Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, Student Connectedness to School and Reading Achievement: A Study of the Children's Defense Fund Kansas City Freedom Schools Initiative

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CULTURALLY RELEVANT PEDAGOGY, STUDENT CONNECTEDNESS TO SCHOOL AND READING ACHIEVEMENT: A STUDY OF THE CHILDREN'S DEFENSE FUND KANSAS CITY FREEDOM SCHOOLS INITIATIVE

ABSTRACT

This quantitative study applies Social Development Model and Social Control Theory to understand the relationship between culturally relevant education and reading improvement for African American children attending a summer reading program for three years. Secondary data from the Kansas City Freedom School Initiative was used to assess the impact of Freedom Schools to mitigate summer learning loss and if any gains in reading ability were influenced by domains created from the parent survey. Linear Regressions were used to test three research questions: (1) Does culturally relevant pedagogy as utilized in Kansas City Freedom Schools have a significant impact on student literacy outcomes (over the summer) for African American children that participated? How do Freedom School students' reading scores compare to students who did not attend Freedom School but were engaged in a variety of summer activities? (2) Are any of the parent survey domains that measure students' cultural appreciation, love of learning, acceptance of responsibility, community involvement, social adjustment, and conflict resolution related to growth in reading score as measured by GRADE reading assessment? (3) Finally, is family income a significant predictor for reading growth over the summer, and does this effect vary by income levels? Findings suggest that participation in Freedom School was significantly associated with reading score growth over the three program years. Freedom School participants with lower initial reading scores, and whose parent household's income ranged between $20,000–$30,000 and $75,000–$100,000, were significantly associated with the growth in GRADE reading scores for students who participated consecutively for two years (2005–2006).

When analyzing growth in GRADE reading scores for three consecutive years, love of learning and participation in Freedom School mitigated the income effects. However, Freedom School participants whose parent household's income ranged between $20,000–$30,000 performed significantly lower on the GRADE reading assessment than higher income Freedom School students and students who did not attend Freedom school with similar household income between $20,000- $30,000.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Second to family, school is one of the most stabilizing forces in the lives of children and adolescents (Blum, 2005b), yet Klem and Connell (2004) report that as many as 40% to 60% of all high school students – urban, suburban, and rural – are disengaged from school. According to social control and developmental theorists, this disengagement can place some students at risk for involvement in deviant behavior (Cernkovich & Giordana, 1992; Jenkins, 1997; Welsh, Greene, & Jenkins, 1999). A substantial body of research suggests that students are more likely to engage in healthy behaviors and succeed academically when they feel connected to school (Blum, 2005b; Centers for Disease Control [CDC], 2009; Klem & Connell, 2004). This empirical research purports a strong relationship between school connectedness and educational outcomes, including persistence to graduation, increased student attendance, and higher grades and test scores (CDC, 2009).

According to Blum (2005a), school connectedness is fostered by "an academic environment in which students believe that adults in the school care about their learning and about them as individuals" (p. 1). The CDC (2009) defined "connectedness" as "the belief by students that adults and peers in the school care about their learning as well as about them as individuals" (p. 3). Nasir, Jones, and McLaughlin (2011) distilled the school connectedness research, which spans several disciplines including psychology, health, and education, and offered a similar definition of the construct: "when students feel a sense of connection (also referred to as attachment, membership, bonding, or belonging) they are more engaged in instructional activities and express greater commitment to school" (p. 1756). Conversely, repeated negative experiences with school and school personnel increases the probability of low academic performance, involvement in deviant behavior, and the ultimate disconnection with

school—dropping out (Hirchi,1969; Maddox & Prinz, 2003; Peguero, Ovink & Li, 2016; Welsch et al., 1999). The likelihood of dropping out in high school has also been linked to students' feelings of alienation (Crosnoe, Johnson, & Elder, 2004), to low academic performance in middle school and third grade literacy in elementary school (Lesnick, George, Smithgall, & Glynne, 2010). Although African American and Latinx students have relatively low academic proficiency rates and exhibit many other problems, school connectedness research has rarely focused on high poverty urban schools that serve predominately African American and Latinx students. These students are "underrepresented in the developmental studies that form the core of the school connectedness research" (Nasir et al., 2011, p. 1758).

Nasir and colleagues (2011) contended that this is particularly problematic for understanding, assessing, and interpreting connectedness to school given that school settings differ in fundamental ways. The contrast between affluent and low-income schools is stark in many of the dimensions of school climate that matter most for connectedness, including teacher quality and preparation, extracurricular activities, safety, and academic offerings. Urban schools that serve predominately low-income African American and Latinx students are less likely to provide conditions that support connectedness (Nasir et al., 2011). One example is school safety; research demonstrates that discipline policies affect students' sense of school connection. Nasir (2011) cited several studies supporting a school's use of fair and consistent disciplinary policies to foster students' connection to school through a sense of safety and the ability to focus on academics when classroom distractions are limited. However, a counterargument purports that the use of zero-tolerance policies that force mandatory suspensions and expulsions from school in majority minority urban educational systems, produces a school climate in which students

experience these policies as arbitrary and punitive, leading to feelings of alienation and disconnectedness with school (Anyon, Zhang, & Hazel, 2016; Hirschfield, 2008).

Researchers have amassed an extensive body of literature demonstrating the negative outcomes associated with feelings of alienation and its direct effect on students' ability to connect with school (Crosnoe et al., 2004). This research has been so compelling that policymakers recently mandated changes in federal educational policy (Yang & Anyon, 2016). The *Every Student Succeeds Act* (2015), which recently replaced the *No Child Left Behind Act*, mandates addressing gaps in school quality as well as mitigating racial disparities in test scores. Yang and Anyon (2016) contend that this is the first time federal educational policy has mandated school performance frameworks include a non-academic indicator such as school engagement. While there is long-standing evidence that ties poor academic performance to family structure, economic disadvantage, inequitable distribution of school funding, and neighborhood conditions, racial disparity continues to exist after controlling for these factors (Anyon, Ong, & Whitaker, 2014; Priest et al., 2010; Voight, Hanson, O'Malley & Adekanye, 2015; Yang & Anyon, 2016).

This is particularly true when analyzing and evaluating school discipline policies and racial inequality (Carter, Skiba, Arredondo & Pollock, 2014; Cuellar & Markowitz, 2015; Rocque & Snellings, 2017; Skiba, Horner, Rausch & Tobin, 2011). Zero tolerance school policies and exclusionary discipline practices such as suspensions have been identified as having differential racialized outcomes leading to school detachment, academic failure, and increased involvement in the juvenile and criminal justice systems for African American and Latinx students (Cuellar & Markowitz, 2015; Rocque & Snellings, 2017; Skiba, Michael, Nardo & Peterson, 2002). With 82% of the adult prison population and 85% of the juvenile justice

population comprised of school dropouts, many researchers (Christle, Jolivette & Nelson, 2005; Hirschfield, 2008) have been examining the rise in punitive reprimands in the educational system and large-scale changes in the United States penal system, and the connectivity between these two non-related entities. This relationship has been described as the school-to-prison pipeline (STPP).

