young adult novels chosen by students.

In one example of planning on the fly, Sara and Mindy grappled over whether or not to use a reading assessment (the DRA) to determine students' reading levels and to then guide them towards reading books that matched those levels. Sara initially was in favor of having students read books at their independent reading levels because she feared students would become frustrated. Mindy, on the other hand, was concerned that students would not become better readers if they only read books at their independent level. They finally agreed to hold off on giving the DRA too early in the year, in hopes of preventing students from attempting more challenging texts. This example demonstrates the challenge the teachers faced in trying to offer student choice while also encouraging students to become more proficient readers. (Please see Appendix N for the prompts, blank rubric, and Sara's model Read, Review, Respond.)

7.2.1.2 Independent Writing Projects

The independent writing projects were the other major, ongoing tasks students completed regularly throughout the year. Every nine weeks students had to complete a major project based on one of the two books they had read independently during that time. These projects were purposely rather ambiguous. At the beginning of the year, students received a list of options from which they could choose. These included a book soundtrack, movie poster, novel cube, yearbook, or newspaper article. Each option included a description of

the project that offered some but not extensive guidance. For example, the novel cube was described as listed below:

Novel Cube: Empty shoe boxes or cereal boxes work well for this assignment.

You'll need six aspects of the novel on your cube; one on each side. Novel cubes should be creative, neat, and reflect the book. For instance, if you just finished *The Diary of Anne Frank* your novel cube should not have rainbows and sunflowers all over it because they do not capture the mood of the book. The six aspects you should focus on are Author and Title, Setting, Main Characters, Plot Summary, Genre, and your Evaluation of the book.

Each type of project also had a basic rubric. The rubric for the novel cube is included below:

Novel Cube (100 points)

(10 pts) Cube is neatly constructed and creative.

(10 pts) Cube reflects the theme and mood of the book.

(10 pts) Author and title

(10 pts) Setting (time and place are represented)

(10 pts) 3- 4 Main Characters are listed and described.

(10 pts) Plot summary (include the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution)

(10 pts) Genre (Be specific. Novels are fiction; your job is to tell me what kind of fiction.)

(10 pts) Evaluation (Find a creative way to rate your book.)

The initial scaffolding for the independent reading projects was focused on primarily marking critical features (Wood et al., 1976) – showing students what key elements (e.g., genre, setting, characters, plot, evaluation) should be included in a chosen project to demonstrate understanding and interpretation of a particular text. Students were given freedom to create their projects in unique ways and to engage in the intellectual work necessary to plan and carry out the project, making it possible for students to incorporate their own ideas and to integrate those ideas with ideas in a text. For example, a student choosing the movie poster had to cast the characters in the text using real actors or people they knew. They had to be able to explain those casting choices. In determining a casting choice, the student had to consider the qualities of the character and compare them to real people who may be able to embody that character in some way. Although this kind of project could be done at a basic level (e.g., using only looks as a criteria), these projects held the potential for making some intertextual connections (Smagorinsky, 2001). (See Appendix O for the list of possible projects and associated rubrics.)

Both the Read, Review, Responds and the independent reading projects were primarily examples of motivation and self-directed learning (Bianacrosa & Snow, 2006) and the tasks themselves included only minimal scaffolding, primarily in the areas of recruitment and marking critical features (Wood et al., 1976). However, some students did require additional support to do this work.

As previously discussed, teaching small interactive groups (Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2003) was one way in which the teachers addressed the more significant needs of some students. Another was through regularly conferring with students about their work, an approach advocated by Atwell (1998) as important for formative

assessment and providing appropriate instruction to keep each student within their ZPD.

The example below from my field notes demonstrates how Mindy used the resource period to provide appropriate scaffolding to individual students:

Mindy sat with a student who wanted to do a yearbook project for his book:

Mindy: Alright, let's figure out what you're doing. Get me a piece of paper. Just a regular piece of paper. Alright, here's what you are going to do for your book. First, you know you are going to have a cover. Each character is going to have a picture of a real person that represents them. Give me a character.

Student: Travis

She draws a box on the paper.

Mindy: So tell me about Travis.

Student: He's fourteen years old. He likes hunting.

Mindy: Okay so who does Travis remind you of? Like a famous person or it can be you.

Student: Probably me.

Mindy writes "Travis Roberts" under the box and tells him he would put a picture of a celebrity or real person there.

Mindy: Okay then you are going to put the activities he'd be in. So hunting. What else? What activities outside of school would he be involved in?

Student: He worked for his neighbor....

Mindy: Okay. What else does he like to do? Does he ride a bike a lot? He's a farmer, so maybe he'd be in 4H. Is 4H just for girls or boys, too?

The student responds that 4H is for both.

Mindy: So here's just a list of activities that they might be involved in: drama, chorus, wrestling, church group....(She lists a number of school-based and out-of—school activities.) Every character is going to get a superlative so there's always like "Most Likely to Succeed," "Best Eyes," "Biggest Flirt," etc. What would Travis be?

Student: He likes to have adventures.

Mindy: So "Most Adventurous." Each character has to have a quote that represents them from the book. So if Travis likes to hunt and would probably be in 4H...then find something that says that.

Mindy sent this student off to work on his project on moved on to another student who wanted to create a movie poster.

Mindy: Here's what you are going to do in a movie poster. What's your book?

The student retrieved his book.

Mindy: Here's the way I'd set my movie poster up. Find a picture on the computer or something that shows a scene. Some people even just print the cover. Then you need to have the title and the author. (She draws a box and writes "Photo" "Scene" "Title" "Author" in the places where they would belong on the poster.) Then on the back what I'd do...who's your characters? (She flips the paper over.)

Student: Kludd

Mindy: Okay who does Kludd remind you of? What kind of person is he? Who is a famous person or someone you know who he reminds you of?

Student: My brother.

Mindy: Okay so you are going to put a picture of your brother and explain why he represents Kludd. Why is Kludd like your brother?

Student: Because he always tries to be the best at everything.

Mindy: Does your brother do that?

Student: Yeah.

Mindy asks him for a scene from the book where Kludd tries to be the best and the student describes an elaborate scene.

Mindy: So you are going to take this person, explain how they are similar and you are going to explain it through text.

In the examples above, Mindy supported individual students in what could be characterized as a combination of strategic tutoring (Biancrosa & Snow) and conferring (Atwell, 1998). Within the context of these individualized conferences, Mindy deployed several features of scaffolding. She used demonstration by explaining how she would tackle a particular task (e.g., “Here’s the way I’d set my movie poster up.”)

Demonstration, or modeling, is a technique advocated not only by Wood et al. (1976) and Atwell (1998) but also as part of self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) for writing instruction - although usually with SRSD a specific strategy (typically a mnemonic device) that scaffolds student writing is modeled (Graham & Perin, 2007).

In some cases Mindy perhaps offered too much guidance by telling students to do the project in a particular way. For example, by drawing a movie poster for a student and telling him that this is “the way I would do it,” she removed the challenge of organizing the ideas in the poster. Mindy considered some of her students with disabilities to be

very struggling learners in need of significant support – similar to the way Jamie and Gina saw many of their students. This example is another illustration of the challenge teachers face when working with students who struggle significantly with reading and writing. Scaffolding features such as frustration control and reduction in degrees of freedom (Wood et al., 1976) can make a task accessible to a very struggling student. The occasional need for extensive support has been cited in the literature on best practices for students with disabilities as well.

Sometimes making a task less difficult is necessary for a student to be able to accomplish the task (Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2003). However, even students who require extensive scaffolding for a task at first should eventually become more independent in doing those tasks. The goal behind scaffolding is for the novice to eventually be able to accomplish the task independently (Wood et al., 1976). The challenge for teachers is in determining when and how to pull back scaffolding and allow the student to do more independently.

Ongoing progress monitoring is also cited as a best practice for students with disabilities (Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2003). It seems that progress monitoring and controlling for task difficulty are two techniques that should work together. As a student becomes more proficient, it is important to notice this proficiency and to remove some of the support that is no longer needed. If a student is learning, then the ZPD should be a moving target and the mediation required to accomplish a particular task should change as concept formation occurs (Vygotsky, 1986). For example, perhaps the student creating the movie poster really needed a format for organizing his ideas. Next time, Mindy might have him tell her how he wants to organize the poster while she provides less specific

guidance (e.g., asking his questions that help him think through the organization). In this way the teacher can ensure gradual release of responsibility to the student is actually occurring.

A particularly encouraging finding about the independent reading projects is that the teachers had evidence that some students were becoming more independent, particularly in the latter part of the year. During our final interview, Sara described how some students had begun to create their own project ideas rather than just choosing one of the five suggested independent reading projects. Sara was motivated by the unique projects some students created because she saw this as evidence of students becoming more independent in their learning:

Somebody was doing – it was like a detective novel. So they wanted to create the detective’s file. So they had like the case file and they had like every single suspect in the case, how they thought they were, where the interview led, and like actual interview questions and answers. Things like that. That was kind of a cool project, one I’d never seen before. Somebody created a gameboard that followed the plot of the [novel] and, the pieces were symbolic to some point in the story. Somebody wrote a play, turned the book into a play with stage directions and dialogue, which we had done from *A Christmas Carol*. – Sara, grade 7 English teacher

These examples demonstrate that as the year progressed, at least some students were becoming more independent. The students in these examples created projects that

demonstrated intertextuality (Smagorinsky, 2001) by incorporating ideas from texts they read with knowledge from other sources. The students who created the detective's file, for example, may have incorporated ideas from television police dramas in creating this project. The student who wrote the place actually made the intertextual connection explicit; the play version of *A Christmas Carol*, a text previously read by the whole class, served as the inspiring idea for this project.

It is important to note that these unique projects were created by students who were typical students in the class. These were not students with disabilities, but they also were not students who were considered advanced. Evidence of student learning as seen in this example suggests that at least some students were doing independent, interpretive work with texts that might later facilitate the ability to write literary analyses as they moved into high school and writing demands became more challenging (Beck & Jeffrey, 2009). The challenge remaining for the teachers would be to get more students, including those with disabilities, doing this kind of work.

7.2.1.3 Whole Class Work with Common Texts

Unlike in the ninth grade classroom, whole class work around common texts represented only a portion of the instruction in the seventh grade classroom rather than the primary instructional focus. During the time of my observations, the teachers led students through three longer texts and several short texts. The longer texts were *Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse, *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, and *Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie* by Jordan Sonnenblick. These novels were selected by Sara and taught mainly through the use of two techniques: text-based collaborative learning and whole group discussions.

Common texts were primarily used for class discussions and therefore addressed in the next section. However, it is important to explain how the seventh grade teachers created tasks that fostered higher-level cognition and recitation in a way that was very different from what I observed in the ninth grade classroom.

Appendix P shows a task implemented during the unit on *Out of the Dust*. The first part of the task focused on getting students to use the text to develop an understanding of the cultural context. They first listed ten details about the Dust Bowl based on their reading; then in a small group of two to three people, they developed a timeline showing the events leading up to the Dust Bowl, building an understanding of how it occurred; finally, they speculated on how it might have been prevented, listing five things that might have helped avoid the situation.

The second part of the task focused primarily on getting students to identify sensory imagery and to identify and explain evidence from the text. First they cited ten lines from the text that showed how life in the 1930s was depicted. They then had to identify the focal literary device for this task. (The literary device was imagery.) From there, they were prompted to cite passages that appealed to each of the five senses, then make a judgment about whether authors used imagery more effectively by appealing to one or several senses. They were expected to explain their judgment. Finally, the students were prompted to reread two sections of the text and to develop a thesis regarding which section used text more effectively, citing evidence from the text as part of their response.

The prompts for this task engaged students primarily in what Nystrand et al. (2003) would label as analysis (e.g., breaking down how examples of imagery were used into smaller parts) and generalization (e.g., building up an argument for whether authors

are more effective when they appeal to one or more senses and developing a thesis that builds a case for the effectiveness of the imagery in one specific passage over another) as well as some speculation (e.g., considering how the Dust Bowl may have been prevented). These kinds of tasks are higher-level cognitive tasks that are more challenging than relaying information. Such work aligns with the goal of getting students to integrate new and existing knowledge in ways that foster meaningful interpretations (Smagorinsky, 2001).

7.2.2 The Nature of Discussion

Discussion in Sara and Mindy's class occurred in three different ways: whole group discussion of commonly read texts, small group discussions of texts read by either the whole class or a small group of students, and teacher-student conferences about a student's own writing or an individually read text (for a Read, Review, Respond or independent writing project). Although they used sometimes reading guides, such as the one for *Out of the Dust* (Appendix P), reading guides did not structure most class discussions the way they did in the ninth grade classroom. By her own admission, Sara was "not a big lesson person." Most of her questions were not planned out in advance. Rather, she would support students and try to let the discussion flow in a natural way. Mindy joined the discussion at her own discretion. As I explain later in this section, Sara in particular seemed to make attempts to guide students to make intertextually constructed meanings (Smagorinsky, 2001) by posing questions that connected what they read to their own lives and experiences. As I discovered, however, this didn't lead to more dialogic discussions; in fact, I did not actually witness any true dialogic

discussions or even dialogic spells in this classroom. This does not mean that students were not offering engaged responses. As Table 7.3 shows, students did offer engaged responses quite a bit, even if less engaged responses were more common. However, they were not building on one another's responses or posing questions that led to class discussions.

Whole group discussion was often interspersed with small group work. This gave students the opportunity to talk to one another. Those responses are not coded in the table below. Due to circumstances in the classroom (my inability to record, attempts to remain unobtrusive) it was difficult to capture the exact discussions that occurred in small groups, but typically students would be given a task, asked to engage in that task with group members, and then share highlights of their group discussions with the class - a technique (text-based collaborative learning) cited by Biancarosa and Snow (2006) as effective for struggling readers. I offer an example of this activity later in this section of the chapter.

7.2.2.1 Whole Group Discussions

I have included here tables of teacher input (Table 7.2) and student input (Table 7.3) during discussions in Sara and Mindy's classroom. As in Chapters 5 and 6, incorporate Nystrand et al.'s (2003) categories of dialogic bids, which are explained in Table 3.6 of Chapter 3. These tables are based on 24 of the 29 sets of field notes I collected (excluding notes taken during observations when discussions of literature did not occur – e.g., class sessions devoted to grammar exercises). The tables offer a general portrait of how teachers and students participated in discussions in this classroom.

Table 7.1 Teacher Input in Sara and Mindy's Classroom

Teacher Input	Total Count	% of Total Teacher Moves*	Total Count: Mindy	Total Count: Sara
Teacher Explanation	118	21%	48	70
Teacher Test Questions	113	20%	43	70
Low-Level Authentic Questions	40	7%	8	32
High Level Authentic Questions	45	8%	9	36
Uptake	146	26%	37	109
Evaluation	52	9%	14	38
Evaluation with Follow Up	39	7%	8	31
Total Teacher Input	553	*Percentages are rounded to the nearest 100 th	167	386

Table 7.2 Student Input in Sara and Mindy's Classroom

Student Input	Total Count	% of Total Student Moves*
Authentic Student Questions	7	2%
Engaged Response	133	39%
Low Engagement Response	201	59%
Total Student Input	341	*Percentages are rounded to the nearest 100th

Overall several important findings emerged from these data: (1) teacher moves were coded far more often than student moves (894 total moves, 553 teacher moves, 341 student moves), with teacher talk comprising 62% of the recorded talk moves and student talk only 38%; (2) coded talk moves for Sara were more than triple that of coded talk moves for Mindy, with Sara's moves comprising 70% of the total teacher talk compared to 30% of Mindy's moves, confirming Mindy's more auxiliary role in the classroom; and (3) although teacher moves coded as uptake - one of the moves labeled as a dialogic bid by Nystrand et al. (2003) - were more common than any other category of teacher move, the overall percentage (?) of engaged responses by students was similar to that in Gina and Jamie's class (see Table 5.3 in Chapter 5) where uptake was far less common (see Table 5.2 in Chapter 5) and there were no examples of dialogic spells or dialogic

discussions. Concerned about my findings regarding uptake, I returned to Nystrand et al.'s (2003) definition of uptake:

We defined uptake as occurring when one conversant, for example, a teacher, asks someone else, for example, a student, about something the other person said previously (Collins, 1982). In an example of uptake taken from a ninth-grade lesson on *The Odyssey*, the teacher asks, "What do they have to do to Polyphemus?" A student replies, "Blind him." The teacher then follows up, asking, "How come the plan is for blinding Cyclops?" (p.145)

According to Nystrand et al., moves like this help incorporate multiple voices into a discussion and contribute to coherence in a discussion. I returned to my data on Sara and Mindy's classroom and examined examples I coded as uptake for these teachers. I thought one reason for the discrepancy might be that a few examples of the uptake I coded occurred during conferences with individual students or with small groups of students. However, these only accounted for 8 examples of uptake for Mindy and 9 examples of uptake for Sara.

To get further insight into this phenomenon, I began examining whole class lessons where uptake was coded several times. The example below comes from a segment of lesson on *Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse. This example indicates how uptake was sometimes made less effective when (1) a teacher followed up an example of uptake with a teacher test question before students could respond to the uptake and (2) when uptake was phrased in such a way that it became leading for the student (and

therefore more like a teacher test question). Such moves might lead to a reduced opportunity for dialogic spells or discussions:

Sara: Okay. She values education a lot but what do we know about Ma and the piano? Read this line here. "I can't make myself over the way Ma did." What does that mean? How do you make something over? Be made over? Get a makeover?

(Higher level authentic question – generalization)

Mindy: No one watches *Extreme Makeover*? What is a makeover girls? **(Teacher test question)**

Student: Be a better person. **(Less engaged response)**

Mindy: Does it make over your personal or physical traits? **(Teacher test Question)**

Student : It's on the outside. Makeup and hair. **(Less engaged response)**

Mindy: So it makes over your physical traits.

Sara: But what does it mean here? What does it mean Ma got made over? **(Uptake)**

Student: It means she'll have more responsibility like her. She'll do what her mother used to do. **(Engaged response)**

Student: She can do what her ma did personally but she can't do what her ma did physically. **(Engaged response)**

Student: Like for a makeover ...change the person that you are. **(Engaged response)**

Sara: She was this music-loving, piano playing person with dreams but she made herself over. **(Teacher explanation)**

Mindy: What happened to her? **(Higher level – generalization)** Does she play the piano all the time and have these big dreams? **(Teacher test question)**

Student: No [she doesn't play the piano anymore]. She's just being a mom.

(Engaged response)

Sara: Why doesn't she play piano anymore? **(Uptake)**

Student: It has something with her dad. **(Engaged response)**

Sara: Yeah. It has to do with the dad. It has to do with the dust. What has happened to Ma? **(Evaluation with follow up)**

Mindy: What did she lose? **(Teacher test question)**

Student: Ma's changing because of the dust and she can't do what she did before the dust. **(Engaged response)**

Sara: Why does she change? **(Uptake)**

Mindy: What does she lose? **(Teacher test question)**

Student: I'm just going to guess here but I am going to guess [she loses] hope for the rain. **(Less engaged response)**

Mindy: And not just hope for the rain but just ... **(Uptake)**

Student : Hope. **(Less engaged response)**

In this example I found that although Sara did take up student ideas and ask follow up questions/ or probe for more interpretation in a way that supported the direction maintenance feature of scaffolding (Wood et al., 1976), Mindy frequently followed up

Sara's uptake with a teacher test question – an example of reduction in degrees of freedom (Wood et al., 1976). Mindy clearly wanted a student to say that Billie Joe's mother lost hope while Sara was trying to let the students figure out what happened to the mother more on their own. Sara asked questions such as "What is happening to Ma?" and "How does she change?" – questions that encourage students to make a generalization by drawing evidence from the story together in a way that builds up a theory of why the mother changed.

Conversely, Mindy asked questions that led students to a specific answer. The single instance of uptake on the part of Mindy in this excerpt also led to an answer, making it closer to a teacher test question. Rather than using uptake to direct students toward a specific intellectual and interpretive goal, Mindy used it to reduce degrees of freedom, making the task a lower level task of finding the "right" answer (Wood et al., 1976). Mindy took up a student's idea (that Ma had lost hope for the rain) once in the excerpt, but she phrased her uptake as a fill-in the blank statement. Further, the student response she was taking up in this example was actually a student's attempt to guess the right answer Mindy was looking to elicit.

Mindy, as a special education teacher, may have been concerned that some students would not be able to get at the key ideas in the text without significant help. Crafting questions that led to dialogic exchanges rather than asking more leading teacher test questions proved challenging not only for Mindy, but also for the ELA teacher, Sara. Although she used more authentic questions than Mindy, she also relied quite often on teacher test questions and struggled to elicit engaged responses from students. These

findings align with Nystrand et al.'s (2003) findings that teachers typically struggle to structure effective class discussions.