> STPP disproportionately affects students of color, "refers to the increasing connection between school failure, federal, state, or local school disciplinary policies, and student involvement in the justice system….the connection between these initially dissimilar institutions is spurred by failing schools with low graduation/high dropout rates, zero tolerance disciplinary policies, and student disengagement. (Rocque & Snellings, 2017, p. 2).

This vicious cycle perpetuates academic failure, which leads to behavior challenges, which then leads to office referrals and suspensions which over time leads to dropout and juvenile delinquency. Christle, Jolivette and Nelson (2005) reported that despite the widespread use of suspensions, it is not effective in reducing the behavior it is designed to correct, and suspensions are a major reason youth drop out. Proponents of zero-tolerance policies argue that it sets the expectation for pro-social conduct by specifying rules and consequences (Cuellar & Markowitz, 2015). Proponents also suggest that the certainty of punishment has greater deterrence effects than the severity of punishment and that removal of disruptive students from the classroom prevents the "contagion" effect on peers when the punishment is enforced. This premise is supported in the literature as a way to enhance the learning environment for students by reducing disruption that impedes academic instruction. It is well established that disruptive

behavior in the classroom reduces academic achievement for the general student population (Cuellar & Markowitz, 2015).

Cuellar and Markowitz (2015) and Skiba et al. (2011) have highlighted numerous organizations including the American Academy of Pediatrics, U.S. Department of Education, the American Bar Association, the Children's Defense Fund, and the American Psychological Association that have been critical of the use of zero-tolerance policies, specifically school suspensions and expulsions, pointing to the potential downsides of exclusionary practices that have been correlated to poor educational outcomes for the excluded students. These outcomes include missed educational opportunities, poor school performance, and dropping out of school altogether. Such outcomes limit students' accumulation of human capital while increasing the likelihood of involvement in the juvenile justice system. Students who experience repeated negative educational outcomes are more likely to end up in prison than on a sustainable college or career pathway (Hirschfield, 2008; Osher, Coggshall, Colombi, Woodruff & Osher, 2012; Peguero et al., 2015; Rocque & Snellings, 2017).

Analyzing school detachment through a criminology lens is not a novel concept. In 1969, Travis Hirschi's groundbreaking work profoundly impacted the field of criminology, asserting that criminal activity occurs when an individual's attachment to society is weakened. According to Hirschi, there are four social bonds that bind people to society: *attachment* – the affective ties that people have to others; *commitment* – the aspirational dedication to something; *involvement* – the investment of time and resources; and *belief* – the acceptance of something as true, real, fair and equitable. From a criminology perspective, Hirschi argued that strong social bonds prevented individuals from breaking the law. In summary, when individuals are *attached* to other members of society, they are more likely to *believe* in the conventional values of society, which influences

their *commitment* and *involvement* in conventional activities, which makes them less likely to break the law.

The aim of this research is to apply Hirschi's Social Control theory to the educational experiences and schooling for African American children, hypothesizing that culturally relevant pedagogical practices helps African American children positively attach to schools, fostering a love for learning through cultural appreciation, which increases their committed and involvement in the educational process, and thereby improving academic outcomes. When school personnel refuse to acknowledge the role of cultural norms, values, and beliefs, implicit biases about others are allowed ample space to manifest and remain unchecked and unchallenged, creating discontinuity and barriers for student-teacher relational trust and attachment. This barrier impacts all the other social bond domains of commitment, involvement, and, most importantly, belief in the conventional values of education.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) (Ladson-Billings, 1995a) is one means of strengthening connections between schools, educators, and students of color. Research has found a lack of diversity in the educator workforce coupled with an increasingly diverse student population (Maasum, Maarof & Ali, 2014; Tennant et al., 2015). With the enormous educational failure of minority children in the K-12 system, few are in a position to competitively enter college and graduate into the education workforce as compared to their white peers, making diversity in education an enduring challenge. This path is exceptionally challenging for low income students of color, hence many teachers of color enter the education workforce from middle class families that may not have experiences or schemas concerning the challenges and lived experiences of urban inner-city students. It is widely noted that the behaviors and experiences of middle-class parents of any race can differ considerably from those of low-

income parents (Lareau, 2003; Thornton, 2014). Culturally Relevant Pedagogy is a tool for all teachers who want to connect with students from diverse ethnic, linguistic, geographical, socio-economical, cultural, and spiritual backgrounds.

CRP facilitates and supports the academic achievement of all students by centering instructional practices and strategies in a culturally supported, learner-centered context, that values, nurtures, identifies, and utilizes the assets that students bring to the classroom to support academic achievement. It requires teachers to learn about the history and experiences of diverse groups, to self-reflect on their own culture, beliefs and values, and bridge that divide through instructional practices. This includes evaluating the tools of instruction (books, teaching methods, activities, and assignments) to ensure they are culturally congruent with the diverse students in their classroom. CRP is grounded in the teacher's ability to display cultural competence and be skilled at teaching in a multi-cultural setting. It requires teachers to self-reflect on their identity development, focus on equity and excellence, teach to the whole child, and be committed to building healthy and trusting student-teacher relationships. These practices align in three functional dimensions: the institutional dimension, the personal dimension, and the instructional dimension. The institutional dimension requires an assessment and reform of the cultural factors affecting school organization, policies, and procedures, including discipline and special education. The personal dimension refers to the work teachers must do to become culturally competent and aware of their own identity, and the instructional dimension focuses on the practices, tools, methodologies, and strategies with teaching in a culturally responsive classroom.

Statement of the Problem

The enduring underperformance of African American children is an educational crisis. Along all major points of the academic continuum, African American students, particularly males, are faring worse than any other comparative subgroup. These disparities are enduring, persistent, endemic, and far "too devastating to be tolerable" (Gay, 2010, p. 1). These disparities have draconian implications for the quality of life and life trajectory of the individual and collectively for the nation's ability to compete in a global economy. Across every major U.S. system— housing, employment, education, income, wealth, healthcare, banking, child welfare, and criminal justice—African Americans are experiencing the worst disparities (Carter & Reardon, 2014; Desmond, 2017; Hout, 2017; Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality, 2017).

This stark epidemic is not solely the result of a meritocratic society, but rather of a system of structural racism created with the express purpose of preventing African Americans from achieving equitable outcomes. It has been more than 60 years since the passage of the Civil Rights Act and the Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling that "separate but equal" schools are unconstitutional, and yet as a nation we are still addressing policies and discriminatory practices in schools, workplaces, and governmental agencies that routinely produce inequitable outcomes for people of color. Several recent reports are bringing awareness of disparate outcomes for black youth, and while there has been substantial improvement in academic outcomes for students of color, there is a significant distance left to travel to a more equitable and inclusive destination. According to the American Psychological Association Presidential Task Force on Educational Disparities (2012),

> pervasive ethnic and racial disparities in education follow a pattern in which African American, American Indian, Latinx, and Southeast Asian groups underperform

> academically relative to Whites and other Asian Americans. These educational disparities (1) mirror ethnic and racial disparities in socioeconomic status as well as health outcomes and healthcare, (2) are evident in early childhood and persist through the K-12 education, and (3) are reflective in test scores assessing academic achievement such as reading and mathematics, percentages of repeating one or more grades, drop out and graduation rates, proportions of students involved in gifted and talented programs, enrollment in higher education , as well as in behavioral markers of adjustment, including rates of being disciplined, suspended and expelled from schools. (p. 7)

As America's ethnic composition diversifies, our schools and classrooms welcome students from various cultures, communities, and economic, and linguistic backgrounds. Many of these students are greeted by a less diverse, middle class, predominately female teaching force. Most of these teachers enter the profession with good intentions to help all students; however, more than good intentions are required to "bring about the changes needed in educational programs and procedures to prevent academic inequities among diverse students" (Gay, 2010; p. 13). This assertion is not to presume that educators from racial, ethnic, social, and economically different backgrounds cannot teach economically disadvantaged students of color successfully, or that teachers of color have a monopoly on promoting the success of racially matched students. Rather the assertion amounts to the argument that any educator lacking the ability and willingness to understand the chasms that may exist between their own cultural orientation, beliefs, biases, and norms and those of their students may place their students in jeopardy of not realizing their full potential.

Teaching is not devoid of culture; it is a contextual and situational process (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995a). Teacher preparation programs that build the capacities of educators to

leverage ecological factors will be much more effective at preparing teachers to enter the workforce ready to educate all children. These factors include the home culture of diverse students, their prior experiences, cultural background and ethnic identities of both the teacher and students. There is a growing body of evidence to suggest that employing culturally relevant/responsive pedagogical practices is one way to address the discontinuity that diverse students of color experience with U.S. schooling (Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Bui & Fagan, 2013; Choi, 2013; Gay, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Ladson-Billings, 2006a, 2006b; Sleeter, 2012; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Culturally Relevant Pedagogy is a theoretical and pedagogical framework whose major goal is to give students from diverse backgrounds an equal chance to experience educational success and mobility. Jackson and Boutte (2009) contended that

> examination of conventional classrooms against the backdrop of typical dimensions of African American culture reveal that schools are lacking important aspects (spirituality, harmony, verve, creativity, movement, affect, communalism, expressive individualism, social time perspective, and oral traditions)—thus making schooling a remote and foreign experience for many black students. (p. 110)

This mismatch between the home culture and the structure of mainstream education can place students of color at a higher risk for dropping out.

Although there is strong empirical evidence to support school bonding/connectedness as a protective factor for all youth (Cernkovich & Giordana, 1992; Jenkins, 1997; Monahan, Oesterle, & Hawkins, 2010; Virdourek, King, Bernard, Murnan & Nabors, 2011), few research studies have directly examined the extent to which school connectedness is influenced by race/ethnicity and the effective strategies that strengthen this relationship (Johnson, Crosnoe, & Elder, 2001; Peguero et al., 2015; Voight et al., 2015). Additionally, this research tends to skew

towards explicating racial variations in connectedness to school from a deficit-based model; correlating weak bonds to school with disengagement, involvement in delinquent behavior, and ultimately dropping out of school (Bryan, Moore-Thomas, Gaenzle, Kim, Lin, & Na, 2012; Jenkins, 1997; Maddox & Prinz, 2003; Voight et al., 2015). Limitations of this research suggest there is a need for evidence-based strategies that increase students' connectedness to school and improve academic performance. Gay (2010, 2013), Ladson-Billings (1992, 1995a, 2006a, 2006b; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995), and Thornton (2014) suggest that in order to promote academic achievement of students of color from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, it is imperative that teachers make learning culturally relevant.

This dissertation highlights the use of culturally relevant pedagogy as a vehicle for school connectedness and improved academic outcomes, such as reading literacy, during the summer months when many students of color experience learning loss. The focus on literacy as an indicator for achievement, culturally relevant pedagogy, and summer educational programming is not accidental. Increasingly, literacy has become a proxy to predict academic success in middle school and high school graduation (Lesnick et al., 2010). According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation (2015), only 18% of African American fourth graders and 16% of eighth graders were found to be proficient in reading on the 2015 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), an assessment that has been given to a national representative sample of students every two years since the 1970s. Additionally, none of the fifty states with a minimum of 500 African Americans taking the American College Testing (ACT) saw more than 17% score college ready on all tested subject areas.

These findings are consistent with existing literature that links early reading ability to future educational success. A critical transition takes place in elementary school; from

kindergarten to third grade, students are learning how to read; in fourth grade and beyond, students are using reading skills to learn new content. A longitudinal analysis by Lesnick et al. (2010) of third grade students in Chicago revealed several findings critical to this current research: (1) Third grade reading level was shown to be a significant predictor of eighth grade reading level and ninth-grade course performance, even after accounting for demographic characteristics; (2) students who are above grade level for reading in third grade graduate from high school and enroll in college at higher rates than students who are below grade level; (3) The proportion of students who are below grade level is the highest for males students, African American students, and for students with experiences in the foster care system.

There is also research supporting summer reading interventions as critical strategies to improving children's reading ability from kindergarten to eighth grade (Kim & Quinn, 2013). While all students are at risk for losing reading skills and abilities over the summer break, low-income students without access to quality summer enrichment opportunities are affected disproportionally, and this loss is exacerbated in school achievement gaps. Kim and Quinn (2013) cited research suggesting that income-based disparities in student reading achievement have grown larger over the past four decades, and while there are many underlying causes, the summer months place low-income children at a greater risk. However, earlier research by Kim (2004), which explored the relationship between access to reading materials, summer book reading, and fall reading performance, reported that the volume of summer reading was positively related to fall reading achievement independent of prior reading and writing skills and student background characteristics. Additionally, the benefits of reading books over the summer were also consistent for all ethnic groups. Kim's second analysis revealed that access to books

was also positively associated with the volume of summer book reading independent of student background characteristics.

Research on students who are not proficient readers by third grade has been compelling and alarming, suggesting that these students are four times more likely to drop out of school. According to a report published by The Annie E. Casey Foundation (Hernandez, 2011), African American and Hispanic children who are not reading by third grade are twice as likely as white students with similar reading skills to not graduate from high school. For students who spend at least a year in poverty and are not reading proficiently, the rates for not graduating from high school rise to 31% and 33% for African American and Hispanic respectively, compared to 22% for White students. When mainstream education narrowly reflects the dominate middle class European culture, one must ask to what degree is the role of culture perpetuating these disparities when controlling for all other factors such as income, school effects, and parental education?