In an effort to further clarify why teacher uptake of students' ideas did not lead to dialogic spells in this classroom, I analyzed a second example of classroom talk that included uptake by both teachers. Below is an excerpt from a lesson on the play version of *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens. I found, in this example, that both teachers used uptake less to facilitate discussion and more to probe and assess an individual student's thinking:

Sara: In review what is a main character? **(Teacher test question)**

Student: It is a person who is in the story a lot. **(Less engaged response)**

Sara: More. **(Uptake)**

Student: It is the person the story revolves around. **(Less engaged response)**

Sara: Good. So what's a minor character? **(Evaluation with follow up)**

Student: Helps tell the story. **(Less engaged response)**

Sara: Good. **(Evaluation)**

Student: Not there to help the story but like a background character.

(Engaged response – correcting previous student's answer)

Mindy: What's a foil character do? (Students are instructed to look through their notes.) **(Teacher test question)**

Student: It's different. **(Less engaged response)**

Mindy: Different than what? **(Uptake)**

Student: The other character. **(Less engaged response)**

Mindy: The main character. **(Teacher explanation)**

Sara: Remember we read about some foil characters on Monday. Who were those foil characters?**(Teacher test question)**

Student: Fred was the foil character for Scrooge. **(Less engaged response)**

Mindy: Why is that? **(Uptake)**

Student (thinks about it): Because Fred's always all happy and Scrooge doesn't like the holidays. **(Engaged response)**

In this example, both teachers use uptake (and, similarly, evaluation with follow up) to probe a student's thinking - as a way to provide scaffolding for students through direction maintenance (Wood et al., 1976). However, they did not typically use uptake as a dialogic move to facilitate class discussion by, for example, encouraging other students to expand on a student's initial response. Sara first used uptake to assess whether a particular student really understood the concept of a "main character." Mindy similarly used uptake to determine if a student could explain what was meant by a "foil character." Neither of these led to engaged responses; the students tried, rather, to give the teachers the "right" answer.

The third example of uptake, posed by Mindy, did lead to a more engaged answer; the student provided reasoning for why Fred was a foil character for Scrooge. However, this uptake again seemed aimed at an assessment of how well a particular student understood a concept rather than an attempt to foster a dialogic discussion. As a result, the student who was directly asked responded to the uptake, elaborating on his or her original response. Again, these findings seem to speak to the challenge inherent in

facilitating effective classroom discussions for not only special education teachers but also ELA teachers.

7.2.2.2 Engaging Talk: Use of Intertextually-Focused Questions and Text-Based Collaborative Learning

Although the talk in this classroom was not characteristic of the dialogic spells and discussions defined by Nystrand et al. (2003), it would be unfair to represent the classroom talk as globally not engaging for students. On the contrary, there were opportunities for students to talk about texts in meaningful ways. One was through questions that got students to construct representations that were “emplotted” in their own life experiences and that drew parallels across texts, or that were “intertextual” (Smagorinsky, 2001). The other was through the use of text-based collaborative learning (Bianarosa & Snow, 2006) – frequent opportunities for students to engage in discussions with each other about a text they were reading. These components of the classroom talk, although not serving as a substitute for rich dialogic discussions about texts, did allow for opportunities for meaningful engagement with texts.

Intertextually-Focused Questions

Sara made a particular effort to have students find parallels between characters and situations in the texts they read and their own lived experiences. As analyzed in the section on reading and literature instruction, Sara employed the use of prompts for the Read, Review, Respond assignments that addressed intertextuality in the two ways noted by Smagorinsky (2001): (1) through evoking students’ own life experiences in relationship to the text and (2) through juxtaposition of the focal text with another text

(print, visual, or multimedia). Smagorinsky suggested that connections between ideas in a text and life experiences in particular can help students make the kinds of personalized representations of texts that “emplot their literary readings in their life narratives as dramatic occasions in their development of personality” (p.157). As such, personalized representations are not only important for literacy development but, on a larger scale, for human development in adolescents. Sara used questions encouraging intertextual connections not only as Read, Review, Respond prompts but also as questions that shaped classroom talk and in doing so placed value on these kinds of connections. Below are some examples of questions that encouraged intertextuality:

- “If you were Peter Driscoll and Cole did to you what he did to Peter, would you want Cole in the Circle of Justice or would you want him in jail? What if you were Jeffrey? (to a girl) Would you date him?” (Text: *Touching Spirit Bear* by Ben Mikaelson)
- “How does that relate to the conversation we had about Afghanistan?” (Text: news article about people living in Afghanistan/comparison to *Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse)
- How many of you would leave? How many of you wouldn’t? How many of you think he leaves? How many of you think he stays? (*Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie* by Jordan Sonnenblick)

- How many of you would have died if your parents had found that message (from girls to Steven)? How would you have reacted if your parents heard that message? (*Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie* by Jordan Sonnenblick)

Such questions seemed to provide scaffolding by recruiting students to consider how they would react to a situation like one described in a text or marking critical features by suggesting a situation in one text (e.g., people living during the Dust Bowl) may have similarities to another text (e.g., people living in modern day Afghanistan) and then recruiting students to draw a comparison between two texts (Wood et al., 1976). In addition to encouraging intertextuality, they also encourage speculation – a higher order thinking skill (Nystrand et al., 2003) – and encourage connections that students may otherwise not make on their own.

I had at least some evidence that this classroom was the kind of “transactional zone” that Smagorinsky (2001) posits can help students “employ their literary readings in their life narratives” because students would sometimes share information about themselves in connection with a piece of literature during a class discussion. In one especially poignant example, during a discussion of the text *Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie* by Jordan Sonnenblick, a novel that deals with childhood cancer, one student shared his own personal story of his battle with cancer as a younger child. Sara welcomed the personal story, asking him questions that helped draw parallels between lived experience and the experience of the characters in a literary text:

A student, Randy, divulged that he had leukemia as a young child. He told a story about how his lungs collapsed while he was running.

Sara: How did your parents react?

Randy: Well my dad was scared and my mom was worried and the whole family just wanted to come and see me. The first time when it happened, we went to Pittsburgh.

Sara referred to a scene in the book when a character has to get injected with a needle in his back. Randy said he also had to be injected with needles in his back.

Sara: How long have you been cancer free?

He said he has been cancer free for five years.

She asked him to name something specifically that he related to in the story.

Randy: Well like how he goes through those machines. I had one beside me.

Sara: Did you go to school at that time?

Randy: No because I had a machine beside me and it pushed the medicine in me slowly.

Sara: How did you know that you were cancer free?

Randy: Well they kept checking and eventually it was gone.

Another student who knew Randy since they were young children chimed in that he also remembered when Randy was sick.

Sara's willingness to allow these personal vignettes to become part of the class discussion of a text and, perhaps more notably, students' willingness to divulge personal information such as this in class, speaks to the transactional zone of Sara and Mindy's classroom.

Although Mindy didn't tend to be the one who asked these kinds of questions during whole group instruction, she was also supportive of students sharing personal connections and, in her one-on-one interactions with students, tried to encourage connections to lived experiences as well. Overall, this classroom was one that valued and encouraged the kinds of idiosyncratic and personal textual representations that Smagorinsky (2001) argues are important to personal as well as literacy development.

Text-Based Collaborative Learning

As previously stated, Mindy and Sara had students engage in small group text-based activities on a regular basis. In the example below, Sara and Mindy were teaching students about imagery through having them find examples of imagery in the novel *Out of the Dust* together with a small group of other students (See Appendix P for handout):

Sara: What is imagery? You just told me.

Student: What you can imagine.

Sara: The authors writes it so you can imagine by appealing to your...

Student : Your senses.

Sara wrote a definition on the board and read it aloud to students: Imagery is details that appeal to your senses - when you can see it, feel it, imagine it.

Sara: "We haven't had a good crop in 3 years." Is this showing or telling?

Students say it is telling.

Sara: When someone tells you that you have to chew milk, where do you feel it in your body? Don't you want to spit it out?

Students are directed to page with hand, nose, eye, and mouth.

Sara tells them that they should find something that they can see, hear, feel, smell, or taste.

Students were broken into groups. Each group was assigned a different sense.

Sara: “Find me something you can see. Find me something you can hear...”

Mindy checked in individually with students.

After finding examples in the book, each group was instructed to write an example on the board. The examples would then be shared with the class.

Sara: Let’s look at this list.

She then led them through talking about the examples, such as the one below.

“Mud streamed out. He coughed and spit out mud. If he had cried, his tears would have been mud, too, but he didn’t.”³³

Mindy: Where would the mud have been coming from?

Student: His tear duct?

Mindy: Think about when you were a little kid and you got in all muddy and dirty and you cried.

Sara: So the dust is on his skin but where else?

Student: His body system.

Sara: The dust was on him but was also in him. It was almost if the dust becomes part of them.

Sara erased the board.

The students returned to looking for examples

Sara noticed that all the senses except smell were taken and informed the students that she and Mindy would take smell. The two teachers then began to

look for examples to model for the students as the students in their small groups looked for their own examples.

Sara: See if you can come up with 2 or 3 good examples and we'll go over these on Monday.

In this example, the teachers were mediating concept formation (Vygotsky, 1986) in the students by first explaining the concept and then recruiting students (Wood et al., 1976) to find their own examples. After the students had done some work finding examples, the teachers provided additional scaffolding by having them share some examples as a class. This scaffolding addressed the features of marking critical features (of imagery, in this case) as well as direction maintenance (Wood et al., 1976). Students were then sent off to find more examples in their small groups. This example is indicative of a common technique used in the seventh grade classroom that engaged more students in the process of talking to each other about ideas in a text. Although students didn't contribute much to whole class discussion, in their individual groups they talked to one another as they searched for examples of imagery.

7.2.3 The Nature of Writing Instruction

Sara and Mindy, of the three partnerships, most closely followed a process writing model (e.g., Atwell, 1998; Graham & Perin, 2007) and used a process that bore some similarities to SRSD (Graham & Perin, 2007). Students regularly engaged in writing about texts they read through the Read, Review, Responds and the independent writing projects. Additionally, during my observations the students completed the creative

writing assignment? analyzed below. This task was the creation of a unique myth based on a series of Greek myths the students had read together as a class. For this assignment the teachers used a specific strategy, a plot chart, which was designed by Sara. The plot chart had been introduced earlier in the year and students were familiar with it by the time they did this assignment in the spring. In this section, I analyze the process by which students created their myths and three samples of student work using the criteria for rigor adapted from Matsumura et al. (2002), as I did for the writing assignments in Chapters 5 and 6.

7.2.3.1 Clarity of Learning Goals

Although I was not able to see the introduction of this writing task, Sara and Mindy detailed in their interviews with me the way they prepared students for this task and got them started. Additionally I was able to observe writing conferences between the teachers and students, so I had a sense of the individualized scaffolding that took place. In our second interview, Sara articulated a clear goal for the task:

In general I want them to be able to write with clear ideas and good organization without much prompting from me. I don't want to read something I told them to write. That's always my focus. In the Greek myths specifically, I wanted them to be able to look at the organizational structure of a Greek myth and write using that and allow them creativity in their ideas. So that was pretty much my goal. – *Sara, 7th grade ELA teacher*

As Sara described the process they used to prepare students to write their myths, it seemed to bear much in common with the SRSD model for teaching writing (Graham & Perin, 2007). The first step in the SRSD model is the development of background knowledge. Sara and Mindy began by having students read several Greek myths. In reading the Greek myths, they pointed out the structure of these myths. At this point, they reintroduced a strategy they had used at other times in the year to describe the structure of a narrative text: the plot chart. (Plot charts are included in Appendix R, along with each student work sample.) Since the myths were narrative literary texts, the plot chart was a useful strategy for this task. The plot chart incorporated both a visual to “show” the shape of a narrative and labels with guiding prompts to help students remember what needs to occur at each point in the narrative. For the Greek myths, the plot chart included prompts specific to this assignment.

SRSD (Graham and Perin, 2007) also incorporates the description of a strategy early in the writing process. The development of background knowledge and introduction of the strategy serve to scaffold students’ development by marking critical features of a task (Wood et al., 1976). From previous work on plot charts, students knew that their narrative writing had to include an exposition, conflict, rising action, climax, falling action, and a resolution. The prompts further clarified those critical features specific to a myth: it had to include gods and goddesses; it had to explain something about the universe; the main character had to learn some kind of lesson. In my second interview with Mindy, she described how she and Sara used the plot chart together when

introducing the Greek myths to clarify the structure of the myths:

Well, plot chart gets introduced pretty much throughout the entire year. I mean we're still doing plot charts here every time we do something. But I know we did a plot chart with this also, when we did Zeus. You know, as a whole class. And then they had to come up with their own... We as a class did Zeus, we did the whole plot chart.... We didn't do a plot chart for each individual one...but they had kind of like a guided...like not actual diagram form but they had to pretty much say like...they had like a worksheet...Basically it was like a plot chart...So it was kind of like a plot chart only they had to go through breaking down each one of their myths. Then they taught their myth to the class. Like [student's name] was in charge of - it might of been him and another person - Athena. And then he broke his down and just summarized to the class who Athena was and what all the fivelements of a Greek creature or whatever. And each kid had to do that. So if two kids had Athena, they had to do the whole thing themselves. Then they could work together and decide what they should teach the whole class, if they should teach the part...what each kid was responsible for. We did Zeus together as whole class. – *Mindy, grade 7 special education teacher*

The process Mindy describes includes not only building background and the description (or review, in this case) of a strategy, but modeling of the strategy. Modeling is a practice advocated by Atwell (1998) as a technique that can help students learn about the features of proficient writing. Additionally, Vaughn and Linan-Thompson (2003) specifically

advocate modeling strategies and more generally process writing as effective techniques for supporting students with special needs. Modeling aligns with the demonstration step of scaffolding according to Wood et al.'s (1976) as well. By modeling use of the plot chart with the class, the teachers modeled for students how to construct a myth – which elements to include and how to organized them. Following background building and modeling of the strategy, sutdents engaged in supported use of the strategy when they completed a task similar to the plot chart for one of the myths read in class and had to teach that myth to the rest of the students. Support in use of a taught strategy is part of the SRSD model (Graham & Perin, 2007). Although students were not, to my knowledge, given a guide for their writing projects like the ones students received in the ninth grade classroom, the learning goals for the task were made clear through the organized way in which students were initially introduced to the task.

7.2.3.2 Scaffolding

As Mindy and Sara both described, they started with a minimal level of scaffolding for the whole class and then provided additional scaffolding for students who required more support. For this task, all students read several myths, experienced the whole class modeling of the plot chart for Zeus, and then completed an assignment similar to the plot chart for a separate myth. The individual myth had to be taught to the class, demonstrating that the student understood the critical features of a myth.

At this point the students engaged in process writing. They brainstormed ideas, drafted a myth, and then went through the processes of revising and editing. The plot chart aided them in organization but students had to come up with their own ideas and

develop a unique narrative. Novice writers often find it difficult to develop reader-based prose (Flower, 1979) - text that makes sense to other readers rather than just a stream of the writer's brainstormed ideas. (Even the more proficient students in this class, as seventh graders, were still in the process of learning to write and could be considered novice writers.) The conferring process provides crucial step in supporting novice writer and is technique championed by experts in the field of writing instruction such as Atwell (1998). Below is an example of a conference between Sara and a student:

Sara: I am only going to read [your myth] the first time for content.

She begins reading the student's essay from the computer aloud.

Sara: I like it a lot. I think it's very good. I like how the telescope is invented.

Here's the deal. The last two paragraphs you added just to add vocabulary words.

So let's see if instead of adding paragraphs there might be a better way to add vocabulary words. So you tell me here that he had a feeling about him. How did he have a feeling?

Student: He had a feeling about his son. He had special powers. Every son imitates the father I guess.

Sara: Somebody tells Zeus. Isn't it Apollo that could be stronger than him?

Student: Didn't Zeus hear about the special powers?

Sara: Who knows about them? Who is all knowing? You used this person in your story. Okay, let's look here. What's all that?

Student: He went to the Oracle of Delphi because he lost his powers because he lost his eyes so he wanted to see if Zeus was still alive.

Sara: Okay the oracle is the one who knows everything. The oracle told Zeus. But I kind of like that they go to Hades and the underworld.

In this example, Sara started by reading the student's written work and then started a conversation with him about what she noticed. She decided she wanted him to use vocabulary more strategically and guided him to use the word "oracle" since he already alluded to this character in his story. This kind of one-on-one discussions is an example of the writing conferences advocated by Atwell (1998) and also could be coded as a type of strategic tutoring (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006), as Sara provided the student with focused support in his personalized area of need (use of vocabulary) based on her formative assessment of him. Due to the high level of individualization in this class, strategic tutoring and conferring were preferred ways to offer appropriate scaffolding? to students. For example, in the conference featured here, Sara needed to provide scaffolding that pointed out critical features (where vocabulary could be used more effectively) and direction maintenance to get the student to consider ways in which he might revise his paper to make it more effective (Wood et al., 1976).

Students in this classroom did tend to receive a lot of support tailored to their own needs, which is necessary for keeping students working in the ZPD (Vygotsky, 1986). Additionally the conferences and strategic tutoring component of the class allowed teachers to provide more ongoing progress monitoring (Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2003), a necessary component of keeping students learning within their ZPDs.

7.2.3.3 Cognitive Challenge of Task

Overall, I found the cognitive challenge of writing a unique myth to be relatively high-level. Although the students used plot charts that guided the structure of the myths they wrote, the myths did not have to rigidly align to the sequence in those charts. For example, “Carl,” the general education student whose paper I analyzed in Table 7.4, included the lesson that his character learned at the end rather than at the climax of the story. This was considered acceptable and he was not told to reorganize the story. In this sense, students were given some autonomy with this task.

Further, the process of learning the components of a genre and being able to structure a text in accordance with a particular genre is challenging (Beck & Jeffrey, 2009). Although writing a myth is not an example of literary analysis, it is an example of a task that required students to learn genre features well enough that they could produce work in that genre. The plot chart in that sense made those genre features visible without constraining students so much that they produced identical work. The myths from this class, while following the basic structure of having an exposition, conflict, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution as well as certain characteristics typical of myths (e.g., a lesson learned, a legend about an ordinary real life phenomenon), also featured a wide variety of different kinds of plots, characters, symbols, and themes.

7.2.3.4 Clarity of Grading

The grading for these writing tasks was the area that seemed vaguest in regards to the task overall. The teachers used a rubric that they used regularly for writing (Appendix Q). Matsumura et al. (2002) assess the quality of tools used for grading (such as rubrics) by analyzing these tools for “specificity and potential for helping students improve their

performance” (p.212). A high-quality rubric should offer students sufficient guidance by clearly demonstrating the criteria they need to include in their work to achieve a high score. Although the writing rubric for the seventh grade class did not lack in specificity, it seemed to be less useful for guiding students’ writing because it contained too much information and not enough explanation for how to use that information.

On one side of the rubric were traits for the 6+1 writing traits (ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions, and presentation); advice for how to start sentences; warnings about how to not start sentences; transition words; commonly misspelled words; conjunctions ; two mnemonic writing strategies; and alternatives to over-used words. On the other side of the rubric were ELA vocabulary terms; Reading comprehension strategies; and reading word strategies. The amount and density of the information included as part of the rubric made the rubric difficult to understand or use.

When I analyzed the student work I noticed there were no grades and no rubrics attached although there were comments. I asked Mindy about the grading and she suggested that the grading was flexible, depending on the student:

For their work, because of their learning disabilities, we don’t really adapt the assignments. We adapt the grading that we do because of their levels. [The grading] is more adapted versus the assignment being adapted. At least in the seventh grade. – *Mindy, grade 7 special education teacher*

Mindy’s statement resonated with Keefe & Moore’s (2004) finding that grading was an area that was considered challenging for co-teachers, required negotiation, and occurred

in multiple ways. Below I analyze the feedback given to three students - one student without a disability and two students with a disability. None of the papers had grades or attached rubrics. Instead feedback offered via the comment feature in Microsoft Word. Table 7.3 divides the comments by the components students were required to include in their myths.