Purpose of the Study

This dissertation examines connectedness to school through a Social Development and Social Control lens, hypothesizing culturally relevant pedagogy as an educational practice to improve literacy skills for African American children. To do this, secondary data from the Kansas City Freedom Summer School Initiative was used. School Connectedness research indicates that students with higher academic achievement are more likely to possess strong connections to school (Blum, 2005a, 2005b; Hirschi, 1969; Klem & Connell, 2004; Libbey, 2004). These connections have both affective and behavioral dimensions. The Kansas City Freedom School Initiative utilized parent surveys to measure students' cultural appreciation, love of learning, acceptance of responsibility, community involvement, social adjustment, and conflict resolution. These six domains reflect affective and behavioral dimensions parallel with

Hirschi's four elements of a social bond, attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief. Catalano, Oesterle, Fleming, and Hawkins (2004) identified Attachment theory, Social Development Model, and Social Control Theory as three child and adolescent development theories with bonding as a key component for healthy development and central to cognitive functioning. This research highlights central tenets in each of these theories to explore social bonding, its links to achievement, and the role of culture in strengthening those bonds to school through a constructivist model of teaching.

This project adds to the body of knowledge by conducting an exploratory examination of culturally relevant pedagogical approaches and their impact on mitigating the summer reading loss for African American students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade. Additionally, research supports parental involvement and relationship with teachers as a key driver of student success (Simons-Morton & Crump, 2003; Rosenfeld, Richman & Bowen, 2000; Tennant et al., 2015). This study explores whether parent survey domains are correlated with student reading growth across three programmatic years. Additionally, income-based differences in reading achievement is explored. This study is guided by three research questions:

(1) Does culturally relevant pedagogy as utilized in Kansas City Freedom Schools have a significant impact on student literacy outcomes (over the summer) for African American children who participated? If so, how do Freedom school students' reading scores compare to those of students who did not attend Freedom school but were engaged in a variety of summer activities?

(2) Are any of the survey domains that measure parents' perceptions of their students' cultural appreciation, love of learning, acceptance of responsibility, community

involvement, social adjustment, and conflict resolution related to growth in reading score as measured by GRADE reading assessment?

(3) In what ways does family income impact the summer reading growth for students in Freedom school, and does this growth vary by family income?

Research on the achievement gap has largely focused on the differences between Black and White children's academic performance as measured by standardized tests and assessments, graduation rates, and college completion. Along each metric, Blacks tend to fare worse on all academic leading indicators as compared to their White counterparts. Studies have shown that these gaps are evident as early as three years old; some even suggest the race gap emerges after a child's first birthday (Burchinal et al., 2011). Fewer than 25 years ago, Coll et al. (1996) were calling attention to the need for an integrative model for the study of developmental competencies in minority children, arguing that comparing minority children's growth and development to that of white children without examining the intersection of social class, culture, ethnicity, race, and the role of racial discrimination in influencing social position and social isolation is a flawed approach. This omission in mainstream child development research minimized the unique ecological circumstances that African American children and their families encounter and fails to acknowledge the issues related to life course processes within a broader sociocultural context.

Jackson and Boutte (2009) proclaimed that within a racially stratified society, children demonstrate an understanding of the social meaning of racial and ethnic distinctions by the time they are six. This holds consistent even for children with little to no direct contact with people from other racial or ethnic groups. When students of color do not experience their culture positively reflected in the curricula, texts, or teaching staff, research suggest this can negatively

impact their connectedness to school and academic outcomes. As evidenced by the continuing underperformance of children of color in mainstream public education, race continues to be a pernicious and indelible mark obstructing the path towards academic success.

The focus of this study on African American students allows for a within group comparison, exploring the impact of a summer reading program on the literacy level of African American students when using a culturally rich and affirming pedagogical model taught by African American college interns. While research has shown that multicultural and culturally relevant pedagogy is beneficial for all students, it may be essential for the academic achievement of African American students in an European hegemonically educational system grounded in middle class values. A looming gap exists in the research connecting the necessity of culturally relevant pedagogy to the dismal state of education for students of color (Sleeter, 2012). It is important to remember that the educational purpose of schooling pre-*Brown* was curated to reflect and meet the needs of White children and assimilate immigrants to the cultural values and norms of American society. Integration of African American children did not automatically shift the ideological, pedagogical, and cultural norms of the system to ensure African American students felt a sense of connectedness or belonging to their new educational institutions. Although the Civil Rights movement gave birth to multiculturalism and diversity efforts within the educational system, a widespread agreement and adoption of culturally relevant/responsive pedagogy for the advancement of students of color is grossly underrepresented in urban teacher preparation programs.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

Connectedness to school has been described in many different terms: school bonding, school attachment, and school connectedness (Yang & Anyon, 2016). This is largely due to the research spanning several fields: education, sociology, health, psychology, and criminology (Blum, 2005a, 2005b; Libbey, 2004; Peguero et al., 2015). School bonding, school attachment, and school connectedness are used interchangeably, each referring to the relationship students have to their academic institution; however, the theoretical framework guiding explication and measurement of these terms differs (Blum, 2005a; Libbey, 2004; Maddox & Prinz, 2003; Monahan et al., 2010). Yang and Anyon (2016) noted that although these terms are operationalized differently, there is evidence that suggests that a student's relationship to school is a powerful influence on individual behavior and health. Another closely related term in assessing and measuring students' connectedness is school climate (Libbey, 2004; Voight et al., 2015). School climate refers to the collective experiences of quality and character of school life. Based on the norms, goals, values, actions, teaching and learning practices, and interpersonal relationship among staff, students, and parents, climate is the summation of those patterns that define the spirit of the school.

School Connectedness and School Bonding

Often used interchangeably, school bonding and school connectedness are used to explore the relationship between students and schools (Yang & Anyon, 2016). As a predictor for adolescent health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2009) defined school connectedness as the belief by students that adults in the school care about their learning as well as about them as individuals. Akin to school connectedness, school bonding is often used as an umbrella term to examine several aspects of a student's relationship to school (Libbey, 2004).

Both constructs have behavioral and affective dimensions and are assessed using parallel indicators, such as attachment to school, connection to school personnel, educational commitment, school involvement, and belief that the institution is fair (Catalano et al., 2004; Yang & Anyon, 2016). Literature regarding school connectedness points to two primary and interdependent components: *attachment,* characterized by the relationships with those at the school; and *commitment*, the investment in school and performing well in school (Monahan et al., 2010). These social bonds to school are believed to influence conformity to the norms and the values of school.

While school bonding encompasses several aspects of a student's relationship to school, including the connection to school personnel, the academic ideals espoused by the school, and peer relationships, it often denotes the presence of attachment and commitment as prerequisites for positive bonds to develop. Catalano et al. (2004) identified Attachment theory, Social Development Model, and Social Control theory as three child and adolescent development theories with bonding as a key component for healthy development and central to cognitive functioning. Baumeister and Leary (1995) positioned the need to belong as fundamental to cognitive development. Thompson (2007) situated the need for connection as a basic human need and motivation.

Attachment Theory and Social Development Theory

Attachment theory outlines a process by which neural connections are established for subsequent interactions with others based on the infant's interactions with primary caregivers. Hence, interactions with primary caregivers build the foundation for future bonds with others. The social development theory also positions social interaction as an antecedent for cognitive

development. Consciousness and cognitive development are by-products of socialization and social behavior.

Based on the work of Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky, constructivism denotes that learning is an active, contextualized process of constructing knowledge rather than simply acquiring it. The learner constructs knowledge through social interaction with people and the environment. Contrary to the notion that children are *tabula rasas* (blank slates) when they enter school, constructivists argue that past experiences and cultural factors are active agents in acquiring new knowledge. Vygotsky's theory did not adhere to the notion that development precedes learning, such as in Jean Piaget's theories (Mishra, 2013); Vygotsky argued, "learning is a necessary and universal aspect of the process of developing culturally organized, specifically human psychological function" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 90). Vygotsky's theory of human child development did not limit interactions for cognitive development to merely people and environments; he also stressed the interplay of cultural artifacts. Mishra (2013) suggested that these cultural artifacts serve a dual purpose; they assist in the integration of the child into their culture, and through this transformative process, according to Vygotsky, they shape the way the child's mind is formed.

The acquisition of these cultural tools "extends one's mental capacities, making individuals the master of their own behavior" and "as result of using these tools—first in cooperation with others and later independently—the child develops higher mental functions: complex mental processes that are intentional, self-regulated, and mediated by language and other sign systems" (Mishra, 2013, p. 3). This link between culture, social interactions with people, and the environment as an antecedent or contributor to the construction of knowledge is fundamental to understanding the affective and behavioral component of school bonding and its

impact on learning and student achievement. The Social Development Model affirms attachment and commitment as key drivers of creating social bonds, and these bonds exert a powerful force that directs and inhibits behavior. The development and strength of these bonds are created through patterns of behavior, both prosocial and antisocial in their environment (Catalano et al., 2004). This socialization occurs through four processes, according to the Social Development model: (1) perceived opportunities for involvement; (2) actual involvement; (3) skill for involvement and interaction; and (4) rewards from involvement and interaction. Catalano and colleagues (2004) suggested a social bond of attachment and commitment develops because of consistent socializing processes.

These bonds form between the individual, the people, and the activities of the socializing unit. The Social Development model explores the dimensions of attachment and commitment, with involvement being encapsulated within commitment. The Social Control theory provides a more expansive paradigm, unpacking commitment from involvement and inserting the notion of belief—the degree to which a socializing unit is fair, and which has racial, gender, cultural, and social class implications. These ancillary components offer a vantage point for understanding and analyzing disparities in education as they relate to the direction and strength of social bonds to schools.

Educational research highlighting the disparities in education often focuses on the racial achievement gap which has garnered considerable attention and is reflective of long-standing evidence suggesting that racial status is associated with the most profound disparities in adolescent developmental outcomes (Yang & Anyon, 2016). Yet Kirkpatrick Johnson, Crosnoe, and Elder (2001) suggested there are broader social concerns within the educational disparity debate, highlighting other aspects of the educational experience such as the full participation of

minority adolescents in student life and their feelings of comfort and belonging. They suggested these are functions of the students' background and characteristics of the schools they attend.

Social Control Theory

Travis Hirschi's (1969) Social Control theory is one of the most prominent, empirically based theoretical frameworks (Maddox & Prinz, 2003; Peguero, Popp, Latimore, Searcher & Koo, 2011) purporting to explain school bonding. Maddox and Prinz (2003) suggested that Hirschi's theory (also called Social Bond theory) was the first comprehensive conceptualization of school bonding and provided empirical evidence identifying the lack of school bonding as a major cause of deviant behavior. In Hirschi's (1969) analysis of over 4,000 students examining the associations between school bonding and delinquency, findings suggested that students who were fond of school and cared about what their teachers thought about them had lower rates of delinquency than students with lower scores on those same variables (Murray & Greenberg, 2000). Delinquency as defined by Jenkins (1995) is "acts against persons or property in school that disrupt the educational processes of teaching and learning" (p. 221). Hirschi (1969) postulated that all individuals have a distinctive inclination to commit deviant acts, thus conformity of social rules, not deviance, is what needs explication. For Hirschi, delinquency was the result of weak social bonds to conventional societal institutions (Jenkins, 1995; Maddox & Prinz, 2003; Peguero et al., 2016).

Social bonds have both an affective and behavioral dimension. Hirschi (1969) identified four distinct interrelated elements of the bond to conventional society: attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief. Hirschi argued that a strong social bond to social institutions such as schools promotes conformity; those with weak or broken social bonds are more likely to be engaged in deviant behavior (Hirschi, 1969; Jenkins, 1995; Maddox & Prinz, 2003). Attachment

is an affective dimension; it represents the emotional relationship that one has with significant others, such as parents, teachers, and peers (Hirschi, 1969; Jenkins, 1995; Johnson et al., 2001). Within the educational context, school attachment represents the degree to which students within the school "feel" a sense of belonging and connectedness, the degree to which students care about school and have positive feelings about their school (Blum, 2005a; Cernkovich & Giordano, 1992; Johnson et al., 2001; Walton & Cohen, 2011). Conversely, feelings of alienation can represent the absence of attachment, which could lead to weak social bonds.

Research by Walton and Cohen (2011) suggested that social belonging is not only a fundamental need, but feelings of alienation, isolation, and loneliness are harmful to subjective well-being, intellectual achievement, immune system functioning, and health. In their longitudinal study, which examined the effects of a brief intervention aimed at buttressing college freshman's sense of belonging in school, concluded that the intervention was particularly beneficial for African Americans, and less beneficial for European American students. During the three-year observation period, the intervention raised the African Americans' grade point average relative to multiple control groups and halved the minority achievement gap. Additionally, the intervention improved self-reported health and wellbeing. There is long standing consistent empirical evidence demonstrating that increased connection to school decreases absenteeism, fighting, and bullying and promotes educational motivation, classroom engagement, and completion rates (Blum, 2005a; Jenkins 1997; Monahan et al., 2010).

Within the school bonding context, teacher–student interactions have been a lead indicator for investigating students' attachment to school and achievement. Klem and Connell (2004) reported findings that students who perceived teachers as creating a caring, well-structured learning environment in which expectations are clear, high, and fair reported higher

levels of engagement with schools. In turn, high levels of engagement were also correlated to higher attendance and test scores. Libbey (2004) analyzed the various terms, constructs, and instruments used to measure students' connection to school and reported that teacher support was most often nested within measures of school climate, attachment, and belonging and fair discipline practices. Rosenfield, Richman and Bowen (2000) studied teacher support as a separate variable and found that positive school outcomes were promoted when teacher support was perceived in combination with perceived support from parents and friends.