Table 7.3 Feedback on Students' Myths

	Carl - No Disability	Robin – Disability	Madeline - Disability
Exposition	<p>“Very good exposition. You give good background information and set up the conflict. “</p> <p>Comment about using fragments</p>	<p>“Good human characteristics.”</p>	<p>Praise for good use of an appositive</p> <p>Reminder to use past tense</p>
Conflict	<p>No comments</p>	<p>Comment on spelling</p>	<p>“Good job setting up the conflict.”</p> <p>Question about word choice</p>
Rising Action	<p>“Very creative and macabre mythical character trait. “</p> <p>Instructed to create new</p>	<p>Comment about verb tense</p>	<p>No comments</p>

	paragraph		
Climax	No comments	“Good lesson though I’m not sure what you mean by ‘If no one knew who he was.’ Vocabulary – wrong use of word	“Interesting climax.”
Falling Action	No comment	Comment about using plurals and apostrophes	No comment
Resolution	“Very clever thing to explain about the universe. I like how you used a ‘dark’ character to explain nightmares and shadows.” “Excellent lesson.”	“And then what? Your story seems unfinished.”	“Interesting way to explain something about the universe.”

Overall, most of the comments on content were positive while the comments on grammar tended to offer more constructive feedback. I found this a concern because all three of these students would have benefitted from guidance on specific aspects of their writing (e.g., developing a conflict, leading from rising action to climax) but the feedback did not seem helpful in that regard.

For example, Madeline had difficulty developing her conflict but the feedback she received did not address the challenges she had with this aspect of the writing. In fact, she was given praise for writing a strong conflict even though her conflict was actually

problematic. Because the conflict was an important feature of the genre students had been asked to write, a myth, Madeline's essay showed a significant lack of conceptual understanding of the genre. It seems that it would have been useful to Madeline's development as a writer for one of the teachers to comment on this weakness in her understanding, but they did not either through written comments or individual conferencing area.

Likewise, Robin's myth exhibited problems with the clarity of language, organization of ideas, and coherence of the plot. The falling action in his myth was not coherent and seemed instead like several disconnected ideas that did not logically lead to a resolution. The resolution to the myth was not actually included. Although the feedback on Robin's myth did mention the missing resolution, the other comments were focused on grammar and conventions. As a result, more serious problems with his writing were not addressed.

Finally, Carl's myth exhibited better organization, more coherence, and more precise use of language than the other two myths. (Carl did not have a disability.) However, even for students who generally write well, it is important to provide feedback that offers clear guidance for the development of their writing in specific areas (Atwell, 1998). The teachers' comments on Carl's myth, with the exception of some highlighted grammar and conventions issues, focused almost entirely on praising what he did well. Students like Carl could benefit from feedback that specifies detailed ways in which they might further develop a particular aspect of their writing. This kind of feedback would provide scaffolding by marking critical features of the writing (e.g., the transition

between falling action and resolution) and providing direction maintenance to support the student in further developing that aspect of the writing (Wood et al., 1976).

7.3 SUMMARY

Sara and Mindy's partnership, although positive in many ways, was also more of a traditional inclusion partnership rather than a true example of co-teaching. According to Rice & Zigmond (2000) characteristics of co-teacher compatibility, they were generally compatible. They did not share a teaching philosophy, but they shared some core values about teaching and learning. They communicated openly and honestly, even if they didn't have time to actually plan together in a meaningful way. Sara respected Mindy's knowledge of special education techniques and Mindy respected Sara's ELA knowledge even though they didn't work across roles enough to reap some of the benefits that come from blurring the roles; they mutually enhanced each other even if they did not have time to impart substantial knowledge to each other (e.g., Austin, 2001; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007). In general they fell into a comfortable if not ideal rhythm where Sara did the planning and Mindy provided support to ensure that the struggling students, especially those with disabilities, did not fall behind.

In Sara and Mindy's class, education was very much tailored to meet the needs of students with a variety of abilities, aligning primarily with a differentiated instruction approach (Tomlinson, 1999). Students regularly read and did tasks (Read, Review, Responds and independent reading projects) based on their own self-selected texts. The students also had frequent opportunities to make intertextual connections

between texts they were currently reading and other texts as well as their own lived experiences (Smagorinsky, 2001).

In the area of whole-class discussion, these teachers faced many of the same struggles as the other co-teaching partners in my study. Despite their best intentions to involve students in text-based discussions, I did not find examples of dialogic spells or discussions in this classroom (Nystrand et al., 2003). The teachers demonstrated uptake of students' comments in discussions (Nystrand et al., 2003) but they primarily used this move to probe how well a student understood a topic or concept rather than as a dialogic bid to foster discussion among students. Students did, however, have opportunities to engage in text-based collaborative learning (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006) often and in this way still were afforded with opportunities to have conversations about texts with other students, though the learning opportunities provided by those conversations was not observed.

Writing instruction in this classroom was more closely aligned with a process approach than in the ninth grade classroom (e.g., Atwell, 1998; Graham & Perin, 2007). Additionally several features of SRSD (Graham & Perin, 2007) were evident even though the teachers were not formally using this approach. Students were instructed in the use of particular strategies, such as the plot chart, and then given enough scaffolding and support to master those strategies through modeling or demonstration, a focus on critical features of particular genres, and adjustable levels of scaffolding primarily provided in the form of one-on-one conferences (Atwell, 1998; Beck & Jeffrey, 2009; Graham & Perin, 2007; Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2003; Wood et al., 1976). In this way students were generally kept working in their ZPDs (Vygotsky, 1986). Although the grading

system was not clear and written feedback often did not include enough constructive criticism to aid students' development as writers, the frequent conferences and strategic tutoring (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006) based on individual students' needs enabled the teachers to engage in ongoing progress monitoring of their students (Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2003).

Overall, this classroom offered a portrait of co-teaching that was less equally distributed between partners compared to Jamie and Gina's partnership but which also entailed professional respect, benefits for students such as exposure to different teaching styles and more opportunities for teacher help (e.g., Keefe & Moore, 2004; Rice & Zigmod, 2000, Wilson & Michaels, 2006).

8.0 CONCLUSION

Over roughly the past decade, co-teaching has become an increasingly popular method for educating students with disabilities alongside their general education peers and a burgeoning body of literature on co-teaching has emerged during this time period (e.g., Austin, 2001; Dieker & Murawski, 2003; Keefe & Moore; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Wilson & Michaels, 2006; Scrugs et al., 2007). These studies have typically focused on describing partnerships between co-teachers with few studies (e.g., Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Wilson & Michaels) exploring the experiences of students in co-taught classrooms.

This study is a unique study of co-teaching in that it brings together this body of research on co-teaching and best practices for students with disabilities (e.g., Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2003) with literature on best practices in secondary ELA instruction (e.g., Atwell, 1998; Beck & Jeffrey, 2009; Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Graham & Perin, 2007; Nystrand et al., 2003). It also explored, in particular, how scaffolding techniques (Wood et al., 1976) were used to support the learning of students at various ability levels in the same classroom.

Following the partnerships of three sets of co-teachers in a district renowned locally for its strong co-teaching program, this study delved into the nuances of what happens in schools and classrooms where the general consensus is that the co-teaching model is exemplary and the instruction rigorous. One of the most significant findings, subsequently, was that the perception of success may actually be an impediment to improvement and growth. These findings have implications for both the field of co-teaching and, more generally special education, and the field of secondary ELA.

8.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In pursuit of developing a deeper understanding of co-teaching in inclusive secondary ELA classrooms, my study posed two questions:

1. What are the characteristics of co-teaching partnerships in inclusive secondary ELA classrooms and how do those characteristics shape the nature of classroom instruction?
2. How do ELA and Special Education co-teachers scaffold literacy instruction for students in inclusive secondary English classes?

Overall, my study yielded the following findings in response to my research questions.

8.1.1 Research Question 1

When teachers are left to negotiate co-teaching partnerships independently without training or much guidance at the school or district level, the partnerships tend to develop in idiosyncratic ways. Rice & Zigmond (2000) posited that co-teacher compatibility relies on several factors: similar views on academic and behavior standards; honest and open communication; the ability to problem solve in positive ways; equal pedagogical skills; and the self-confidence necessary to take risks in a partnership. At the school and district level, Schaeffner & Buswell (1996) offered guidance for a successful inclusive education program. Among other factors, a strategic plan, strong leadership, a school-wide culture that promotes diversity, and support systems for teachers rank important for the overall success of the program.

At SJSHS, the atmosphere was one of acceptance and value for diverse ways of learning. During my time at SJSHS, I observed that students with disabilities were treated respectfully by peers and adults and often I only knew a student had a disability when I saw that student receiving extra support during the study hall period with the special education teachers. In addition to a welcoming atmosphere for students, the conditions for teachers were also generally favorable. Teachers had freedom in designing curriculum for their classes and were respected as professionals with expertise in their content and pedagogy.

However, along with these strengths, I also noticed some weaknesses in the administration of the co-teaching model at SJSHS. Teachers did not receive any training before entering into partnerships and received little ongoing support as they negotiated a new partnership. The co-teaching model at SJSHS was characterized by a lack of a strategic and little ongoing, organized technical support for co-teachers (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996). The onus of developing a strategic plan and support networks (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996) fell to the teachers. In addition to the lack of training and ongoing support, teachers also lacked planning time to develop a plan for their classrooms or to jointly develop curriculum. The lack of training and planning time are both factors that have been cited in the literature as impediments to the development of strong co-teaching partnerships (e.g., Austin, 2001; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007).

As a result of these factors, the three partnerships I studied developed in very different ways. Jamie and Gina had the strongest, most equally shared co-teaching partnership. They both took part in planning and implementing the curriculum and they shared responsibility for supporting both the students with and without disabilities in the

classroom. Their partnership, however, was unusual in that they had become close personal friends over the course of their partnership. This meant that they spent time outside of school hours together and many of the decisions they made about their classroom happened in an outside-of-work context. A friendship cannot be planned by a school or district; this is rather an idiosyncratic situation that primarily occurred do to chance. As such this type of partnership cannot be purposely replicated.

Concomitantly, it became clear that just because a teacher has a strong partnership with one person does not necessarily mean that the same teacher will be able to develop a strong partnership with a new person. Jamie had five years of co-teaching experience when she began working with Dave. However, her experience as a co-teacher did not translate into a positive start to her partnership with Dave because the co-teaching situation with Dave was completely different from the co-teaching situations with Gina. Besides connecting with Gina on a personal level, Jamie also had the advantage of being paired with an experienced, skilled, and self-confident special education teacher when she was with Gina. They also entered into co-teaching together and did not bring with them preconceived notions of what it meant to be in a co-teaching partnership.

When Jamie began teaching with Dave, circumstances were quite different. Dave was only a second year teacher. He entered mid-year and did not know the curriculum well. Catching up proved difficult. Jamie, on the other hand, was both an experienced teacher in general and an experienced co-teacher in particular. When Dave was either unable or unwilling to serve in the same capacity as Gina had, Jamie became frustrated. Further, she was experiencing a sense of loss due to the end of her strong, five-year partnership with Gina. On a much more basic level, she was dealing with loss due to her

best friend moving away. As Jamie stated during my last interview with her: “My heart is broken and I want Gina back.” Experiencing this sense of loss may have led Jamie to be less receptive to Dave and Dave may in turn have felt less inclined to try to make the partnership work. Jamie began to lose her tolerance and patience for Dave, important qualities when establishing a new partnership (Rice & Zigmond, 2000), and Dave began to withdraw until he was often not coming to class at all. Subsequently both the teachers and students missed out on the many benefits of co-teaching. Jamie and Dave did not enjoy mutual enhancement or learning and their students did not have the opportunity to benefit from the exposure to different teaching styles and extra help that typically come with a strong co-teaching partnership (e.g., Austin, 2001; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007; Wilson & Michaels, 2006).

Finally, Mindy and Sara on the surface had a strong partnership and generally expressed satisfaction with the way they worked together, but upon closer analysis it became clear that these two teachers had a more traditional English teacher-special education teacher inclusion partnership than a true co-teaching partnership. Sara was the person who designed the curriculum for the class while Mindy provided support to struggling students and ensured that the students with disabilities kept up with the class. Sara, in her interviews, stated that she would have liked to have planning time with Mindy but she also expressed satisfaction with having control over the curriculum.

Their partnership was similar to many co-teaching partnerships described in the co-teaching literature (e.g., Austin, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007). Rice and Zigmond (2000), for example, found that “co-teaching still took place in classrooms that were still the designated ‘territory’ of the subject

teacher”(p.196). This seemed to be very much the case with Sara and Mindy. Sara had a strong sense of ownership over her class and the curriculum enacted there and although she respected Mindy she seemed reticent to let Mindy have a more prominent role. Mindy, perhaps comfortable in her role as a more traditional special education inclusion teacher (a role she held prior to co-teaching), was accepting of this arrangement and didn’t make attempts to change the situation. This situation made me wonder if perhaps more “successful” partnerships in the school and district resembled Sara and Mindy’s partnership rather than Jamie and Gina’s, which was unique due to the bond of friendship.

8.1.2 Research Question 2

Over the course of my observations in the two classrooms and across the three partnerships, several findings regarding instruction in these classrooms began to emerge: (1) the perception that most students needed significant help to be successful led to an overuse of scaffolding; (2) this was more likely to occur when a class was regarded as “low-track” (echoing findings of Freedman et al., 2005; Nystrand et al., 2003); (3) in classrooms with a range of abilities, individualized tasks and texts seemed to be a way to address students at different levels; and (4) all of the teachers struggled with engaging students in dialogic discussions, suggesting that fostering these kinds of discussions is difficult and probably less likely to occur without professional development focused on developing this capacity in teachers.

In Jamie and Gina’s classroom, which was a low-track classroom, both teachers perceived that all the students needed significant support to access complex texts

and complete tasks such as literary analysis essays. This led to what I saw as an overuse of scaffolding, with a focus particularly on reduction in degrees of freedom and frustration control (Wood et al., 1976). Most of the frustration control seemed preemptive - assuming that frustration would occur and trying to prevent it rather than addressing frustration as it happened. The teachers, believing all students needed a great deal of support, took on an approach that seemed closely related to universal design for learning (UDL), which is focused on accessibility of tasks to allow most students to participate with a degree of success (Edyburn, 2010; Friend & Bursuck, 2006; King-Sears, 2009). Using UDL does not require that scaffolding features are overused, reducing the cognitive challenge (Matsumura et al., 2002) of tasks for students; however, teachers may struggle with creating accessibility while maintaining rigor, a balance that is challenging for all teachers. Further, UDL is still in development; borrowing a framework from architecture, the specific ways in which the tenets of universal design in architecture travel into education is still unclear (Edyburn, 2010). As a result, teachers attempting to create tasks that are accessible to all will likely encounter challenges. In the ninth grade classroom, those challenges seemed related to achieving the right balance of scaffolding and rigor in tasks.

Jamie and Gina relied heavily upon reading guides, modeling, and writing guides to scaffold student learning. Gina stated that the students in this class needed teachers to “cater to” their needs and Jamie and Gina seemed to be on the same page regarding the level of support necessary for students to be successful. This led to assignments such as the characterization essay for the novel *That Was Then, This is Now*, which due to a very structured guide and heavy use of teacher modeling resulted in many nearly identical

papers. Although modeling (e.g., Atwells, 1998; Graham and Perin, 2007; Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2003) or demonstration (Wood et al., 1976) has been cited in the literature as a technique that can be helpful for guiding the learning of both students with and without disabilities, an overuse of modeling may lead to a lack of rigor and opportunity for creativity and independence in tasks, as evidenced by the student work in this classroom.

Sara and Mindy, on the other hand, had a wide range of different ability levels in their classroom, which can also lead to challenges for teachers as they try to meet the needs of such a range of students. These teachers took on more of a differentiated instruction (DI) approach, creating opportunities for students to read texts and engage in tasks that were aligned with their individual ZPDs (Tomlinson, 1999; Vygotsky, 1986). Students in this classroom read many self-selected texts and had some degree of choice with assignments. The scaffolding approach in this room was to initially offer less scaffolding and to then offer extra scaffolding as necessary if it was determined that an individual student required it. This led to less overuse of scaffolding, although the criteria for selecting texts and the grading system, which were determined individually for each student, seemed not to provide students with high expectations and sufficient guidance for literacy development within students' ZPDs.

Finally, engaging students in dialogic discussions (Nystrand et al., 2003) appeared to be a challenge for all of the teachers. In Jamie and Dave's class there was an increase in engaged response compared to in either Jamie and Gina's class or Sara and Mindy's class but I posit that this was actually unintentional and likely arose due to Dave's lack of participation and Jamie's subsequent need to engage others (besides her co-teacher) in a

discussion. Another possibility is that Jamie had received some instruction in this area in graduate school. The two lessons in Jamie and Gina's classroom that led to more dialogic talk were both the result of Jamie trying a technique (Socratic seminar and fishbowl) that she had learned in classes she was taking for her Master's degree. This seemed to suggest that professional development or teacher training aimed directly at preparing teachers to engage students dialogically would be helpful and would resonate with the findings of Nystrand et al. (2003).

8.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH

In this section I explore implications for this study on the bodies of research in the areas of co-teaching, scaffolding theory, and best practices in ELA instruction. I draw upon my findings from across the three partnerships, exploring areas where this study extends or adds insight to the literature.

8.2.1 Significance to Research on Co-teaching

Much of the co-teaching literature utilizes surveys, interviews, and, in some cases, observation in classrooms (e.g., Austin, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Magiera & Zigmond, 2005; Nichols et al., 2010; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs, Mastropieri, & McDuffie, 2007; Wilson & Michaels, 2006). This study extends the co-teaching literature in a few important ways. First, this study is an in-depth exploration of individual partnerships in the context of a particular school and district. Extensive interviews and

observations with teachers in these settings provide a rich, nuanced portrait of specific co-teaching partnerships. This allowed me to look deeply into concepts such as co-teacher compatibility.

By looking deeply into compatibility for three different partnerships, I was able to uncover the following findings: (1) the strongest partnership was the result of teachers becoming personal friends, a phenomenon that could not be purposely replicated by a school or district; (2) co-teachers in the other partnership that was characterized as “strong” actually had a more traditional, inclusion partnership rather than a true co-teaching partnership where responsibilities for planning, teaching, and supporting students were more evenly divided between the teachers; and (3) pairing an experienced co-teacher with a new co-teacher does not necessarily lead to a smooth transition with the experienced person guiding the new person. These findings have implications for what it means to have a “successful” co-teaching partnership or school/district level co-teaching model; specifically, it demonstrates how the perception that success has been achieved could lead to a failure to recognize or effectively deal with challenges as they arise.

Particularly in the case of Jamie and Dave, at least one administrator – Sandy, the special education director – was aware that the new partnership was in trouble but did not address this issue. Jamie admitted she would have welcomed support from administration but thought the reason no one had intervened was because they felt she, as an experienced co-teacher, could handle the issues herself. However, Jamie had admittedly lost her patience and tolerance for Dave and Dave had stopped communicating with Jamie; these are factors important for co-teacher compatibility (Rice & Zigmond, 2000) and the lack of these factors made it less likely for the partnership to move forward in a positive way.

The characteristics of each co-teaching partnership shaped literacy instruction in specific ways. The co-teaching and inclusion literature offers some broad and rather vague recommendations for inclusive education such as “effective teaching practices” and “deliberate processes to ensure student accountability” (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996) or alleged benefits of co-teaching for students such as receiving more help or exposure to different teaching styles (e.g., Keefe & Moore, 2004; Wilson & Michaels, 2006). However, in Gina and Jamie’s classroom, students received extra help and scaffolding, but the extra help was so pervasive that much of the rigor was lost from tasks in this classroom. I found that the mutual enhancement and learning that is cited as generally positive between co-teachers (e.g., Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007) may actually have some pitfalls. Jamie and Gina may have reinforced for each other the perception that all the students in the classroom were in need of very extensive scaffolding. The two teachers also often discussed texts together in the classroom and unintentionally left fewer opportunity for students to offer engaged responses (Nystrand et al., 2003). Both teachers mentioned that they often overlapped as they spoke and I witnessed this overlapping speech for myself during observations. However, where Jamie and Gina saw this as an example of how well they worked together, I saw an example of how teacher talk dominated the classroom, leaving fewer opportunities for student talk. This finding does not negate the positive aspects of Gina and Jamie’s partnership, but it does offer a caveat for teachers who have strong partnerships: these teachers need to be aware of their influence on each other and cognizant not just of how they are interacting with the other teacher but also with the students. In the current body of co-teaching literature there is a heavy focus on what makes and how to facilitate a strong co-teaching

partnership or models but caveats for partnerships or school and district models that are already perceived as strong are notably absent.