The second interrelated bond in Hirschi's social control theory is *commitment.* Commitment represents the degree to which students have a personal investment in the school (Bryan et al., 2012). Cernkovich and Giordano (1992) referred to commitment as a "stake in conformity" that insulates the individual from involvement in delinquency. Commitment is reflected by the time and effort an individual invests in learning, the intrinsic value of getting good grades, and concern for future achievement. Research indicates that students who are committed to school have higher academic achievement and lower levels of school-related delinquency and misbehaving (Blum, 2005a, 2005b; Bryan et al., 2012; Catalano et al., 2004). For Hirschi (1969), commitment is the dimension of the social bond that focuses on the cost/benefit exchange of involvement in criminal or deviant acts. People who have invested in the conventional values and activities will be reluctant to give up those investments by committing deviant acts.

Using Hirschi's (1969) social bonding theory, Jenkins (1995) examined the relationship between school commitment and delinquency in middle school and the effects of personal background characteristics, such as family structure, mother's education level, race/ethnicity and gender. Relative to the other variables, school commitment had a strong inverse relationship with

school misconduct. Similarly, Eitle and Eitle (2007) found that low school commitment was associated with a greater likelihood of alcohol use and/or binge drinking for high school students. In summary, research supports the premise that strong affective bonds to schooling and commitment to educational goals reduces the prospect for involvement in delinquency (Cavendish, Neilsen & Montague, 2012; Eitle & Eitle, 2007; Jenkins, 1995; Tennant et al., 2015).

The third interrelated bond in Hirschi's Social Bond theory is *involvement,* which relates to the time invested in extracurricular activities, clubs, and athletics. School involvement refers to the opportunity cost related to how people spend their time. Maddox and Prinz (2003) referred to involvement as the temporal component of the social bond, which reflects the behavioral and demonstrable connection to the institution. Bryan et al. (2012) cited several research studies denoting a positive relationship between students' involvement in extracurricular activities and academic achievement and other academically related outcomes. For Hirschi (1969), if people are spending their time in prosocial activities, this reduces the time available to engage in antisocial activity. If students are heavily involved in legitimate school-related activities, either academically, socially, or participating in school athletics, that time is unavailable for engagement in deviant behavior.

The final type of social bond identified by Hirschi is *belief,* which refers to the degree to which one adheres to the moral validity of the law (Hirschi, 1969). In summary, Hirschi's (1969) Social Control Theory begins with the premise that all persons are born with the innate hedonistic drive to act in the selfish and aggressive ways that lead to criminal behavior. This premise reported a stark departure from virtually all existing criminological theories that posited that criminal behavior requires the creation of criminal motivation. Popular theories, such as

Strain theory focused exclusively on why people engage in deviant behavior. Conversely, Hirschi (1969) focused on *"why don't we do it."* For Hirschi, the answer was found in the bonds that people form to prosocial values, prosocial people, and prosocial institutions. He argued that the only reason people conform to the rules of society and go against their inherent immoral nature is because of bonds that either a person or institution has that promotes conformity, with schools as one of the prominent institutions for youth (Hirschi, 1969; Maddox & Prinz, 2003; Peguero et al., 2011).

Child Development, School Bonding, and Race/Ethnicity

Research on Hirschi's Social Bonds theory suggests that weak bonds to school can have detrimental effects on school experience and educational outcomes (Bondy, Peguero & Johnson, 2016; Crosnoe et al., 2004; Jenkins, 1995, 1997). It is also argued that strengthening students' bonds to school can have positive effects on educational success and attainment (Bondy et al., 2016; Bryan et al., 2012; Klem & Connell, 2004). As a result, research linking school bonding and academic related outcomes is studied across a plethora of fields. However, little is known about how race/ethnicity impacts social bonds to school. Hirschi's (1969) Social Bond theory does not explicitly address the issue of race/ethnicity (Bondy et al., 2016; Peguero et al., 2011), arguing that social bonding is invariant across social characteristics including race/ethnicity, and the focus is on the strength of the social bonds and ties to conventional society. An ecological approach to understanding the relationship between social bonds to conventional society and school outcomes must also acknowledge that students are strongly influenced by the social context in which they live. Coll and colleagues (1996) called for a new conceptual framework for the study of child development in minority populations, highlighting the absence of appropriate models to understand the growth and development of minority children. These authors purport

that an integrative comprehensive model is needed "because traditionally, the interaction of social class, culture, ethnicity, and race has not been included at the core of mainstream theoretical formulations in the discipline of child development" and these shortcomings are found "even in most of the contextually based theoretical frameworks identified in the developmental literature as organizational, transactional, and ecological" (p. 1892).

This omission minimizes the effects of social stratification derivatives such as prejudice, discrimination, racism, and segregation effects on the development of minority children. Consequently, mainstream child developmental theories define and situate "normative" child development within the confines of the Caucasian experiences; as such, the understanding of the normal development of children of color requires more explicit attention to the unique ecological circumstances these children face, as opposed to delineating and explicating observed differences. In the comparative analyses among black-white difference, *white* is often used as the control or normative state. The lack of attention to issues of culture and race in developmental sciences has resulted in an over-saturation of literature on minority children and their families narrowly focused on "explaining developmental deviations in comparison to white middle-class populations rather than examining normative developmental processes and outcomes" (Coll et al., 1996, p. 1894).

Quillian (2012) suggested that in the United States, a notable difference in the typical lives of African Americans, Caucasians, and Hispanics lies in the economic class of people in their social environment. Most of middle-class White families overwhelmingly live in homogenous neighborhoods and send their kids to schools where their respective race represents the majority of the student and staff population. Conversely, many African American and Hispanic middle-class families live in working class or low-income neighborhoods, and their

children are more likely to attend schools serving predominately low-income children of color with diverse school faculty and leadership. Empirical evidence suggests that socio-economic levels of neighborhoods and schools can affect quality of life, the academic quality of the school, and life outcomes (Burchinal et al., 2011; Condron, 2009; Logan, Minca, & Adar, 2012).

High poverty neighborhoods are often characterized by high crime, violence, racial and ethnic segregation, unemployment, blight, and disinvestment. *Urban* has become a term synonymous with the zoning of historical and contemporary structural racism, the presence of poor people of color, and inadequate schools (Briggs, 2005; Gotham, 2012; Roscigno, Devey, & Crowley, 2006). Hirschi's (1969) Social Control theory does not outline the specific factors that affect the strength of a bond to conventional social norms and institutions, and few studies to date examine racial effects. The scant research that exists examining race and social bonding reports that the aforementioned conditions can impede the formation of strong attachment, commitment, involvement, and particularly belief in the fairness and values of conventional institutions (Bondy et al., 2016; Bottiani, Bradshaw, & Mendelson, 2015; Peguero et al., 2015; Peguero et al., 2011; Voight et al., 2015).

The intersection of race, socio-economic status, and inequities in access to quality education is one of the most pernicious threats to participatory democracy (Allen & Boykin, 1992; Burchinal et al., 2011; Jackson & Howard, 2014). Closing the racial/ethnic achievement gap, which is apparent as early as kindergarten, continues to represent one of the most persistent challenges to the American educational system (Downer, Goble, Meyers, & Pianta, 2016). A great deal of political, social, and educational attention has been focused on schools and their ability to reduce or exacerbate differential outcomes between White students and their peers of color (Anyon et al., 2016; Bottiani et al., 2016; Klem & Connell, 2004; Yang & Anyon, 2016).