8.2.2 Significance to Theory of Scaffolding

Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) developed a model for apprenticing a novice to a new task through a set of features meant to break the task down a way that is accessible and allows for gradual release of responsibility until the novice becomes proficient at that task. Scaffolding theory offers an explanation for one way to provide the mediation necessary for a learner to achieve the formation of a new concept (Vygotsky, 1986).

This study explored scaffolding theory (Wood et al., 1976) in relationship to three areas of ELA instruction in inclusive, co-taught classrooms: reading and literature instruction; discussion; and writing. Most saliently, the findings of this study offer insight into the struggle teachers of students with diverse abilities face as they attempt to offer the right amount and right kind of scaffolding to allow all students access to a challenging task without entirely removing the challenge from that task. As evidenced by the findings in my focal classrooms, using scaffolding effectively is a difficult task for teachers to accomplish.

In the ninth grade classroom, tasks were heavily scaffolded and often employed the scaffolding features of reduction in degrees of freedom, frustration control, demonstration, and marking critical features (Wood et al., 1976). The use of these features of scaffolding were most evident in the reading guides for *Romeo and Juliet* and the characterization essay written as part of the *That Was Then, This Is Now* unit. The reading guides, meant to support students in their comprehension of the Shakespearean

play, ended up leading to discussions that were dominated by teacher test questions (Nystrand et al., 2003) and teacher explanation. Meant to help make the text more accessible, instead these questions led students to give less engaged responses and to make fewer interpretive or analytical statements as they read. This level of scaffolding likely reduced the opportunity for students to grapple with the text and to form their own personal representations of the text (Smagorinsky, 2001)

Similarly, the scaffolding provided through the modeling of a sample essay and a step-by-step guide for creating the characterization essay for the *That Was Then, This Is Now* unit led to many similar essays. All of the essays were five paragraphs and had nearly identical thesis statements. In this case, an overuse of scaffolding reduced the opportunity for students to engage in generating and organizing ideas and setting goals for their own writing, important facets of the mental processes writers go through while composing texts (Flower & Hayes, 1980, 1981) because the organization and goals of the writing – in fact, much of the process generating ideas (students were told to choose a character, describe the character with three adjectives, and then give evidence for why those adjectives were chosen) – were eliminated from the writing process.

In the seventh grade classroom, the scaffolding approach was quite different from that in the ninth grade classroom. Students were provided with minimal scaffolding and then offered more scaffolding as necessary if they struggled with the initial task. Much of the scaffolding in the seventh grade classroom took the form of recruitment, marking critical features, and direction maintenance with reduction in degrees of freedom and frustration control used with individual students as needed (Wood et al., 1976). Some demonstration was used (Wood et al., 1976) – for instance students were given a sample

Read, Review, Respond written by Sara at the beginning of the year – but they were also given more opportunity to deviate from the model through a variety of prompts that could lead to multiple kinds of responses, not just responses similar to that of the model.

The difference between the approach in the ninth grade classroom and the seventh grade classroom may have been due to a general difference in approaches between the sets of teachers, but likely there was also a link to the composition of the class. In the tracked ninth grade classroom, there may have been more pressure to provide everyone with scaffolding that was relatively extensive compared to in the untracked seventh grade classroom. This finding would resonate with others findings that suggest teachers in low-track classrooms tend to provide students with less intellectually rigorous learning activities (e.g., Freedman et al., 2005; Nystand, 2003) and would suggest that providing too much scaffolding at the initial stages of a task may stem from a perception that all students would likely become frustrated or give up if they were allowed to grapple more with a task.

8.2.3 Significance to Best Practices in ELA

In regards to best practices in ELA, this study contributes in three significant ways to the literature: (1) through showing how different approaches to making meaning from texts led to particular affordances and limitations for students in the focal classrooms; (2) the challenge of facilitating dialogic talk, as evidenced in the focal classrooms; and (3) intersections of reading and writing as connected to both literary analysis (Beck & Jeffrey, 2009) and the demystification of the internal processes of writing (Atwell, 1998; Flower, 1979; Flower & Hayes, 1980, 1981; Graham & Perin, 2007).

The approach to reading and literature instruction took shape quite differently in the seventh and ninth grade classrooms. In the ninth grade classrooms the focus was on whole group instruction with complex texts. Students answered a number of comprehension questions that I generally coded as teacher test questions – questions that were looking for a particular “right” answer as opposed to an interpretation (Nystrand et al., 2003). The use of complex texts and a focus on making sense of what information is contained within that text aligns with the move in the Common Core State Standards to get students reading more challenging texts and to closely read those texts to glean meaning from the texts (Coleman & Pimental, 2012). However, Smagorinsky (2001) emphasizes the importance of also developing intertextual representations through making sense of ideas in a text in relationship both to other texts and to one’s own lived experiences. Both activities invite students to actively do this intellectual work rather than for teachers to do this work for them.

In the ninth grade classroom the use of complex texts and a focus on deriving meaning from those texts was diluted through an overuse of scaffolding. This likely reduced the opportunity for the formation of intertextual representations. In the seventh grade classroom, conversely, there were many opportunities for students to make intertextual connections through the Read, Review, Respond and independent reading projects. However, these teachers grappled with whether it was more effective to use texts matched to students’ reading levels or more complex texts for all students. As Snow and Sweet (2003) assert, reading comprehension involves multiple factors: the text, the context, the reader, and the activity. This study makes salient the challenges teachers face as they try to design reading and literature instruction that takes these factors into

account; it is particularly a challenge when the students in one's class are at various points in becoming proficient readers.

Closely linked with the challenges inherent in reading and literature instruction was the difficulty involved in facilitating dialogic discussions (Nystrand et al., 2003). All of the teachers in the study struggled to engage students in more dialogic classroom talk. Nystrand et al. (2003) acknowledge that most teachers are unsure about how to engage students in dialogic discussions and that, in general, teachers lack an understanding of discourse and how to shape it. Considering that the two clearest examples of dialogic talk over the course of the study were examples of a teacher (Jamie) trying to implement a discussion technique in which she had been trained, it seems likely most teachers would benefit from training in how to better facilitate classroom discussions.

For this study, the student work samples I analyzed for each partnership were writing samples based on previous reading and literature work that had been done with students. As previously discussed, knowing just how much scaffolding to provide for writing tasks proved challenging for the teachers, particularly at the ninth grade level. Since novice writers often have difficulty understanding the full process of writing they need to go through to develop prose that makes sense to a reader (Flower, 1979), it is important to mark critical features (Wood et al., 1976) for novice writers. Methods such as SRSD (Graham & Perin, 2007) offer some insight into how teacher might lead students through the writing process. In the seventh grade classroom, the teachers implemented aspects of SRSD (Graham & Perin, 2007) even though they weren't familiar with this technique. Rather, they were more generally familiar with strategy instruction to support student writing. The strategy I saw them use, the plot chart, was

effective for helping students to organize their ideas as they wrote but didn't not seem to be constraining for students, as students were still able to make creative decisions about how they developed their written work. The findings on writing suggest that teachers might benefit from directly learning to use techniques such as SRSD coupled with work on how to gradually release responsibility for learning to students - perhaps through the use of conferences with students, a practice recommended by Atwell (1998) and employed in both classrooms, although more prominently in the seventh grade classroom. Additionally, a focus on how to make explicit connections between reading and writing in service of developing a literary argument – an analysis of literature (Beck & Jeffrey, 2009) - would help students develop, as literary analyses are a key writing activity in ELA classes at the high school level and beyond.

8.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The previous sections explore my research questions in light of my data collection and analyses and show how my data contribute to the literature on co-teaching, scaffolding theory, and best practices in ELA instruction. In this section, I suggest implications for co-teaching in schools and districts, with consideration for what might enable stronger practices at the ELA classroom as well as the school- and district-level.

8.3.1 District- and School-Level Practices

Stateline District and SJSHS by all outer appearances were implementing co-teaching very successfully – successfully enough to serve as a model for other districts. However, deeper analysis revealed that there were several areas that needed to be addressed. It is likely these areas escaped notice due to the perception of co-teaching as so strong at this school and in this district. The most noticeable areas in need of change were regarding teacher training, planning time, and support for co-teachers who encountered difficulties in their new partnerships.

Schaeffner and Buswell (1996) suggest the importance of a strategic plan for implementing inclusive practices. This might include, among other considerations, training teachers on co-teaching practices that foster partnerships. Rearranging schedules to allow for planning time and then preparing teachers to use that time effectively also would be important for preparing to launch co-teaching at a school- or district-wide level. Teachers might have a protocol of some time for planning time that guides them in the basics of co-planning instruction or looking at student work for purposes of formative assessment.

Partnerships like Gina and Jamie's cannot be expected to happen spontaneously. Some teachers may become friends and may choose to connect with each other outside of the work day. More often, however, co-teachers left to their own devices may develop partnerships like Sara and Mindy's. Such partnerships do not fully include the special education teacher in ownership over the classroom and the curriculum. In these cases the special education teacher becomes like a consultant at best or an aide at worst (e.g., Austin, 2001; Keefe & Moore, 2004; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007).

Teachers will need preparation and support in learning to share the co-teaching role in an equitable manner.

A system also should be in place that guides teachers in what to do if an early partnership begins to have difficulties. Again, a protocol might be helpful here. It could start with ideas about how co-teachers could solve the problems together, move on to ways to utilize colleagues effectively, and finally include a process for initiating mediation by administration if necessary. This type of plan would have built into it the organized and ongoing technical support and support networks that Schaeffner and Buswell (1996) cite as critical for the development a strong inclusion program.

8.3.2 Co-teaching in the ELA Classroom

For the teachers involved in co-teaching partnerships in ELA classrooms, a sense of awareness about their respective roles is helpful in beginning to develop a co-teaching partnership. This might begin with a personal assessment of one's own strengths and needs. Special education teachers might consider how much they know about the ELA curriculum at their school and best practices in ELA in general. If teaching ELA content will be completely new, preparation might involve spending time at English department meetings, arranging time to meet with a literacy coach, or simply sitting down with the person who will be the ELA teacher counterpart of the co-teaching partnership and asking about the curriculum and pedagogical practices in the classroom. Special education co-teachers should enter a partnership understanding that they may not be ready to take on a full role in planning and implementing ELA content right away, but that over time they should begin to truly share in these duties with the ELA teacher.

For the ELA teachers, working with a special education co-teacher may require

a change in point of view regarding ownership of the classroom and curriculum. Rice & Zigmond (2000) note the territorial feelings that content area teachers typically have over their classrooms. For a teacher who has taught alone and planned instruction alone for a long period of time, it may be difficult to let go of some of that control and to allow another teacher to take on some of the ownership of the classroom.

Even newer teachers like Sara may have difficulty letting go of some of that control. In Sara and Mindy's classroom, Sara seemed to be holding onto control of the curriculum and instruction because on one hand she considered Mindy's teaching style to be very different (she referred to Mindy's style as "conservative" compared to her own) and on the other hand co-planning would require Sara to significantly change the way she prepared for her class. Sara did not like creating lesson plans and wanted to let the instruction for the year unfold in a natural manner.

For a teacher who works alone, Sara's way of working might prove successful. However, for a teacher in a co-teaching partnership, this meant that the co-teacher never knew what was going on instructionally until she entered the classroom that day. This made it difficult for Mindy to take on a full instructional role even though she had become quite adept at figuring out what the lesson for the day was and how she might assist in delivering that lesson. A key word here is "assist." Mindy's role, while acceptable to both Mindy and Sara (at least as far as both teachers were willing to admit during interviews) was one of assisting rather than leading instruction. In this way, she was not being used effectively as a teacher and did not have the chance to contribute in ways expected of another teacher rather than a teaching assistant.

When co-teachers work together in productive ways, mutual learning can take

place (e.g., Rice & Zigmond, Scruggs et al., 2007). However, there must be time and openness to learning from each other. Rice and Zigmond (2000) suggest that equal pedagogical skills are important in a co-teaching partnership. However, special education and ELA teachers will likely bring different but complementary pedagogical skills to the partnership. ELA teachers may have a strong grounding in how to teach literature and composition but find themselves unsure when they encounter students who are still developing basic reading skills in the upper grades. Special education teachers, conversely, may be very knowledgeable about how to provide intervention and support for students with significant learning disabilities or behavioral issues yet find themselves struggling to make sense of the ELA curriculum. In this area teachers can help each other if each is willing to learn from the other.

Jamie and Gina experienced the benefits that came with learning from one's co-teacher. Between the two of them, they managed to work out a plan for learning each other's role and beginning to share that role. Over time, Gina became comfortable teaching ELA content, including more challenging material such as Shakespearean plays. Jamie became more knowledgeable about the kind of support very struggling students like Alicia, the life skills student, might require to achieve success in a general education setting. Through "honest and open communication" (Rice & Zigmond, 2000) and a general willingness and flexibility (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996) to put oneself in the role of the learners, these two teachers benefitted from co-teaching and by extension their students reaped the benefits of having two co-teachers who truly shared the role of the lead teacher (e.g., Keefe & Moore, 2004; Wilson & Michaels, 2006).

One area that emerged from this study and for which I did not find a

counterpart in the existing literature was in regards to caveats for strong partnerships. Jamie and Gina, as strong partners who received praise from administrators and were generally upheld as examples of co-teaching at its best, there seemed to be little impetus to turn a critical eye towards their own practice. Rather, these two teachers - rightfully proud of their strong partnership – tended to emphasize how well their classroom ran. In some cases, this meant they saw strengths where, in fact, there were problems.

Most saliently, this occurred in the area of classroom talk. Both Gina and Jamie cited the fact that they overlapped as they talked as a sign of how strong their partnership had become. They finished each other's sentences and intuitively knew where the other teacher planned to lead a discussion. What they did not seem to notice was how this led to a teacher-centered classroom where student participation typically consisted of reading aloud from a text and answering teacher test questions (Nystrand et al., 2003). For these teachers, moving towards a more student-centered classroom may have started as simply as developing an awareness for how much teacher talk versus student talk was occurring in the classroom. These two teachers were teachers who might have read the Nystrand et al. (2003) article together, then planned a lesson that incorporated more authentic questions and attempted to use dialogic bids to purposely pull students into a discussion. However this awareness only comes when teachers are willing to be critical about their own teaching and when they are open to realizing that even successful partnerships still have room for growth.

8.3.3 Teacher Professional Development

This study highlights two areas in which teachers may need professional development to have more successful co-teaching partnerships in secondary ELA classrooms. One area is in the process of developing the co-teaching partnership and the other is in the area of pedagogy, encompassing both best practices in ELA instruction and effective ways to use scaffolding techniques to allow all students to engage in best practices.

In regards to co-teaching professional development, Rice and Zigmond's (2000) five areas for co-teaching compatibility offer a promising entrée into understanding what it takes to develop a strong partnership. A district training module for teachers might start with having teachers articulate their philosophy on teaching and learning. This could be done in prose form and might guide the pairing of co-teachers. Teachers who have significant ideological differences may not make the best co-teaching partners.

The other area where information about teachers may be collected prior to embarking on co-teaching at a school- or district-level is in regards to pedagogical skills. This information might be gathered via a survey that elicits from teachers how knowledgeable they consider themselves in particular areas and how comfortable they feel doing different instructional activities. For example, teachers might rate on a scale of 1 – 5 how comfortable they would feel leading a discussion on a Shakespearean play such as *Hamlet*, conducting a writing conference with a student in the process of drafting an essay, or providing guidance for a student with an emotional problem. These surveys could be used both for pairing teachers who have complementary skills and for planning professional development in a strategic way that responds to teachers' actual needs.

All teachers entering into a co-teaching partnership would also benefit from professional development on communicating with a co-teaching partner and solving problems that may arise in a productive way. This professional development might best happen as part of ongoing team meetings at the school level. Teachers may receive initial professional development on effective problem solving or communication skills and then meet with other co-teachers on a regular basis to share what works or what doesn't work. Such team meeting might consist of special education and ELA teachers together or separate groups for each set of teachers. An administrator, literacy coach, or department head might lead such a group and keep track in this way of problems as they arise so they can be solved in a timely manner. Group meetings might have led to identification of the problems in Dave and Jamie's partnership early on and may have subsequently allowed for these teachers to get support in solving those early problems before they became more significant.

In regards to ELA instruction, three areas emerged from this study as critical areas for professional development: (1) selection of texts and the development of text-based activities; (2) facilitation of dialogic discussions; and (3) implementation of scaffolding in a manner that fosters gradual release.

In the seventh grade classroom, the teachers struggled with making decisions about what kinds of texts the students should be reading. Sara and Mindy, in one of their "on the fly" planning sessions, debated whether or not to give students a reading assessment that would determine what level books they should be reading. Mindy was concerned that this would lead to students only reading books that were at their independent level rather than books that challenged them. Sara, conversely, worried that

students might end up with books that were too challenging and become frustrated. Ultimately the teachers decided not to give the assessment too early in the year and to allow students to choose some books that were at the independent level but also to push them to read at least two books that were more challenging.

Sara and Mindy's predicament was not unique. Coleman and Pimental (2012) emphasize the shift in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which call for all students to engage in reading complex literary and informational texts. Teachers might access the CCSS website (<http://www.corestandards.org/>) for guidance on selection of appropriate texts. Further this is an area in which districts might develop professional development for teachers. Along with selection of texts, teachers might receive professional development in creating reading activities that lead to stronger comprehension (Snow & Sweet, 2003), including tasks that focus on information from within the text itself (Coleman & Pimental, 2012) and tasks that foster intertextual connections (Smagorinsky, 2001).

This leads to a second area for important ELA professional development – the facilitation of dialogic discussions (Nystrand et al., 2003). Nystrand et al. (2003) acknowledge the challenge involved in learning to foster these types of discussion in classrooms, particularly in classrooms considered “low-track.” This was an area in which all of the teachers in this study struggled. Likely, classroom talk would be a professional development need across a school or district since it is challenging for even experienced ELA teachers to purposely shape discourse in a way that deeply engages most or all students in discussions where ideas are able to be freely exchanged. Nystrand et al.

(2003) article serves as a good starting point for developing a professional development plan that leads to more dialogic discussions in the classroom.

Lastly, teachers with students of diverse ability levels would benefit from professional development that explores the features of scaffolding (Wood et al., 1976) and how these different features might be utilized to support students' ability to engage in rigorous tasks. Professional development in scaffolding might be done in tandem with a technique for scaffolding in a certain area – for example SRSD (Graham & Perin, 2007) as a technique for scaffolding process writing. The outcome of such professional development would focus on helping teachers understand how to provide the right amount and kind of scaffolding depending on the task and student need and subsequently how to peel back that scaffolding over time, allowing for gradual release of responsibility to students. Such professional development would assist teachers in being able to effectively engage struggling students in rigorous tasks without providing so much scaffolding that the tasks loses rigor.

This professional development would be built upon the Vygotskian (1986) theory that students move forward in their conceptual development when they are consistently kept working at a level just above what they can do independently – the ZPD – through the mediation of a more knowledgeable person such as a teacher. The ZPD is a moving target and therefore the concept of gradual release works with this theory; as students become able to do a task independently, mediation for that tasks should fade.

8.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was a small-scale study exploring co-teaching in the context of three co-teaching pairs in two classrooms in the same school. The district was unique in a few ways. It was a small, rural district comprised of just three schools located within walking distance of one another. The school and district was under minimal pressure in regards to annual yearly progress (AYP) and therefore testing, although considered important, did not take on the same prominent role as in districts facing the possibility of sanctions. The population at this school and in the district was relatively homogeneous – for the most part white, middle class, and non-mobile. Any generalizations drawn from this study therefore must take into consideration the small size and context of the study.

Data collection for this study also posed some limitations. Due to the distance traveled to the research site, I was not able to collect data in the same classroom on a daily basis and instead typically collected data once to twice a week in each classroom over a period of multiple months. This led to a significant number of field notes over time (67 sets of field notes total across the three partnerships) but it did mean that I typically observed parts of a unit in progress as opposed to the progression of a unit from beginning to end on a daily basis. To address these gaps in my observations, I asked questions of the teachers if I was unsure about something I observed and used my interviews with teachers to help develop a sense for how each unit of instruction unfolded in the focal classrooms.

Lastly, I was not allowed to audio record in classrooms due to a school policy that forbid the use of audio recording equipment. This made capturing discussions a particular challenge. Although I am a fast typist, I was unable to capture all responses that occurred

during class sessions. I was able to capture enough of the discussions to reasonably support my claims about the nature of discussion for each partnership but ideally this analysis would have been done based on transcripts of audio recording rather than typed notes. Although I tried to capture verbatim responses as much as possible, in some cases responses are approximate. Therefore the data on discussions is used to offer a general sense for the classroom talk with the caveat that there were examples of both teacher and student input that I was not able to capture.

8.5 DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study provides multiple possible directions for future studies. Future studies might explore co-teaching partnerships in districts with a district-mandated ELA curriculum or in large, urban districts with many schools and a more diverse population. Since this study provided a snapshot of all aspects of literacy instruction in the focal co-taught ELA classrooms, future studies may look more deeply at just one of these components – writing instruction, for example,

One particularly promising area for future study would be the exploration of how particular best practices in ELA instruction are different in the co-taught classrooms as opposed to a classroom taught by one teacher. The literature on best practices in ELA overwhelming has been conducted in general education classrooms taught by one teacher (e.g., Atwell, 1998; Beck & Jeffrey, 2009; Nystrand et al., 2003; Smagorinsky, 2001). Studies that explore how the nature of these practices change in a classroom with two

teachers and diverse learners could provide further insight into the use of these practices in the context of the inclusive co-taught classrooms.

Finally, a useful and interesting area of research would involve the development and implementation of professional development modules based on the ideas for professional development outlined in this chapter. For example, a professional development module might be designed based on Rice and Zigmond's (2000) areas of co-teaching compatibility and then used to train teachers just embarking on the co-teaching process. The study might follow these teachers and the ways in which their partnership develops. Another possibility would be a comparative study that explores the implementation of co-teaching using the professional development module and implementation of co-teaching in a similar school or district that does not provide professional development on co-teacher compatibility before implementing a co-teaching model. Such studies would have implications for the implementation of co-teaching through the development of a more strategic plan (Schaeffner & Buswell, 1996) than the relatively unstructured implementation of co-teaching in Stateline.

8.6 CONCLUSION

This study is unique in that it brings together areas of literature that have not previously been studied in tandem in such a comprehensive manner – literature on co-teaching (e.g., Austin, 2001; Rice & Zigmond, 2000; Scruggs et al., 2007); scaffolding theory (Wood et al., 1976); and best practices in ELA instruction (e.g., Atwell, 1998; Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Graham & Perin, 2007; Nystrand et al., 2003; Smagorinsky, 2001). Through a

detailed analysis of three partnerships in two classrooms, the study provides insight into how co-teaching partnerships may develop as well as how co-teachers make decisions about how to scaffold the learning of students both with and without disabilities in the same classroom. Chief among the findings in this study is the discovery of unexpected challenges that may exist beneath the surface of a co-teaching model that has been labeled as successful at the school- and district- and even regional-level. At the individual partnership level as well, this study offers a look into potential concerns that may be overlooked when co-teaching partners consider their partnership to be successful. Such concerns may include an unintentional reinforcement of students as in great need of extensive scaffolding leading to an overuse of scaffolding; domination of teacher talk due to deeper engagement between co-teaching partners rather than between the teachers and the students during class lessons; and unequal distribution of teaching responsibilities between co-teachers that leads to marginalization of the special educator. In summation, this study encourages the critical and careful examination of practices related to co-teaching, even when the co-teaching is considered to be successful.

REFERENCES

- Agee, J. (2009) Developing qualitative research questions: a reflective process. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 22 (4), 431 — 447.
- Applebee, A.N., Langer, J.A., Nystrand, M., & Gamoran A. (2003). Discussion-based approaches to developing understanding: Classroom instruction and student performance in middle and high school English. *American Education Research Journal*, 40, 685 – 730.
- Athanases, S. Z., & Heath, S. B. (1995). Ethnography in the study of the teaching and learning of English. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 29(3), 263-287.
- Atkinson, P., & Delamont, S. (2008). Analytical perspectives. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (3rd ed. ed., 285-311). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Atwell, N. (1998). *In the middle*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, Inc.
- Austin, V. L. (2001). Teachers' beliefs about co-teaching. *Remedial and Special Education*, 22(4), 245-255.
- Baker, J. M., & Zigmond, N. (1995). The meaning and practice of inclusion for students with disabilities: Themes and implications from the five cases. *Journal of Special Education*, 29(2), 163-180.
- Beck, S.W. & Jeffrey, J.V. (2009). Genre and thinking in academic writing tasks. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 41, 228 – 272.
- Beck, I.L., & McKeown, M.G. (2006). *Questioning the author: A fresh and expanded view of a powerful approach*. USA: Scholastic, Inc.
- Beck, I.L., McKeown, M.G., & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Biancarosa, C., & Snow, C. E. (2006). Reading next—A vision for action and research in middle and high school literacy: A report to Carnegie Corporation of New York

- (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.
- Boudah, D. J., Schumacher, J. B., & Deshler, D. D. (1997). Collaborative instruction: Is it an effective option for inclusion in secondary classrooms? *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 20(4), 293-- 316.
- Chalk, J. C., Hagan-Burke, S., & Burke, M. D. (2005). The effects of self-regulated strategy development on the writing process for high school students with learning disabilities. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 28(1), 75-87.
- Cook, L., & Friend, M. (1995). Co-teaching: Guidelines for creating effective practices. *Focus on Exceptional Children*, 28(3), 1-16.
- Coleman, D. and Pimentel, S. (2012). Publishers' Criteria for the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Literacy, Grades 3–12.
- Crockett, J. B., Myers, S. T., Griffin, A., & Hollandsworth, B. (2007). The unintended side effects of inclusion for students with learning disabilities: The perspectives of school administrators. *Learning Disabilities*, 14(3), 155-- 166.
- Darvin, J. (2006). "Real world cognition doesn't end when the bell rings": Literacy instruction strategies derived from situated cognition research, *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 49(5), 10 – 18.
- Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (2008). The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (3rd ed. ed., 285-311). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Dieker, L. A. (2001). What are the characteristics of "effective" middle and high school co-taught teams for students with disabilities? *Preventing School Failure*, 46, 14-23.
- Dieker, L. A., & Murawski, W. W. (2003). Coteaching at the secondary level: Unique issues, current trends, and suggestions for success. *The High School Journal*, 86,

- Dyson, L. L. (2007). The unexpected effects of inclusion on the families of students with learning disabilities: A focus-group study. *Learning Disabilities, 14*(3), 185-- 194.
- Dyson, A.H. (2003). *The brothers and sisters learn to write: Popular literacies in childhood and school cultures*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Edyburn, D. L. (2010) Would you recognize universal design for learning if you saw it? Ten propositions for new directions for the second decade of UDL. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 33*, 33 – 41.
- Emerson, R.M., Fretz, R.I., & Shaw, L.L. (1995). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Flower, L. "Writer-Based Prose: A Cognitive Basis for Problems in Writing." *College English, 41* (1) 19-37, September, 1979.
- Flower, L., & Hayes, J. R. (1980). The cognition of discovery: Defining a rhetorical problem. *College Composition and Communication, 31*(1), 21-32.
- Flower, L., & Hayes, J. R. (1981). A cognitive process theory of writing. *College Composition and Communication, 32*(4), 365-387.
- Freedman, S. W., Delp, V., & Crawford, S. M. (2005). Teaching English in untracked classrooms. *Research in the Teaching of English, 40*(1), 62-126.
- Friend, M. & Bursuck, W.D. (2006). *Including students with special needs: A practical guide for classroom teachers* (4th ed). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Fuchs, D., & Fuchs, L. S. (1998). Competing visions for educating students with disabilities: Inclusion versus full inclusion. *Childhood Education, 74*(5), 309-- 316.
- Fuchs, D., & Fuchs, L. S. (1994). Inclusive schools movement and the radicalization of special education reform. *Exceptional Children, 60*, 294-309.
- Gee, J.P. (2001). Reading as situated language: A sociocognitive perspective. *Journal of*

- Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 44, 714–725.
- Graham, S. (2006). Strategy instruction and the teaching of writing: A meta-analysis. In C. A. MacArthur, S. Graham & J. Fitzgerald (Eds.), *The handbook of writing research* (187-207). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Graham, S., Harris, K. R., MacArthur, C. A., & Schwartz, S. (1991). Writing and writing instruction for students with learning disabilities: Review of a research program. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 14(2), 89-114.
- Graham, S., & Perin, D. (2007). *Writing next: Effective strategies to improve writing of adolescents in middle and high schools – A report to Carnegie Corporation of New York*. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.
- Greenleaf, C.L. & Hinchman, K. (2009) Re-imagining our inexperienced adolescent readers: From struggling, striving, marginalized, and reluctant to thriving. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 53(1), 4 – 13.
- Griffin, C. C., Jones, H. A., & Kilgore, K. L. (2007). The unintended side effects of including students with learning disabilities for teacher educators. *Learning Disabilities*, 14(3), 195-- 204.
- Heath, S.B. (2007). *Ways with words*. (14th printing) New York: Cambridge University Press. (Original work published 1983)
- Holdheide, L. R., & Reschly, D. J. (2008). *Teacher preparation to deliver inclusive services to students with disabilities*. Washington, D.C.: National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.
- Jorgensen, C. M. (1996). Designing inclusive curricula right from the start: Practical strategies and examples for the high school classroom. In S. Stainback, & W. Stainback (Eds.), *Inclusion: A guide for educators* (221-236). Baltimore: Paul H Brookes Publishing Co.

- Karigiannis, A., Stainback, S., & Stainback, W. (1996). Historical overview of inclusion. In S. Stainback, & W. Stainback (Eds.), *Inclusion: A guide for educators* (17- 28). Baltimore: Paul H Brookes Publishing Co.
- Kavale, K. A., & Forness, S. R. (2000). History, rhetoric, and reality: Analysis of the inclusion debate. *Remedial and Special Education*, 21(5), 279-296.
- Keefe, B., & Moore, V. (2004). The challenge of co-teaching in inclusive classrooms at the high school level and what the teachers told us. *American Secondary Education*, 32, 77-78.
- King-Sears, M. (2009). Universal design for learning: Technology and pedagogy. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 32, 199-201.
- LeCompte, M. D., & Schensul, J. J. (1999a). *Designing and conducting ethnographic research*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.
- LeCompte, M. D. & Shensul, J.J. (1999b). *Analyzing & interpreting ethnographic data*. Walnut Creek, Calif.: AltaMira Press.
- Madden, N. A., & Slavin, R. E. (1983). Mainstreaming students with mild handicaps: Academic and social outcomes. *Review of Educational Research*, 53(4), 519-569.
- Magiera, K. & Zigmond, N. (2005). Co-teaching in middle school classrooms under routine conditions: Does the instructional experience differ for students with disabilities in co-taught and solo-taught classes?" *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*. 20 (2), 79-85.
- Matsumura, L.C., Garnier, H., & Pascal, J. (2002). Measuring instructional quality in accountability systems: Classroom assignments and student achievement. *Educational Assessment*, 8 (3), 207 – 229.
- Mock, D. R., & Kauffman, J. M. (2005). The delusion of full inclusion. In J. W. Jacobson, R. M. Foxx & J. A. Mulick (Eds.), *Controversial therapies for*

- developmental disabilities: Fad, fashion, and science in professional practice* (pp. 113-- 128). Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Murray, D.M. (1978). Writing before writing, *College Composition and Communication*, 29(4), 375 – 381.
- Murawski, W., & Dieker, L. (2004). Tips and strategies for co-teaching at the secondary level. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 36(5), 52-58.
- Nichols, J., Dowdy, A., & Nichols, C. (2010) Co-teaching: Cure or quick fix? *Education*, 30 (4) 647 – 651.
- Nystrand, M., Wu, L.L., Gamoran, A., Zeiser, S., & Long, D.A. (2003). Questions in time: investigating the structure and dynamics of unfolding classroom discourse. *Discourse Processes*, 35(2), 135 – 198.
- Pearson, P. D., & Gallagher, M. C. (1983). The instruction of reading comprehension. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 8, 317–344.
- Rex, L. A. (2003). Loss of the creature: The obscuring of inclusivity in classroom discourse. *Communication Education*, 52(1), 30.
- Rice, D., & Zigmond, N. (2000). Co-teaching in secondary schools: Teacher reports of development in Australian and American classrooms. *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*, 15, 190-197.
- Roberts, G., Torgesen, J. K., Boardman, A., & Scammacca, N. (2008). Evidence-based strategies for reading instruction of older students with learning disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice* 23(2), 63-69.
- Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2005). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data* (2nd ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Sage, D. D. (1996). Administrative strategies for achieving inclusive schooling. In S. Stainback, & W. Stainback (Eds.), *Inclusion: A guide for educators* (105-116).

- Baltimore: Paul H Brookes Publishing Co.
- Schaffner, C. B., & Buswell, B. E. (1996). Ten critical elements for creating inclusive and effective school communities. In S. Stainback, & W. Stainback (Eds.), *Inclusion: A guide for educators* (49-65). Baltimore: Paul H Brookes Publishing Co.
- Scruggs, T. E., Mastropieri, M. A., & McDuffie, K. A. (2007). Co-teaching in inclusive classrooms: A metasynthesis of qualitative research. *Exceptional Children*, 73(4), 392-416.
- Smagorinsky, P. (2001). If meaning is constructed, what is it made from? Toward a cultural theory of reading. *Review of Educational Research*, 71 (1), 133 – 169.
- Snow, C. E. & Sweet, A. P. (2003). Reading for Comprehension. In A. P. Sweet & C. E. Snow (Eds), *Rethinking Reading*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Stainback, S., & Stainback, W. (1996). Curriculum in inclusive classrooms: The background. In S. Stainback, & W. Stainback (Eds.), *Inclusion: A guide for educators* (203-208). Baltimore: Paul H Brookes Publishing Co.
- Szabo, S. (2006). Kwhhl: A student-driven evolution of the kwl. *American Secondary Education*, 34(3), 57-67.
- Tomlinson, C.A. (2001) *How to differentiate instruction in mixed-ability classrooms* (2nd ed). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Vaughn, S., & Linan-Thompson, S. (2003). What is special about special education for students with learning disabilities? *Journal of Special Education*, 37(3), 140-147.
- Vygotsky, L. (Kozulin, A. rev. ed.) (1986). *Thought and language*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Walther-Thomas, C. S., Bryant, M., & Land, S. (1996). Planning for effective co-teaching: The key to successful inclusion. *Remedial and Special Education*, 17(4),

255-264.

- Willis, J.W. (2007). *Foundations of qualitative research: Interpretive and critical approaches*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Wilson, G.L. & Michaels, C.A. (2006). General and special education students' perceptions of co-teaching: Implications for secondary-level literacy instruction. *Reading and Writing Quarterly*, 22, 205 – 225.
- Wood, D., Bruner, J., & Ross, G. (1976). The role of tutoring in problem solving. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 17, 89-100.
- Zigmond, N. (2003). Where should students with disabilities receive special education services?: Is one place better than another? *Journal of Special Education*, 37(3), 193-199.
- Zigmond, N., & Baker, J. M. (1995). Full inclusion for students with learning disabilities: *Theory into Practice*, 35(1), 26.
- Zigmond, N., Kloo, A., & Volonino, V. (2009). What, where, and how? special education in the climate of full inclusion. *Exceptionality*, 17(4), 189-204.
- Zito, J. R., Adkins, M., Gavins, M., Harris, K. R., & Graham, S. (2007). Self-regulated strategy development: Relationship to the social-cognitive perspective and the development of self-regulation. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 23(1), 77-95.

APPENDIX A

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION GUIDE

Role Negotiations

Who introduces the lesson?

Who leads the main lesson? Or is it led through team teaching?

Do teachers switch among co-teaching models during the lesson (e.g., team teaching, one-teach, one-assist, etc.). If not, what is the predominant model?

If the lesson is discussion based, how do the two teachers interact with the students during the discussion?

How do the teachers communicate with each other during the lesson?

How is behavior addressed? Does one teacher address behavioral issues more or in a different way?

How do the teachers pace the lesson?

Classroom Activities

What is the nature of the reading activities?

What is the nature of the writing activities?

How does each teacher provide reading/writing instruction?

What kinds of talk surround classroom activities? How is the talk used to mediate student learning? Are there any salient examples of dialogic bids used to guide students towards engaging in discussions that lead to a deeper understanding of particular concepts?

Do teachers employ any specific reading or writing strategies to scaffold students' engagement in particular literacy tasks?

Scaffolding

How do teachers assess students for understanding?

How do students let teachers know when they need help?

Do teachers model tasks? Examples?

What kind of scaffolding occurs during lesson introduction? What level of individual scaffolding occurs? Group scaffolding?

What is the nature of each example of scaffolding?

APPENDIX B

LOOSE PROTOCOL USED DURING FIRST INTERVIEWS

How did you originally get started in a co-teaching relationship? Tell me a bit about how you became an inclusion teacher.

Special ed teacher: Describe your teaching role before you were involved in the inclusion program. How did you end up as an English inclusion teacher? What preparation did you have for this role? How has co-teaching in the English classroom differed from previous roles you've had?

How would you describe or characterize your working relationship with your co-teacher? How has this relationship developed over time? What are the essential elements, in your opinion, for making a co-teaching relationship work?

How do you and your co-teacher plan for instruction? Assess student learning? Implement lesson plans?

How do you see your roles? Divide responsibilities?

What is most beneficial about co-teaching? What is most difficult? (For you and for the students)

Describe your ideal composition of an inclusion class. Should it contain struggling students with IEP students or a broad spectrum of levels? Why is this an ideal class composition?

Where do you see your co-teaching relationship moving in the future? What are future goals that you and your co-teacher have for yourselves and for working with students?

What do administrators at the school or district level do to support the co-teaching inclusion model at this school? How might they better support teachers? What advice would you give to teachers just beginning in a co-teaching relationship?

APPENDIX C

PROTOCOL FOR TASK ANALYSIS

(Adapted from Matsumura, Garnier, Pascal, and Valdés, 2002)

Clarity of Learning Goals

Teacher clearly articulates skills, concepts, and/or content knowledge that students will gain.

Scaffolding

Support through models, clear directions, examples, and strategies included to aid students in engaging with the task in a way that furthers understanding.

Cognitive Challenge of Task

Students required to engage in activities requiring higher-order thinking skills such as constructing an argument, analyzing and solving a problem, or comparing different concepts and experiences.

Clarity of Grading Criteria

Teacher makes it clear to students how they will be assessed.

APPENDIX D

EXCERPTS FROM ROMEO AND JULIET READING GUIDE: ACT I



Character Chart

Most of the characters in the play are involved in a bitter conflict between two families: **Capulets and Montagues.**

Decide who is, or works for, a **Capulet or Montague.** In some cases the characters are neutral. Place them in the appropriate columns.

Romeo	Juliet	Lord Montague	Lord Capulet	Benvolio
Mercutio	Paris	Lady Capulet	Lady Montague	Tybalt
Nurse	Balthasar	Abram	Friar Laurence	Peter
Sampson	Gregory	Frair John	Apothecary	Prince Escalus

Montagues' Side

Name Role

Romeo — son of Lord Montague

Capulets' Side

Name Role

Juliet — daughter of Lord Capulet

Neutral

Name Role

Prince Escalus — Ruler of Verona



Prologue

Setting the Stage

Today, theater-goers are usually given a printed program. This program tells the audience about the playwright, the actors, and the play itself. Often the program gives a brief overview of the entire story.

However, in Elizabethan days, most people could not read. Moreover, printing was a new craft and few books existed. Therefore, playwrights offered their audience a prologue in place of a printed program. Elizabethan audiences listened carefully to the information in such prologues.

Reading Questions

Pages/lines

Before Act I there is a short prologue narrated by the chorus. This prologue tells where the play is set. It also reveals the problems the main characters will face and how the play will end.

1. The two families are fighting because

Page 992, line 3

2. Who is involved in the fight besides the two families?

Page 992, line 4

3. This is a sad story of a young couple's

Page 992, line 9

4. The parents' anger is finally ended by

Page 992, line 11

5. How many hours will it take for this story to be acted on the stage?

Page 992, line 12



Act I Scene IV

Setting the Stage

People in Shakespeare's time believed in superstitions. Notice how Romeo's dream affects him adversely in wanting to attend the Capulets' party. Notice Mercutio's reaction to Romeo's hesitancy.

Reading Questions

Pages/lines

Pun is a play on words; the humorous use of a word or phrase so as to emphasize or suggest its different meanings or applications, or the use of words that are alike or nearly alike in sound but different in meaning

1. Romeo is still sad and depressed because of

2. Romeo does not want to dance because:

- a. His friends have "nimble soles" meaning

- b. He has a "soul of led" meaning

- c. This is an example of

Sole =

Soul =

3. What are Mercutio's thoughts on dreams? Write two lines that show his beliefs about dreams on the lines below. Write the line number in the column on the right.