Research suggests that economic disadvantage, unequal access to healthcare, and inequitable school funding explains some racial differences in achievement; however, disparities continue to exist after controlling for these factors. According to Yang and Anyon (2016), quantitative measures of socioeconomic status fail to explain between 45% and 60% of the Black-White differences in test scores, reflecting longstanding evidence that racial status is associated with some of the most profound disparities in academic outcomes (Anyon et al., 2016; Downer et al., 2016; Johnson et al., 2001; Peguero et al., 2011).There is also a growing consensus among researchers that African American students experience school differently than their White peers (Cernkovich & Giordano, 1992; Crosnoe et al., 2004; Johnson et al., 2001; Peguero et al., 2011; Skiba et al., 2011; Yang & Anyon, 2016).

This attention to the differential experiences of students of color in public school has been highlighted across an extensive body of observational, experimental, and qualitative research documenting differential treatment, biased perceptions, disparities in the use and enforcement of exclusionary discipline practices, and disparate experiences in schools based on the racial/ethnic background of students (Anyon et al., 2016; Bottiani et al., 2016; Deschenes, Cuban & Tyak, 2001; Johnson et al., 2001; Peguero et al., 2011; Yang & Anyon, 2016). Feelings of alienation, discrimination, and isolation can have a profound impact on a student's ability to establish bonds to school (Bondy et al., 2016; Eitle & Eitle, 2007; Maddox & Prinz, 2003; Peguero et al., 2015).

Peguero et al. (2015) examined how five types of social bonding *(attachment, academic and sports involvement, commitment, and belief*) influence the likelihood of dropping out for racial and ethnic minorities in rural, urban, and suburban schools using national data from ELS, a survey administered by the Research Triangle Institute (RTI) for the National Center for

Education Statistics. The results confirmed that strong bonds to school minimized the odds of adolescents dropping out of school and have the potential to ameliorate some of the gap between White Americans and racial/ethnic minority students in dropout risk; however, their results also indicated that these effects vary across type of bond, the racial/ethnic group, and school locale, pointing to the importance of investigating how the effect of strong social bonding to school may be enhanced or inhibited across different school locales and by racial/ethnic groups.

Another in-school factor that can affect students' social bond to school is their ability to form healthy student–teacher relationships. Research suggests that the relationships students have with their teachers can have an immediate influence on their motivation and behavior (Murray & Greenberg, 2000). Fostering strong relationships between teachers and students positively connects students to schools (Vidourek et al., 2011). Monahan et al. (2010) highlighted several characteristics of classrooms that promote feelings of school connectedness, which include adult and student relationships that are positive and respectful. Bryan et al. (2012) cited research suggesting that although prior academic achievement is one of the strongest predictors of academic achievement, the students' connectedness to their respective teacher(s) is also highly associated with academic success.

In recent years, the vast and steadily increasing demographic divide between teachers and students has become an educational and public concern (Cherng & Halpin, 2016). Currently, less than 20% of teachers are racial/ethnic minorities, yet minority students are the demographic majority in public schools in the United States (Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Evans & Leonard, 2013). According to a report by the U.S. Department of Education (2016), students of color will be 56% of the student population by 2024. Currently, the elementary and secondary workforce is overwhelmingly white (82 %). This gap is long-standing and not likely to be closed any time

soon (Cherng & Halpin, 2016). Crosnoe et al. (2016) contend there is a wealth of social psychological research demonstrating individuals' preference for same-race interactions, and this racial ethnic mismatch may cause students to feel less connected to teachers. Cherng and Halpin (2016) investigated whether minority students have a more favorable perception of minority teachers compared to teachers who are not of their race. Collecting data on 2,700 teachers in grades 4–9 across 317 schools in six U.S. cities from 2009 to 2011, over 157,00 students were recruited to evaluate their teachers. The study found that minority students perceive minority teachers as more supportive of them than non-minority teachers.

The U.S. Department of Education report (2016) indicated that both qualitative and quantitative studies have found that teachers of color can improve the educational experience of all students, and compared with their White peers, they are more likely to have higher expectations of students of color, confront issues of racism, develop more trusting relationships with students (particularly those that share a cultural background) and that teachers of color tend to serve as advocates and cultural brokers. Gershenson, Holt and Papageorge (2015) found that when a Black teacher and a White teacher evaluate the same Black student, the White teacher is about 30% less likely to predict the student will complete a four-year college degree. White teachers are also almost 40% less likely to expect that their Black students will graduate high school. Research has shown that African American primary students matched to the same race as their teachers perform better on standardized tests, but little is known about the long-term benefits of this same-race pairing.

Most recently research by Gershenson, Hart, Lindsay and Papageorge (2017) found that assigning a black male to a black teacher in the third, fourth, or fifth grades significantly reduces the probability that he will drop out of high school (29%), and for the most economically

disadvantaged males their chance of dropping out fell by 39%. The study contends that low-income African American students who have at least one black teacher in elementary school are significantly more likely to graduate from college.

The Role of Culture in Education

In the matter of education, culture is at the heart of curriculum, instruction, administration and even performance assessments (Gay, 2010). Culture is an interactive, dynamic tool employed consciously and unconsciously to help individuals make meaning and navigate the world. Defined by Gay (2010), as "the dynamic system of social values, cognitive codes, behavioral standards, world views and beliefs used to give order and meaning to our own lives and the lives of others" (p. 27). Culture is inextricably intertwined in the construction, delivery, acquisition, and assessment of classroom instruction. Gay (2010) contended that the "actual sites" where learning successes or failures are determined lie between the interactions among students in the classroom and the interaction between student and teachers. Research has long documented the classroom teacher as being a lead determinant for student academic success (Gershenson et al., 2017).

Boykin (1994, as cited in Gay, 2010) asserted, "there has always been a profound and inescapable cultural fabric of the schooling process in America" (p. 244); the question is not if *culture* is a meaningful and integral component of instruction and education, but rather *whose* culture or *what* culture becomes the north star for delivering and assessing the outcomes of learning? Gay (2010), Ladson-Billings (1995a), and Milner (2012) noted the dominant influence of middle class European culture within the historical and current system of education and educational reform efforts. For far too long, the academic performance and educational trajectory of African American, Latinx, and Native American children have consistently and persistently

lagged their white counterparts across multiple indicators and measures of student success. These egregious disparities have a tremendous influence on the quality of life and life expectancy of black and brown children. Reform efforts are needed to address the rapidly growing diverse student population that has far outpaced the diversity of the U.S. teaching staff.

For decades ,researchers (Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1995a; 2006b; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002) have documented the need for preservice teacher training and education to include culturally responsive teaching for ethnically diverse students. This training needs to move beyond lessons on multiculturalism, which if not carefully designed, can reduce the complex and intersectional identities of students to "cultural groups" based on a single dimension of their identity (Gorski, 2016). A key feature of culturally responsive training must include a sociopolitical consciousness rooted in social justice, including the teachers' self-reflection of their culture, the beliefs, biases, and values about who they are, and most importantly, the students (and families) they are teaching.