- a. _____

- b. _____

Page 1009, lines 14-16

Pages 1010-1011,
lines 103-110

Line _____

Line _____

Act I



Discussion Question

Act I

1. Which character in Act One appealed to you the most? Why?

2. How would you describe Romeo and his attitude toward love?

3. In your opinion, how might Juliet be changed by meeting Romeo? Consider the following:
 - her reaction when Lady Capulet tells her of Paris's proposal
 - her response to Romeo at the party
 - what the speech beginning "My only love, sprung from my only hate!" indicates about her understanding of the circumstances

APPENDIX E

***SPEAK* READING GUIDE**

Name _____

3

Reading Guide (1st Marking Period)

Review these questions before you begin "First Marking Period." While you are reading, use the questions to help you focus on major events and ideas. When you finish "First Marking Period," write your answers to the questions.

1. Why won't Melinda's former friends speak to her? _____

2. How is Mr. Freeman, the art teacher, different from Melinda's other teachers?

3. What kind of relationship did Melinda have with Rachel before this year? How does Melinda feel about the way Rachel now treats her? _____

4. Why is Melinda doing poorly in school? How do her parents react to her grades?

5. How do Melinda's feelings about her "tree" assignment change? _____

6. What kind of group is the Marthas? _____

7. How does Melinda react when she overhears the Marthas talking about her?

8. **Draw a Conclusion** What do you think happened to Melinda at the end-of-summer party? Write your explanation, along with evidence from what you've read so far, on the back of this sheet.

APPENDIX F

LORD BYRON POEM MARKED WITH STUDENT INTERPRETATIONS

"When We Two Parted"

By: Lord Byron - he

Someone's lover
has gone away
(death) and the
speaker is sad.

death?

When we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this.

sever = break apart
foretold = tell before hand

have chills
from death

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow -
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.

area around eye brow

marriage
vows?
promises

Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame;
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame.

- being famous - everyone knows
light could be: who you are
* heaven
* spotlight

- sad sound
(funeral)

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me -
Why wert thou so dear?

Forbidden
love

They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well -
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

rue = regret

Could he be
falling in love
with someone
else?

In secret we met -
In silence I grieve
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive,

is this where
the shame is? Forbidden
love?

- mis-lead

If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee? -
With silence and tears.

Are they going to meet
in heaven

APPENDIX G

***THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW* CHARACTER ESSAY GUIDE**

Name: _____

English 9

Characterization Essay

Step One - Choose a character from the novel that you think is interesting, understand, or identify with.

Step Two - Choose three adjectives that you feel describes this character. These adjectives must be completely different. In other words, they can't be different words that mean the same thing. For example, kind and nice are different words, but they have the same meaning.

Step Three - Look through the book and find at least one example AND one quote that shows your character being the adjective you've chosen to describe them.

Step Four - Begin writing your essay in the same format we used for the Speak essay.

- ❖ Introduction - starting general and ending specific with the **THESIS STATEMENT**.
- ❖ First Body Paragraph - discusses the first adjective you mentioned in the thesis statement.
 - Example and quotation - don't forget to cite the quotation!
 - (Hinton 8).
- ❖ Second Body Paragraph - discusses the second adjective mentioned in the thesis statement.
 - Example and quotation (You still need to cite the quotation)
- ❖ Third Body Paragraph - discusses the third adjective you mentioned in the thesis statement.
 - Example and quotation (You still need to cite the quotation)
- ❖ Conclusion - starting specific with a **REPHRASING** of the thesis statement (You are not to use the exact same one!) and ending general.

Step Five - **PROOF READ** your paper. Do not think that while writing it you did not make mistakes! We highly suggest you read it aloud, that way you can hear when things do not sound right. We will be giving you a proof reading sheet that you must use to assist in this process.

Step Six - Complete a work cited page for the novel. Example:
Author's last name, first name. Title of Novel. City of publication. Publisher, year of publication.

THIS ESSAY IS DUE _____

APPENDIX H

STUDENT WORK FOR *THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW* ESSAYS

Student sample #1 "Rick"

S.E. Hinton is a very exciting author. Some of the books that she wrote are The Outsiders and That Was Then, This Is Now. There are several characters that are important in That Was Then, This Is Now. Mark is one of the characters that was interesting. Although Mark has several personality traits, the three that stand out the most are tough, brave, and smart.

Mark is tough because the day of the court hearing he wasn't scared or worried of anything, not even jail. Most people that get sentenced to jail are either very worried or scared, unlike Mark. "He looked relaxed and amused, tipping back in his chair, glancing over everyone in the courtroom with an easy, almost friendly expression" (Hinton 153). This sentence proves that Mark is tough because he was not afraid of jail. Great quote!

Another word to describe Mark is brave. Mark helps M&M from getting jumped ^{by} the Shepards. "Since we had surprised them, it wasn't too hard to get them pinned. I had Curly ^{introduce - Bryon says,} Shepard in a stranglehold with one arm twisted behind his back, while Mark had the other guy pinned on the ground" (Hinton 21). This sentence proves that Mark is brave because he was not scared to fight anyone in the back alley ^{where} that M&M was ~~in~~.

Another word to describe Mark is risky. Mark is risky because he sells drugs and steals cars on a daily basis. ^{He says,} "I met this guy on the Ribbon- he set me up. I figure I don't have to take it to sell it, so what's the worry?" (Hinton 147). This ^{shows} ~~sentence proves~~ that Mark sells drugs. "The principal had to leave school early today for some reason. He gets to his parking place, and no car?" (Hinton 73). This sentence proves that Mark not only steals cars, but the school principal's car too!

Change up your wording it keeps it interesting
You need to transition between these ideas - drugs to stealing cars.

"Rick"

Tough, brave, and smart are the three personality traits that describe Mark. At the end of the book, Bryon calls the cops on Mark. Mark goes to jail and he gets five years in the reformatory. Since Bryon got Mark into trouble, Mark no longer wants to be his friend. The book That Was Then, This Is Now by S.E. Hinton was a great book. I would recommend this book for

chehehehe! anyone who likes stealing cars, fighting, and nonstop action. This book just keeps you wondering what is going to happen in the next chapter.
usefully
is one we
know!

~~Springer~~

Great examples! See the comment I made about changing up some of your phrases. Keep up the great work ☺.

11 Pick 11

Work Cited

Hinton, S.E. That Was Then, This Is Now. New York: Penguin Group, 1971.

2500 1

WRITING RUBRIC FOR STUDENTS

FOCUS x 2		CONTENT x 2		ORGANIZATION x 2		STYLE x 2		CONVENTIONS x 2	
The single controlling point made with an awareness of task (mode) about a specific topic		The presence of ideas developed through facts, examples, anecdotes, details, opinions, statistics, reasons, and/or explanations		The order developed and sustained within and across paragraphing using transitional devices and including introduction and conclusion		The choice, use and arrangement of words and sentence structures that create tone and voice		Grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation	
FOCUS		CONTENT		ORGANIZATION		STYLE		CONVENTIONS	
4	Sharp, distinct controlling point made about a single topic with evident awareness of task (mode)	X	Substantial, specific, and/or illustrative content demonstrating strong development and sophisticated ideas	Sophisticated arrangement of content with evident and/or subtle transitions	Precise, illustrative use of a variety of words and sentence structures to create consistent writer's voice and tone appropriate to audience	Evident control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation			
3	Apparent point made about a single topic with sufficient awareness of task (mode)	X	Sufficiently developed content with adequate elaboration or explanation	Functional arrangement of content that sustains a logical order with some evidence of transitions	Generic use of a variety of words and sentence structures that may or may not create writer's voice and tone appropriate to audience	Sufficient control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence structure			
2	No apparent point but evidence of a specific topic		Limited content with inadequate elaboration or explanation	Confused or inconsistent arrangement of content with or without attempts at transition	Limited word choice and control of sentence structures that inhibit voice and tone	Limited control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation			
1	Minimal evidence of a topic		Superficial and/or minimal content	Minimal control of content arrangement	Minimal variety in word choice and minimal control of sentence structures	Minimal control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation			

34 850/0
40 B+

Student Sample # 2

"Kristen"

S.E. Hinton is a very skilled author. She has written many novels, including Tex, The Outsiders, and That Was Then, This is Now. The novel I will be focusing on is That Was Then, This is Now. There are a lot of characters in this book, and those characters all have very different personalities. The character Mark is very diverse in his personality traits, but the three traits that stand out to me the most are temperamental, easy-going, and strong.

Don't tell us you're going to do it, just do it.

↓
The first trait that Mark has is temperamental. He is temperamental because he acts on impulse, never giving a second thought to what he's doing. For example, one night while Bryon, Mark, M&M and Cathy were driving on the ribbon, these snobby-looking guys popped off a really obscene remark towards everyone in Bryon's car. Bryon thinks back to that moment and says "Then, so quick I didn't even realize what was happening, Mark reached past M&M, opened the door, pushed M&M out of the way, ran around to my side of the car, and punched the foul-mouthed guy right in the nose, literally smashing his nose in" (Hinton 96).

Add more explanation as to why this is temperamental

The next trait that stood out the most was his easy-going nature. What makes me think this is how Mark just takes everything that comes at him. In the book, Mark and Bryon are talking about how bad things happen to good people, and Mark says "You got me, Bryon. I never thought about it. I guess 'cause nothin' bad has ever happened to me" (Hinton 112). Bryon just looked at Mark in shock, thinking about how a lot of bad things have happened in Mark's life. But then, Bryon realized that Mark had meant that none of those things mattered because they hadn't left a mark on him. "He was golden, dangerous Mark" (Hinton 113).

Careful - You are getting dangerously close to using S.E. Hinton's words and not quoting them.

User

Nov 5 3:28:53 AM Friday, November 05, 2010



"Krisen"

The last trait that stood out the most in Mark was his strong mind. He always knew how to bottle things up, keep his feelings hidden from the world. Happiness was one thing. Mark could be happy as a clam and everyone would know it. But if he was depressed or sad, not even the greatest psychic in the world could tell what he's thinking. The scene in the book where Mark and Bryon are cutting Angela's hair, Angela was drunk and crying hysterically. Mark hates when girls cry because he thinks it's annoying. After Angela stops crying and passes out, Mark mentions that he hates to see gutsy chicks break and that it destroys his faith in human nature. Bryon then asks Mark, "You're never gonna break, huh?" and Mark just replies with a simple 'Nope' (Hinton 111). *Add explanation.*

connect your pair
what does one thing have to do with the other?

Temperamental, easy-going, and strong, are just three of Mark's many personality traits. This book is very diverse in its characters and is a very good teen fiction novel, but the best character for me was Mark. That was Then, This is Now is a very brilliant novel by the author S. E. Hinton. Although this is not her only novel, it is the best I have read so far.

Nice conclusion.

 I'm not sure temperamental is the word you want - I'm not sure someone can be temperamental and easy-going. Would impulsive work better?
Your quotes are well chosen, just be sure to fully support them :).


Work Cited

Hinton, S. E. That Was Then, This is Now. New York: Penguin Group, 1971.

Lucky!

WRITING RUBRIC FOR STUDENTS

FOCUS x 2		CONTENT x 2		ORGANIZATION x 2		STYLE x 2		CONVENTIONS x 2	
The single controlling point made with an awareness of task (mode) about a specific topic		The presence of ideas developed through facts, examples, anecdotes, details, statistics, reasons, opinions, and/or explanations		The order developed and sustained within and across paragraphs using transitional devices and including introduction and conclusion		The choice, use and arrangement of words and sentence structures that create tone and voice		Grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation	
FOCUS		CONTENT		ORGANIZATION		STYLE		CONVENTIONS	
4		Sharp, distinct controlling point made about a single topic with evident awareness of task (mode)	X	Substantial, specific, and/or illustrative content demonstrating strong development and sophisticated ideas	Sophisticated arrangement of content with evident and/or subtle transitions	X	Precise, illustrative use of a variety of words and sentence structures to create consistent writer's voice and tone appropriate to audience	Evident control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation	X
3		Apparent point made about a single topic with sufficient awareness of task (mode)	X	Sufficiently developed content with adequate elaboration or explanation	Functional arrangement of content that sustains a logical order with some evidence of transitions	X	Generic use of a variety of words and sentence structures that may or may not create writer's voice and tone appropriate to audience	Limited control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation	X
2		No apparent point but evidence of a specific topic		Limited content with inadequate elaboration or explanation	Confused or inconsistent arrangement of content with or without attempts at transition		Limited word choice and control of sentence structures that inhibit voice and tone	Minimal control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation	
1		Minimal evidence of a topic		Superficial and/or minimal content	Minimal control of content arrangement		Minimal variety in word choice and minimal control of sentence structures	Minimal control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation	

39/40
90%
A

"Kirsten"

Student Sample #3

"Hunter"

The author S.E. Hinton has written several novels for teenagers. Most of her characters grow up in old, worn-down towns in a city, and steal and fight almost every day. Bryon is a 16 year old boy in the novel That was Then, This is Now who lives with his mom and his best friend Mark. Although Bryon has several personality traits, the three that stand out the most are smart, caring, and tough.

The first word to describe Bryon is smart. Bryon is a very smart kid and knows what to do in almost every situation. An example of Bryon being smart is in chapter eight when he says, "I don't want to keep this up, this getting-even jazz. It's stupid and I'm sick of it and it keeps going in circles. I have had it---so if you're planning any get-even mugging, forget it" (Hinton 129). This is what Bryon said to Mark about getting even with the Shepards for jumping him on Terry's doorstep. He said this because he wants all the fighting to stop because it's just going to continue until somebody eventually dies. Bryon doesn't want to keep getting mixed up in trouble like he used to.

Another way ^{avoid "you"} you could describe Bryon is caring. An example of Bryon being caring is when ^{he} Bryon calls the police on his best friend Mark for selling drugs. An example of what Bryon said to him when he found out is, "I called the cops" (Hinton 148). He said this to keep Mark safe and to make him change while he still can because he wants what is best for Mark. Selling drugs is not what is best for him.


One other way to describe Bryon is tough. He is a pretty big kid with a good build and he's strong. A way to indicate that Bryon is tough is when Mark and Bryon save M&M from being jumped by the Shepards. "I had Curly Shepard in a stranglehold with

introduce - Bryon says

"Hinton"

one arm twisted behind his back, while Mark had the other guy pinned on the ground" (Hinton 21). The Shepards are pretty big kids too and can fight well. Bryon out smarted and fought one of the Shepard brothers and made them cower and run away from the fight.

Smart, caring, and tough are three words to perfectly describe Bryon in the novel That was Then, This is Now by S.E. Hinton. Bryon ends up regretting calling the police on Mark. He loses his girlfriend Cathy and is all alone and has no friends. Overall I enjoyed reading the book and I would recommend it to anyone looking for a nice book to read.

 - Nice quote choices! You also have some great word choices - indicate, cower, etc.

Your conclusion is a ~~bit~~ tad bit random - try to keep your info about Bryon consistent with what you wrote about in the body paragraphs.

Overall, nice support for your adjectives!

"Hinter "

Work Cited

Hinton, S.E. That Was Then This Is Now. New York: The Penguin Group, 1971.

lucky!

11/11/11

WRITING RUBRIC FOR STUDENTS

FOCUS x 2		CONTENT x 2		ORGANIZATION x 2		STYLE x 2		CONVENTIONS x 2	
The single controlling point made with an awareness of task (mode) about a specific topic		The presence of ideas developed through facts, examples, anecdotes, details, opinions, statistics, reasons, and/or explanations		The order developed and sustained within and across paragraphing using transitional devices and including introduction and conclusion		The choice, use and arrangement of words and sentence structures that create tone and voice		Grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation	
FOCUS		CONTENT		ORGANIZATION		STYLE		CONVENTIONS	
4	Sharp, distinct controlling point made about a single topic with evident awareness of task (mode)	Substantial, specific, and/or illustrative content demonstrating strong development and sophisticated ideas	Sufficiently developed content with adequate elaboration or explanation	Sophisticated arrangement of content with evident and/or subtle transitions	Precise, illustrative use of a variety of words and sentence structures to create consistent writer's voice and tone appropriate to audience	Evident control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation			
3	Apparent point made about a single topic with sufficient awareness of task (mode)			Functional arrangement of content that sustains a logical order with some evidence of transitions	Generic use of a variety of words and sentence structures that may or may not create writer's voice and tone appropriate to audience	Sufficient control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence structure			
2	No apparent point but evidence of a specific topic	Limited content with inadequate elaboration or explanation	Confused or inconsistent arrangement of content with or without attempts at transition	Limited word choice and control of sentence structures that inhibit voice and tone	Limited control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation				
1	Minimal evidence of a topic	Superficial and/or minimal content	Minimal control of content arrangement	Minimal variety in word choice and minimal control of sentence structures	Minimal control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation				

36
40
90%
A
Yes!

APPENDIX I

SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE GUIDE

Soundtrack of My Life

Reflection Essay Format

*Please use the following format to guide your Reflection Essay. Your essay MUST use the following typing specifications:

Font Size – 12 pt.

Font Style – Times New Roman

Line Spacing – Double Spaced

Paragraph #1 – Autobiography

- Who are you?
- Where are you from?
- Where are you now?
- How old are you?
- ETC...

Paragraph #2 – Soundtrack Explanation

- What is this album you have created?
- Why are you completing it?
- What do you hope to get out of this project?
- What do you see yourself doing with this later in life?
- What goals did you have for creating it?

Paragraph #3 thru #10 – Explanation of each Event/Song

- What is the name of the song and the artist?
- Why is the song important to you?
- How does it connect to your life?
- What does the song reveal about the kind of person you are and what you think is important in your life?

Paragraph #11 – Final Remarks

- Conclusion
- Thank your reader for taking the time to read and listen
- Any final comments you have about the project as a whole

Soundtrack of My Life

Rubric

Album Cover: 11 points

Album Name: _____/3
 Your Name: _____/3
 Creativity: _____/5

Information: 26 points

8 Events/Songs/Artists: _____/8
 8 Lyrics: _____/8
 Burned CD: _____/10

Reflection Essay: 55 points

Autobiography: _____/5
 Soundtrack Explanation: _____/5
 Song/Event 1 Explanation: _____/5
 Song/Event 2 Explanation: _____/5
 Song/Event 3 Explanation: _____/5
 Song/Event 4 Explanation: _____/5
 Song/Event 5 Explanation: _____/5
 Song/Event 6 Explanation: _____/5
 Song/Event 7 Explanation: _____/5
 Song/Event 8 Explanation: _____/5
 Final Remarks: _____/5

Presentation: 8 points

Volume: _____/2
 Clarity: _____/2
 Posture: _____/2
 Eye Contact: _____/2

NAME: _____ TOTAL AMOUNT OF POINTS: _____/100

The Soundtrack of My Life

Event	Song	Artist
First Love/First Kiss	"That's Amore"	Dean Martin
Uncle's Death of AIDS	"Seasons of Love"	Cast of Rent
Back to Back State Champs	"Thunderstruck"	ACDC
F.H.S.Homecoming Queen	"Theme from Ice Castles"	Nikki Costa
S.R.V. College Graduation	"Graduation"	Vitamin C
First Real Job	"Respect"	Aretha Franklin
First Car Purchase - VW Bug	"Peaches & Cream"	Group 112
Las Vegas Trip	"Hakuna Mattata"	Timon & Pumba
Baptized First Godchild	"Here I am Lord"	Daniel L. Schutte
Purchased First House	"Independent Women"	Destiny's Child
First Pet - Boo Boo	The Chipmunk Song	Alvin & The Chipmunks
Future Husband	"History in the Making"	Darius Rucker

Horse with No Name - America

On the first part of the journey
I was looking at all the life
There were plants and birds and rocks and things
There was sand and hills and rings
The first thing I met was a fly with a buzz
And the sky with no clouds
The heat was hot and the ground was dry
But the air was full of sound

I've been through the desert on a horse with no name
It felt good to be out of the rain
In the desert you can remember your name
cause there ain't no one for to give you no pain
La, la ...

After two days in the desert sun
My skin began to turn red
After three days in the desert fun
I was looking at a river bed
And the story it told of a river that flowed
Made me sad to think it was dead

You see I've been through the desert on a horse with no name
It felt good to be out of the rain
In the desert you can remember your name
cause there ain't no one for to give you no pain
La, la ...

After nine days I let the horse run free
cause the desert had turned to sea
There were plants and birds and rocks and things
There was sand and hills and rings
The ocean is a desert with its life underground
And a perfect disguise above
Under the cities lies a heart made of ground
But the humans will give no love

You see I've been through the desert on a horse with no name
It felt good to be out of the rain
In the desert you can remember your name
cause there ain't no one for to give you no pain
La, la ...

The song "Horse with No Name" by America represents a trip I once took. I drove across the country with my dad and sister the summer after my freshman year of college. We drove from Columbus, OH to San Francisco, CA and it was the first time I had ever been to the west coast and been through the desert. The song really connects with the journey because it talks about the desert becoming the ocean and ultimately that is what our trip was like. One day we were driving through the desert and the next day we had made it to the ocean. Also, the song gives the feeling that there is clarity in the desert when it says, "in the desert you can remember your name," and maybe that is because the desert is wide open and empty. There aren't a lot of things that cause distraction. Our trip was very much like that. We were gone for about a month and were free from the distraction of day to day life. We had time and clarity to appreciate the scenery and landmarks we visited. Overall, the speaker seems like he learns a lot about life in general and I too on this journey learned a lot about myself and the things I value in life.

The Soundtrack of My Life

[illegible]

APPENDIX J

CONCLUSIONS ABOUT CHARACTERS IN *TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD*

Literary Concept

1

CHARACTERIZATION

Name _____

In a screenplay, there is little description of character—we get most of our clues about character from action and dialogue. When you put together details about the characters, you can arrive at generalizations that characterize their personalities.

Read each conclusion below, and find examples of actions and words that support, or lead to the conclusion. The first one is done for you.

1. Conclusion #1: Atticus believes in using words, not violence, to solve problems.

Details that support the conclusion:

Atticus uses words to calm Mrs. Dubose when she is angry with Scout; Atticus prohibits Scout from fighting;

Atticus is reluctant to use guns.

2. Conclusion #2: Jem loves Scout.

Details that support the conclusion:

3. Conclusion #3: Scout is kind-hearted.

Details that support the conclusion:

4. Conclusion #4: Tom Robinson was an innocent man.

Details that support the conclusion:

APPENDIX K

THEMES IN *TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD*

Literary Concept

3

THEME

Name _____

Themes are messages that the writer wishes to share with readers; they are not usually stated directly. Some of the themes explored in *To Kill a Mockingbird* involve morality and justice. As you read, look for examples that express the themes listed below. Write an example that supports each theme in the space provided.

1. Prejudice and superstition can lead to injustice.

2. Individuals have a responsibility to protect the innocent.

3. One person's wrongdoing can release evil into the entire community.

4. Courage is doing what is right even when the odds of succeeding are poor.

5. People often fear what they don't understand.

6. The most important part of a child's education may take place in the home and community rather than in the school.

7. Insight, maturity, understanding, and integrity have no relation to age, social position, or formal education.

8. Appearances do not always reflect reality.

APPENDIX L

FINAL PROJECT GUIDE FOR *TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD*

To Kill a Mockingbird

Symbolic Theme Illustration

(30 points)

Objective – to convey a main idea and a theme of *To Kill a Mockingbird* and to show comprehension of a specific character in regards to that theme.

Step 1 – Write a theme statement in your own words (you should not be copying one of my theme statements from the agree disagree sheet). This sentence must be a statement; it cannot be a question.

Due _____

Step 2 – Create a non-textual border that relates to the theme statement.

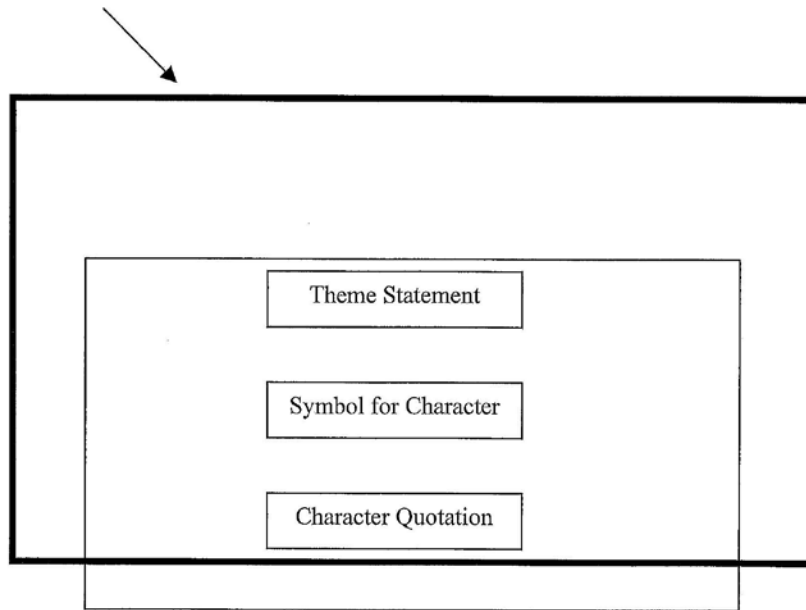
Step 3 – Choose a symbol that represents a chosen character.

Step 4 – Find a quotation that reveals the character's stance on the theme.

Step 5 – Write one paragraph that explains each of your elements. Paragraph must be typed, times new roman font, 12 pt, and double spaced.

Non – Textual Border

Due _____



Due _____

APPENDIX M

STUDENT WORK FOR FINAL PROJECT FROM *TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD*

Courage is doing what is right even when the odds of succeeding are poor.

Student work sample #1

"Atticus"



"Anyway, I'm simply defending a Negro, Tom Robinson. Scout ...there are some things you're not old enough to understand just yet. There's been some high talk around town to the effect that I shouldn't do much about defending this man."

AM Monday, May 16, 2011

"Alicia"

Atticus shows equality, fairness, and justice because he is a lawyer. Atticus wants fairness and equality for Tom Robinson. Atticus wants the same fairness and would have. Atticus is courageous when he is in court. We are all equal like on the scale picture. I chose a lion for a border because Atticus is courageous,

Name _____

TKAM Final Project Rubric

<u>Theme Statement</u>	1	2	3	④	5	6	Good statement - explain it.
(Is the statement true of the novel? Is it explained well?)							
<u>Non-Textual Border</u>	1	2	3	4	⑤	6	
(Does it relate to the theme? Is it clearly visible? Is it neat and aesthetically pleasing? Is it explained well?)							
<u>Character Symbol</u>	1	2	3	4	⑤	6	
(Does it accurately represent the chosen character? Is it neat and aesthetically pleasing? Is it explained well?)							
<u>Quotation</u>	1	②	3	4	5	6	You haven't explained
(Does it portray the character's stance on the theme statement? Is it legible? Is it explained well?)							
<u>Paragraph</u>	1	2	3	④	5	6	A little more information
(Is it typed, double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt? Is it free of grammar errors? Does it provide analysis of project?)							needed
<u>Total</u>	20	30	67%	D			

[Handwritten signature]

"Anyway, I'm simply defending a Negro, Tom Robinson. Scout...there are some things you're not old enough to understand just yet. There's been some high talk around town to the effect that I shouldn't do much about defending this man."

Alicia



Student work sample 2
"Christopher"



My favorite of all the logos is the one with the dove. It's so beautiful and peaceful.

I liked the logo with the dove. It's so beautiful and peaceful.

11/11/11
+
-
=

"Christopher"

[REDACTED]

^{people}
"Individuals persons are obliged to protect ALL people races even when, most likely, they won't succeed." I chose this as my theme statement because Atticus knew that he probably wouldn't win the court case. I chose the smaller peace sign on the outside because; Mr. Finch was a lawyer and fought for peace between everyone. The bigger peace sign with the bird inside symbolizes, Atticus' strive to have peace and not war between all races. African American, Caucasian, Indian etc.... I thought "My goodness gracious, look at your flowers. Did you ever see something so beautiful?" Was a good quotation because Atticus Finch sensed when there was friction between ^{people} persons. He always tried his hardest to resolve the problem as quickly as possible.

ok, but this should reflect your theme - I'm not sure that it does.

Not too shabby!

Nice work - your project is very pretty ☺

Name [redacted]

TKAM Final Project Rubric

Theme Statement	1	2	3	4	5	6
(Is the statement true of the novel? Is it explained well?)						
Non-Textual Border	1	2	3	4	5	6
(Does it relate to the theme? Is it clearly visible? Is it neat and aesthetically pleasing? Is it explained well? Does it provide analysis of project?)						
Character Symbol	1	2	3	4	5	6
(Does it accurately represent the chosen character? Is it neat and aesthetically pleasing? Is it explained well?)						
Quotation	1	2	3	4	5	6
(Does it portray the character's stance on the theme statement? Is it legible? Is it explained well?)						
Paragraph	1	2	3	4	5	6
(Is it typed, double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt? Is it free of grammar errors? Does it provide analysis of project?)						

Total 95 / 30

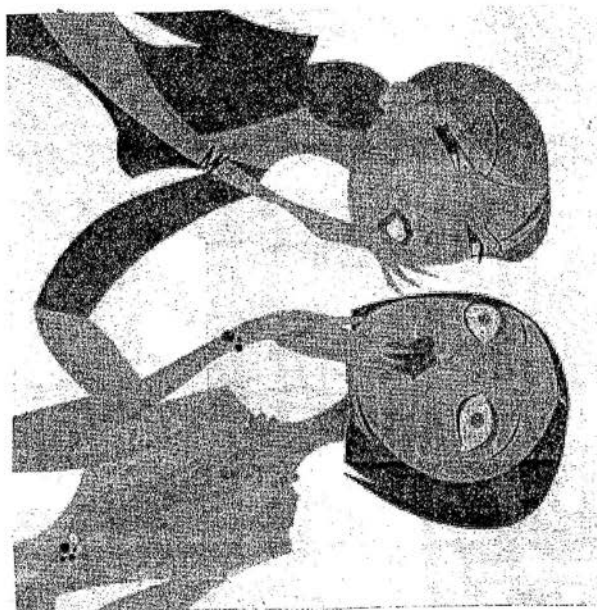
83%

B

"Christopher"



People tend to judge before they completely understand someone or something.



"Stephanie. Dill, I don't want you playing around that house over there. There's a maniac living there and he's dangerous."

student work
sample 3
"Charlotte"

I chose the theme statement, "People tend to judge before they completely understand someone or something." This book has a lot of judging in it. One main example is how Miss. Stephanie judges Boo Radley. At one point she says, "Dill, I don't want you playing around that house over there. There's a maniac living there and he's dangerous." This quote relates back to the theme statement because she is saying that Boo Radley is crazy, but she doesn't really know him. That's the reason why she is scared of him. She has never talked to him, has no idea what he would do, or can do. I chose a picture of girls gossiping, because Miss. Stephanie gossips a lot about Boo Radley. My non-textual border relates back to the theme statement because it is of the famous painting "The Scream." This painting has a man, who is obviously afraid of something. He might be afraid because he may not understand the thing he fears.

"Charlotte"

Great Work!
Finally! Someone
followed directions!
Wonderful!

-Charlotte 11

Name 

TKAM Final Project Rubric

Theme Statement 1 2 3 4 5 (6)

(Is the statement true of the novel? Is it explained well?)

Non-Textual Border 1 2 3 4 5 (6)

(Does it relate to the theme? Is it clearly visible? Is it neat and aesthetically pleasing? Is it explained well?)

Character Symbol 1 2 3 4 5 (6)

(Does it accurately represent the chosen character? Is it neat and aesthetically pleasing? Is it explained well?)

Quotation 1 2 3 4 5 (6)

(Does it portray the character's stance on the theme statement? Is it legible? Is it explained well?)

Paragraph 1 2 3 4 5 (6)

(Is it typed, double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt? Is it free of grammar errors? Does it provide analysis of project?)

Total 30 /30

100%

Perfect! 11)



"Stephanie. Dill, I don't want you playing around that house over there. There's there and he's dangerous."



APPENDIX N

READ, REVIEW, RESPOND PROMPTS, BLANK RUBRIC, AND MODEL

Experiential Prompts

These prompts tap into your prior knowledge, experience, or previous readings, promoting text-to-life or text-to-text connections.

- What are the similarities between the main character and another character you have read about in the past?
- How might the plot of this story parallel that of another story you have read?
- What are the parallels between what happens in the story and current events?
- How are some of the events in the story similar to your own experiences?

Aesthetic Prompts

These prompts tap into your emotional response to the text.

- How does this story make you feel?
- What are your thoughts about what happened to the main character?
- How might you feel if you were the main character?
- What is your perspective on how the main character handled a particular situation?

Cognitive Prompts

These prompts require you to think about what you have read and predict and infer what might happen next in the story. You may also be asked to consider the conflict facing a character in the story and provide possible resolutions.

- What do you predict will happen next?
- What action(s) would you take if you were in the same situation as the main character?
- What assumptions can you make about why the main character behaved the way he/she did?

Interpretive Prompts

These prompts call on you to interpret the message/lesson in the story and make judgments about a character's actions or intentions.

- What is the big idea (lesson/moral) the author is trying to convey?
- In your opinion, did the main character in the story take the right action?
- What was meant when the main character said _____?
- What qualities lead you to believe that the main character is a good/bad person?

Read, Review, Respond

Read:

Keep track of the pages you've read at the top of each entry.

5 points _____

3 points _____

1 point _____

Review:

Summarize the events/ideas of your latest reading.

5 points _____

3 points _____

1 point _____

Respond:

Respond to what you've read. You may use the questions on the back of this page as a guide:

5 points _____

3 points _____

1 point _____

In the beginning of this chapter Billy has to run to his grandpa's store for his mother. When he gets there, the Pritchard boys are in the store buying chewing tobacco. Billy remembers his mother's warnings about the Pritchard boys and tries to stay away, but they lure his grandpa into a bet. The boys bet \$2.00 that Billy's dogs, Lil Ann and Old Dan can't tree the "ghost coon." Billy doesn't really want his grandpa to take the bet even though he never doubts that his hounds will be able to do what no other dogs could. Billy's grandpa put down two one dollar bills and made the bet official. Billy decided not to tell his mom because he knew she would not want him to be involved in anything having to do with the Pritchard boys. In the morning, Billy took the dogs down to the Pritchard's farm and they began their hunt. It did not take them long before they were hot on the trail of the ghost coon. At the end of the chapter, Old Dan was barking, "treed," and Billy was waiting to hear Lil Ann do the same. Billy seemed sure that his dogs treed the ghost coon, but the Pritchard boys were still taunting him.

I'm nervous that the Pritchard boys are going to trick Billy and beat him up. They have such bad reputations as bullies and jerks and they have him alone in the woods. I would feel terrible if something happened to Billy. I think his grandpa will too since he made the bet. If I were Billy, I'd call the dogs and get the heck out of there. I don't think Billy will though because he won't want to disappoint his grandpa.

I can relate to how Billy feels about his dogs because that is how much I love Shattner, too. He is the best dog in the world, and I know he can do anything!

APPENDIX O

INDEPENDENT READING PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS AND RUBRICS

Independent Reading Projects

Each grading period (9 weeks) you are required to **read at least 2 books**, different from those we are reading and discussing in class, to fulfill the independent reading requirement. For one of those books you will complete an Independent Reading Project. Projects may include but are not limited to the following:



Book Soundtrack:

For this project you should create a tape, CD or Play list of songs that connect to characters in the book or the circumstances they are up against. Each arrangement should be accompanied by a "cover" that lists each song included and a brief explanation of why you chose each song and what part of the book it relates to.



Movie Poster:

Think to yourself, "If I were turning this book into a movie, who would I cast for the parts of the main characters and what would the movie look like?" Now create a poster that reflects a scene from the book and advertises the stars you chose to be in your movie. Make sure you include the book's title on your poster and a brief explanation as to why you chose the movie stars you did on the back.



Novel Cube:

Empty shoe boxes or cereal boxes work well for this assignment. You'll need to include six aspects of the novel on your cube; one on each side. Novel cubes should be creative, neat and reflect the book. For instance, if you just finished *The Diary of Anne Frank* your novel cube should not have rainbows and sunflowers all over it because they do not capture the mood of the book. The six aspects you should focus on are Author and title, Setting, Main characters, Plot summary, Genre and your Evaluation of the book.



Yearbook:

Create a yearbook using characters from the novel you finished. Be creative; you may create it by hand, use pictures from magazines, or computer generate it. Be sure to include a yearbook photo for each character, select a quote from the book that captures the essence of that character, list the activities that character may have been involved in and assign each character a senior superlative that fits them. (For example Best Dressed, Most Athletic, Most Talkative...)



Newspaper Article:

You may choose to create a front page article, an editorial, or an advice column piece for this assignment. A front page article should report the events of the novel, include a headline, a direct quote from one of the characters and a picture. An editorial should take a position about one of the central issues the book addresses. It should be written to convince others to adopt your position and include a direct quote from the text. If you choose to write an advice column please write in a "Dear Abby" format in which the character will write about a problem he/she may have and what "Abby" would advise. All newspaper articles must appear as they would in a newspaper!

*****Please know that you are not limited to the above mentioned choices! This is your chance to be creative. If you have an idea for something different that is creative and relates to the novel, see me to make arrangements!*****

Book Soundtrack (100 points)

_____ **(20 pts)** 5-7 songs that represent:

- (5 pts) Characters
- (5 pts) Events
- (5 pts) Conflict
- (5 pts) Theme

_____ **(20 pts)** Cover lists each song and artist
Spelling and accuracy count

_____ **(20 pts)** Explanation as to why you chose each song
-(10 pts) Please be sure to quote specific lyrics from the songs
-(10 pts) Connect lyrics to specific moments in the text

_____ **(20 pts)**

_____ **(20 pts)**

Book Soundtrack (100 points)

_____ **(20 pts)** 5-7 songs that represent:

- (5 pts) Characters
- (5 pts) Events
- (5 pts) Conflict
- (5 pts) Theme

_____ **(20 pts)** Cover lists each song and artist
Spelling and accuracy count

_____ **(20 pts)** Explanation as to why you chose each song
-(10 pts) Please be sure to quote specific lyrics from the songs
-(10 pts) Connect lyrics to specific moments in the text

_____ **(20 pts)**

_____ **(20 pts)**

Movie Poster (100 points)

- _____ (20 pts) 5-7 characters cast:
-(10 pts) character's name and actor assigned their part
-(10 pts) photo or drawing of actor
- _____ (20 pts) Explanation as to why you chose each person for each part
-(10 pts) Be sure to explain what each actor has in common with each character from your novel
-(10 pts) Refer to a specific part of the novel to help you explain
If your novel has already been made into a movie, you must choose different actors
(you can always use ordinary people you know—sometimes your classmates are perfect for the parts)
- _____ (10 pts) Poster represents a scene from the movie
- _____ (10 pts) Novel title on poster
- _____ (20 pts)
- _____ (20 pts)

Movie Poster (100 points)

- _____ (20 pts) 5-7 characters cast:
-(10 pts) character's name and actor assigned their part
-(10 pts) photo or drawing of actor
- _____ (20 pts) Explanation as to why you chose each person for each part
-(10 pts) Be sure to explain what each actor has in common with each character from your novel
-(10 pts) Refer to a specific part of the novel to help you explain
If your novel has already been made into a movie, you must choose different actors
(you can always use ordinary people you know—sometimes your classmates are perfect for the parts)
- _____ (10 pts) Poster represents a scene from the movie
- _____ (10 pts) Novel title on poster
- _____ (20 pts)
- _____ (20 pts)

Novel Cube (100 points)

- _____ (10 pts) Cube is neatly constructed and creative
- _____ (10 pts) Cube reflects the theme and mood of the book
- _____ (10 pts) Author and title
- _____ (10 pts) Setting (time and place are represented)
- _____ (10 pts) 3-4 Main Characters are listed and described
- _____ (10 pts) Plot summary (include the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution)
- _____ (10 pts) Genre (be specific. Novels are fiction; your job is to tell me what kind of fiction)
- _____ (10 pts) Evaluation (find a creative way to rate your book)
- _____ (10 pts)
- _____ (10 pts)

Novel Cube (100 points)

- _____ (10 pts) Cube is neatly constructed and creative
- _____ (10 pts) Cube reflects the theme and mood of the book
- _____ (10 pts) Author and title
- _____ (10 pts) Setting (time and place are represented)
- _____ (10 pts) 3-4 Main Characters are listed and described
- _____ (10 pts) Plot summary (include the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution)
- _____ (10 pts) Genre (be specific. Novels are fiction; your job is to tell me what kind of fiction)
- _____ (10 pts) Evaluation (find a creative way to rate your book)
- _____ (10 pts)
- _____ (10 pts)

Yearbook (100 points)

- _____ (10 pts) 5-8 characters are represented
- _____ (15 pts) Each character has a photo or drawing
- _____ (15 pts) Each character has a quote from the book that captures their essence
- _____ (15 pts) Each character is has a list of activities
- _____ (15 pts) Each character is assigned a superlative
- _____ (10 pts) Author and title are illustrated
- _____ (10 pts)
- _____ (10 pts)

Yearbook (100 points)

- _____ (10 pts) 5-8 characters are represented
- _____ (15 pts) Each character has a photo or drawing
- _____ (15 pts) Each character has a quote from the book that captures their essence
- _____ (15 pts) Each character is has a list of activities
- _____ (15 pts) Each character is assigned a superlative
- _____ (10 pts) Author and title are illustrated
- _____ (10 pts)
- _____ (10 pts)

APPENDIX P

OUT OF THE DUST TASK

Out of the Dust

Historical and Geographical Aspects:

1

Recall or recognize information, ideas, and principles in the approximate form in which they are learned.

What is the Dust Bowl?

Can you... List 10 details you learn about the Dust Bowl?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Out of the Dust

Historical and Geographical Aspects:



Understand the main idea of material heard, viewed, or read. Interpret or summarize the idea into own words.

How did the Dust Bowl happen?

Can you... In a small group (2-3 people), create a time-line of at least 15 related events leading up to the Dust Bowl?



Apply an abstract idea in a concrete situation to solve a problem or relate it to prior experience.

Did it have to happen?

Can you... List five things that could have helped prevent the dust storms of the 1930's?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Out of the Dust

Historical and Geographical Aspects:



Break down a concept or idea into parts and show relationships among the parts.

Can you...After reading pages 3-33, cite 10 lines in which life in the 1930's is depicted.? Please be sure to include the page number.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.






Which literary device are we talking about here? _____

Out of the Dust

Historical and Geographical Aspects:

5 Bring together parts of knowledge to form a whole and build relationships for new situations.

Can you... Identify specific passages that appeal to each sense?

Sense	Passage	Page
		
		
		
 The Nose		
 The Mouth		

******In your opinion, does an author use imagery more effectively by spending a lot of time appealing to one sense or appealing to many or all of the senses? Explain your answer.



6 Make informed judgments about the value of ideas or materials. Use standards and criteria to support opinions and views.

Can you ...Reread *Foul as Maggoty Stew* (p. 28-29) and *Fields of Flashing Light* (p. 31-33) and decide which entry uses imagery more effectively? Be sure to include examples from the text to support your opinion. ****HINT...**You may want to refer to the question above when developing your thesis.

APPENDIX Q

WRITING RUBRIC FOR SARA AND MINDY'S CLASS

TRAI TS FOR GOOD WRITING

Can you do this for readers?

Ideas ~

- * Think up an interesting purpose, details, and message.

Organization ~

- * Give your ideas a good beginning, middle, and end, going from one to the other easily.

Voice ~

- * Write so your words sound like you, your ideas and feelings, and let readers really understand you.

Word Choice ~

- * Search for interesting words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs) that make pictures in readers' minds.

Sentence Fluency ~

- * Shape sentences differently, some short and some long.

Conventions ~

- * Work on capitals, commas, and periods. Spell your best.

Presentation ~

- * Make it look good!

THINK TWICE BEFORE...

starting with these: and, but, because.

BETTER BEGINNINGS

Try starting your writing with...

- A simile ~ "She was as smart as..."
- A metaphor ~ "He was a clever monkey..."
- Alliteration ~ "A stunning student..."
- An idiom ~ "It was a snap to..."
- A question ~ "Have you ever wondered..."
- A belief ~ "I have always felt sure that..."
- A single word ~ "Brains. That's all I..."
- A govtact ~ "The encyclopedia says..."
- A sound ~ "Ka-blaml..."
- A quote ~ "Martin Luther King said that..."

TRANSITIONS

Use these to organize your writing!

- First Paragraph ~
Get, In the beginning, To start,
- Next Paragraphs ~
Also, Additionally, Furthermore, Then,
- Last Paragraph ~
Summing it up, In conclusion, Ultimately,

SPELLING WORDS

- A ~ about, actually, again, a lot, almost, always, another, anyone
B ~ basically, beautiful, because, before, believe, buy, by
C ~ can't, character, coming, communicate, could, country
D ~ described, determined, didn't, doctor, doesn't, don't
E ~ enough, especially, everybody, everything, except, exactly
F ~ favorite, February, first, foolish, forty, furious, friend
G ~ getting, giant, girl, government, guaranteed, guess,
H ~ half, having, hear, heard, hole, honor, horror, hour
I ~ I'm, impossible, instead, into, it's, its
L ~ language, laugh, let's, literature
M ~ making, meant, minute, myself
N ~ natural, necessary, new, no, none
O ~ obey, off, offer, often, once, one, only, our, own, owner
P ~ packet, people, piece, private, probably, prove, purpose
R ~ raise, read, ready, really, rely, require, resist, right
S ~ said, separate, since, school, something, sometimes, success
T ~ terrible, that's, their, then, there, they, they're, thought, threw, through, to, tonight, too, trouble, truly, Tuesday, two
U ~ unaware, unfortunate, until, unusual, used, usually
V ~ vacuum, vegetable, very, violence, vocabulary, volunteer
W ~ wear, weather, Wednesday, we're, went, were, what, when, where, whether, who, whole, with, won, won't, wouldn't, write
Y ~ yawn, yellow, yesterday, young, your, you're, yummy, youth



CONJUNCTIONS ~

These hold sentences together like glue!

and, or, but, for because, when, if, then

COPS

COPS to watch your sentences!

- C ~ capitals
- O ~ organization
- P ~ punctuation
- S ~ spelling

TRICK

A TRICK to answer questions!

- T ~ topic sentence
- R ~ references
- I ~ important details
- C ~ conclusion
- K ~ Show your knowledge!

VIVID WORDS

Can you use these?

- Sad ~ depressed, gloomy, miserable, unhappy, mournful
- Happy ~ glad, jovial, joyful, cheerful, delighted
- Mad ~ furious, enraged, livid, fuming, irate
- Good ~ awesome, cool, wonderful, fantastic, excellent
- Nice ~ pleasant, delightful, kind, thoughtful, charming
- Beautiful ~ lovely, glamorous, attractive, elegant, gorgeous
- Big ~ huge, gigantic, enormous, massive, immense
- Walk ~ strut, hobble, march, plod, stroll
- Run ~ rush, bolt, jog, dash, scurry
- Say ~ reply, state, exclaim, respond, remark
- Laugh ~ cackle, chuckle, giggle, snicker, chortle
- Very ~ truly, surely, especially, chiefly, incredibly
- Like ~ enjoy, adore, admire, appreciate, love

READING VOCABULARY

1. adjective ~ word describing a noun.
2. adverb ~ word that describes verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs
3. antonym ~ word with the opposite meaning of another word
4. author's purpose ~ reason for writing
5. cause ~ reason that something happens
6. cause and effect ~ how one thing leads to another
7. character ~ person (or anything that acts like a person) in a story
8. comparison ~ way in which two things are the same
9. conflict ~ main problem in a story
10. conjunction ~ word that connects two parts of a sentence
11. context clue ~ hint from the words around a word
12. contrast ~ way in which two things are different
13. detail ~ information about the main idea
14. drawing a conclusion ~ putting inferences together to understand
15. effect ~ what the cause makes happen
16. fact ~ claim that is always true and can be proven true
17. figurative language ~ words specially used to be more descriptive
18. graphic organizer ~ drawings that help organize information
19. graphic ~ visual aid to help you understand the words
20. heading ~ bold or large words starting a new section, explaining it
21. homograph ~ words spelled alike but with different meanings
22. homophones ~ like-sounding words but different meaning and spelling
23. idiom ~ a phrase that doesn't make sense, yet people understand it
24. inference ~ ideas or clues to help you figure out what is happening
25. informational report ~ a report with facts and details about a topic
26. main idea ~ the topic of a passage
27. metaphor ~ comparison between two different things
28. narrative ~ story
29. noun ~ person, place, or thing
30. opinion ~ belief that cannot be proven true for everyone at all times
31. personification ~ animal or object that behaves like a person
32. plot ~ events in a story, including conflict and resolution
33. prediction ~ guess about what may happen, based on text clues
34. prefix ~ group of letters before a root word
35. pronoun ~ takes the place of a noun
36. resolution ~ story ending, when the conflict is over
37. response ~ written opinion about what is read, supported by text
38. sequence ~ order in which things happen
39. setting ~ time and place in which the story happens
40. simile ~ compares two things, using the words "like" or "as"
41. skim and scan ~ quickly look through a passage for a key word
42. speaker ~ person who is telling the story
43. suffix ~ group of letters after a root word
44. summarize ~ state the main idea and important details of a selection
45. synonym ~ word with the same or similar meaning as another word
46. verb tense ~ verb form, depending on time (past, present, or future)
47. theme ~ main lesson of a selection
48. web ~ graphic with main topic in the center and details around it

READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

Before, during, and after reading...

Think about the reading

- * Beginning, middle, end.
- * Characters, setting, plot.
- * Main idea, details, vocabulary.

Make connections

- * Text to self.
- * Text to world.
- * Text to text.

Visualize

- * Take pictures of the selection.
- * Tape-record it in your mind.
- * Show a movie in your mind.

Ask questions

- * I wonder ____?
- * What if ____?
- * How's come ____?

Infer

- * Make predictions or conclusions.
- * Use the reading for support.
- * Use examples from your life.

Determine importance

- * What is the main idea?
- * What are the details?
- * What do I want to learn?

Watch what you are doing

- * Monitor for when you get lost.
- * Reread.
- * Use one of these strategies.



READING WORD STRATEGIES

When stuck on word, ask yourself...

- * Does this sound like good language?
- * Do I need to sound out the word?
- * Do other words give me clues?
- * Do I need to go slow and reread?
- * What is happening here?
- * What have I read before like this?
- * What do I know about this?
- * What is the author telling me?

APPENDIX R.

STUDENT WORK GRADE 7: GREEK MYTHS

December 6, 2010

Cempetemary

The most scary, creepy, horrible, god of nightmares, Cempetemary. Cempetemary is a liar, abuses his powers, cares mostly about himself, and disrespects nearly everyone else. The only people he cares about the most are Hades his father, Sinester his brother, and some sort of creature called Creedes. He hates everyone else, especially Hypnotos, his twin brother. Hypnotos is the good god of dreams, he doesn't dislike many people, except for Cempetemary-Cempetemary, for he is his evil twin. They have many reasons why not to like each other, but one story is very interesting.

Cempetemary was bored one day, so he hoped that someone would fall asleep that night, but no one did. One of the Greek kings had an idea of having a special day for him, so everyone came to his party and wouldn't want to fall asleep. Cempetemary was enraged with the king, so that next night Cempetemary was going to send a nightmare so bad that the king would be running away from his throne. Hypnotos noticed and was angry with the horrible god, so knowing that if they fought with each other they would both die, he asks Hades to stop him. Hades said no and wouldn't want to help, so Hypnotos tried to send a dream to balance out the bad nightmare.

After Cempetemary sent his dream he noticed that nothing happened, he knew who was to be blamed, so he sent his best man to murder Hypnotos, his name was Creedes. Creedes was a creature that if you looked at it would take the image of your worst fear, it happened to everyone except Cempetemary. So one night Creedes snuck into Olympus and when no one was looking and/or was around he tried to murder Hypnotos. Creedes lunged at Hypnotos and attacked, but Apollo saw what was happening from a distance. Apollo pulled out an arrow, pulled the arrow back toward him, and let it go. Apollo's arrow strikes Creedes in his heart and Creedes died. Later the gods go to Cempetemary to

Comment [T1]: fragment

Comment [T2]: very good exposition. You give good background information and set up the conflict.

Comment [T3]: New paragraph

Comment [T4]: Very creative and macabre mythical character trait

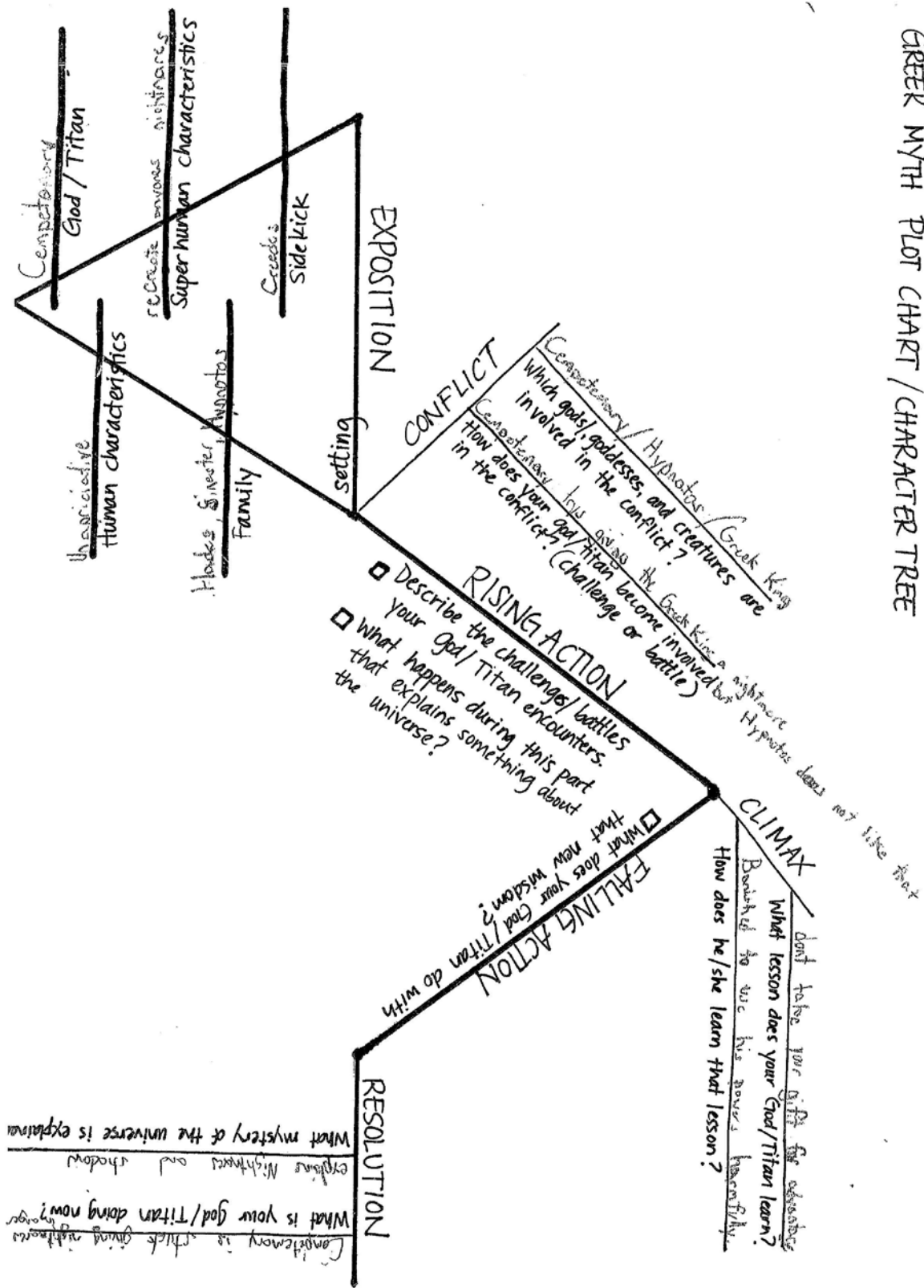
User: [REDACTED] PRINTSRV 8:05:35 AM Tuesday, January 25, 2011

punish him but found no proof. They argued for hours until Cempeternary was proved innocent. After everyone left Cempeternary was very sad about the death of Creedes, so sad that he had to do something great for him. Creedes was respected by being resembled by the shadow. Now Cempeternary stands alone but will always remember one thing, revenge is never the right thing.

Comment [T5]: Very clever thing to explain about the universe, I like how you used a "dark" character to explain nightmares and shadows.

Comment [T6]: Excellent lesson.

Name
 GREEK MYTH PLOT CHART / CHARACTER TREE



December 6, 2010

Neveta

Neveta was the god of machines. He was a caring and a fun god. ~~Neveta family was~~ Demeter ~~was his father, was~~ Hermes ~~was his uncle and was~~ Zeus ~~was his and he had one~~ causing named sinister. One day Neveta was working on a new machine with his 3 sprites army when he heard the god's talking about the war between 2 Ares and 3 Athena. Athena had an army of 4 chariots. Athena tolled all here people that the persons were coming.

Comment [11]: Good human characteristics

Comment [12]: cousin

Comment [13]: told

Neveta started to work more and more to try to stop the war. Ares didn't care how he won the war as long as there was a fight he could fight in. The day ~~the battle~~ Neveta went to the battle with his army of his sprites, he had a box. Neveta seat the box down and the box grows 20 stories tall. The robots took all the persons and throw them back to their boat. Neveta ~~whet~~ to Athena and asked if her army was okay. Neveta learned not to fight if no one knew how he was. Neveta went home to eat and drank the sweet 5 nectar of the god's and eat the filigree of the god's. Neveta went to see the 6 Oracle ~~who~~ said that Athena was badly injured. Neveta kept making new machines and gave them to the 7 Olympians to give to the humans. Neveta went to the underworld to see if he could get a 8 Monstrous creature to help him and protect him.

Comment [14]: past tense- grow

Comment [15]: past tense-throw

Comment [16]: went

Comment [17]: good lesson though I'm not sure what you mean by "if no one knew how he was."

Comment [18]: not an appropriate use of this word; filigree has to do with weaving and crafting.

Comment [19]: To make something plural add an s, adding an apostrophe makes it possessive

Comment [110]: And then what? Your story seems unfinished.

Name _____

GREEK MYTH PLOT CHART / CHARACTER TREE

the Season's to learn from

What lesson does your God/Titan learn?
 he learns to be a better ruler
 How does he/she learn that lesson?
 by trying to kill him and
 his father
 why
 did he
 do that
 to 0

CLIMAX

FALLING ACTION

What does your God/Titan do with that new wisdom?
 he tries to kill him and his father

RESOLUTION

What is your God/Titan doing now?
 the mystery is how
 What mystery of the universe is explained?
 the first much was that of

What happens during this part of the universe?
 the universe?
 Describe the challenge/battles that happens during this part of the universe?
 your god/titan become involved in the conflict?

RIISING ACTION

CONFLICT

EXPOSITION

setting

Sidekick

Apollyon of Spontaneous

Superhuman characteristics

Human characteristics

God / Titan

Character



December 6, 2010

The Race

Atra, god of the planets, ~~is was~~ the second youngest of the 10 Olympians. He was not one of the 12 great gods, but he wanted to be one of them. His mother ~~is was~~ one, his father ~~is was~~ one, his brother ~~is was~~ one, and his sister ~~is was~~ one. He wanted them to stay, but someone will go.

Comment [T1]: Good use of an appositive phrase. Please make sure all of your verbs are past tense. I fixed them in the first paragraph.

As Atra walked to MT 2 Olympus to see 3 Zues then he sees 4 Apollo inside talking to Zues. Apollo is making plans to go see his son back on earth. Zues said that he can't ~~couldn't~~ go. Apollo inspected to go to earth. When Atra lessons in on Apollo and Zues. So Atra wants him to go to the 4 underworld. Then Atra

Comment [T2]: I'm not sure this is the word you wanted to use here. Perhaps expected would have been a better choice.

Afford him a race. Zues sided ~~decided~~ it sounded like a good idea. Atra sided when do you want to have it & do you were do you want to have it. Then Apollo sided ~~said~~ can't we start now, Zues sided ~~said~~ if Atra agrees to your offer. Atra sided let the race begin. ATRA and Apollo started the race they ran from MT Olympus, to Corinth to Sparta then passed his mother and father at the end of the Spartan line. They both ran side by side from Sparta to the underworld. Then Apollo chickened out he was the loser and ATRA became one of the 12 Olympians.

Comment [T3]: Good job setting up the conflict.
Formatted: Tab stops: 0.5", Left + 1.33", Left

ATRA took Apollo's spot he was not one of the 12 Olympians, but he was going back to earth to see his wife. ATRA used Apollo's power and used it to make the creatures help the people in Greece and to make more peace in the world. 47 days pass and ATRA is in space flying at the speed of sound keeping all the planets in order and in the back of his mind there's something that will happen when he's gone with the wind.

Comment [T4]: Interesting climax

Comment [T5]: Interesting way to explain something about the universe

8:03:33 AM Tuesday, January 25, 2011

Name _____

GREEK MYTH PLOT CHART / CHARACTER TREE

VOCAB - 10 words

max 3 characters