The Heinz Endowment Commission performed a review of the literature in 2007 exploring the connections among culturally responsive pedagogy, positive ethnic socialization, resilience, and academic success (Hanley & Noblit, 2009). The review concentrated on empirical studies addressing African American students but also included relevant research with Latin, Asian, and Native American (ALANA) students. The overarching goal was to assimilate research connecting the use of students' culture and ethnic identity in promoting resilience and academic success. Hanley and Noblit's review of 2,808 sources was condensed into a final report citing 146 sources.

Hanley and Noblit (2009) defined culture as "a set of tools, perspectives, and capabilities that students can deploy in the pursuit of learning" (p. 5). The author further asserted, "when

these tools perspectives and capabilities are suppressed or denied, students are educationally disempowered" (p. 5). It is hypothesized that from one's culture comes the development of a racial identity. Pedagogy is defined by Simon (1987, cited in Hanley & Noblit, 2009) as "the curriculum content, design, classroom strategies and techniques, assessment and evaluation, and purpose and methods" (p. 14). Broadly stated, it is the relationship between teaching and learning, the influence of design, methodologies, and instructional practices that provide direction for teaching within a structured framework.

> Hanley and Noblit (2009) defined culturally responsive pedagogy as
>
> teaching and learning that incorporate the culture of ALANA students in curricular and instructional planning, instructional processes, classroom organization, motivational strategies, behavior and discipline and assessments.…it acknowledges the dominance of Eurocentric ideologies and practices in the context of education, which can result in alienation and disinterest among ALANA students. (p. 14)

This definition complements the work of Gloria Ladson-Billings, a prominent pedagogical researcher known for her groundbreaking research in culturally relevant pedagogy and critical race theory. Ladson-Billings (1995b) defined culturally relevant teaching as a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes. These cultural referents are not merely vehicles for bridging or explaining the dominant culture; they are aspects of the curriculum (pp. 17-18). Akin to Hanley and Noblit (2009), Ladson-Billings' culturally relevant teaching entails the development of a sociopolitical consciousness that is equally as important as developing students academically and nurturing their own cultural competence (Jackson & Howard, 2014).

Hanley and Noblit's (2009) review of the research also entailed exploring concepts of racial socialization and racial identity, which include the "acknowledgement of racism and racial oppression to help students think critically as they achieve academic and other successes through content and pedagogical means" (p. 6). It is well documented that early public schools were instrumental in dismantling culture through assimilation (Graham, 2005; Hanley & Noblit, 2009: Siddle Walker, 1996). Success with students of color in segregated schools occurs through connecting classroom learning, racial identity formation, and achievement through racial uplift (Siddle Walker, 1996). Racial uplift is described as both an identity formation and a political initiative; it provides an individual the opportunity to see their efforts and frustrations within a broader political struggle to uplift one's race (Perry, 2003, as cited in Hanley & Noblit, 2009). It is hypothesized that returning the concept of racial uplift to contemporary education will instill direction and purpose for the African American child; in its absence, racial identity loses its salience.

Hanley and Noblit (2009) concluded from their review of the literature:

- ALANA children succeed using their racial identity and socialization in response to racism and oppression as a means of knowledge production and self-actualization
- Culturally responsive pedagogy and positive racial identity can play a major role in promoting academic achievement and resilience for ALANA youth
- There is sufficient evidence to argue that both culturally responsive pedagogy and positive racial identity promote academic achievement and resilience.

Culturally Relevant Education

The Civil Rights movement in the 1960s, along with school desegregation efforts, brought to the forefront the need to more effectively teach a diverse student body. Distinct from

multicultural education, two primary strands of research began to emerge from concepts rooted in culturally appropriate, culturally congruent, and culturally responsive education (Aronson & Laughter, 2016). The first strand focuses on the practices, strategies, and beliefs of teachers; the second strand focuses on the instructional pedagogy and paradigm of teaching and learning. Both strands, culturally responsive teaching and culturally responsive pedagogy, strongly embrace social justice with the classroom as the site for social change.

Culturally relevant education is an inclusive framework that synthesizes critical pedagogy, culturally responsive teaching, and culturally relevant pedagogy (Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Dover, 2013). Geneva Gay and Gloria Ladson-Billings are two of the most cited sources for culturally responsive teaching and pedagogy. Gay defined Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) as "using the cultural knowledge, prior experience, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them" (Gay, 2010, p. 31). According to Gay (2010, as cited in Aronson and Laughter, 2016) culturally responsive teaching is comprised of six qualifying dimensions:

1. Culturally responsive teachers are *socially and academically empowering* by setting high expectations for students with a commitment to every student's success;
2. Culturally responsive teachers are multidimensional because they engage cultural knowledge, experiences, contributions, and perspectives;
3. Culturally responsive teachers *validate every student's culture*, bridging gaps between school and home through diversified instructional strategies and multicultural curricula;
4. Culturally responsive teachers are *socially, emotionally, and politically comprehensive* as they seek to educate the whole child;

5. Culturally responsive teachers are *transformative of schools and societies* by using students' existing strengths to drive instruction, assessment, and curriculum design;
6. Culturally responsive teachers are *emancipatory* and *liberating* from oppressive educational practices and ideologies as they lift the "veil of presumed absolute authority from conceptions of scholarly truth typically taught in schools" (p. 165)

Ladson-Billings' research focused on curriculum, teacher posture, and educational paradigms. She coined the term *culturally relevant pedagogy* and defined it as a "pedagogy which empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes" (Ladson-Billings, 1994, pp. 16-17). Aronson and Laughter outlined three significant components of the Ladson-Billings framework:

1. Culturally relevant pedagogues think in terms of long-term academic achievement and not merely end-of-year test;
2. Culturally relevant pedagogues focus on cultural competence, which "refers to helping students to recognize and honor their own cultural beliefs and practices while acquiring access to the wider culture where they are likely to have a chance of improving their socioeconomic status and making informed decisions about the lives they wish to lead. (Ladson-Billings, as cited in Aronson & Laughter, 2016, p. 166)
3. Culturally relevant pedagogues seek to develop socio-political consciousness, which includes a teacher's obligation to find ways for "students to recognize, understand, and critique current and social inequalities" (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, p. 46, as cited in Aronson & Laughter, 2016, p. 166)

Dover (2013) defined culturally responsive education as an integration of critical pedagogy, which entails an explicit social justice agenda, one that seeks to challenge the political

neutrality of curriculum, pedagogy, and educational systems and instead seeks to develop students' sociopolitical consciousness through co-investigation, problem-posing, and dialogue. Dover (2013) contended that culturally responsive education "calls for the analysis of teachers' political ideologies, preservice education, technical skills, and readiness to effect change, and asserts that teachers must be specifically trained to interrupt social and educational inequity" (p. 5). Dover (2013) identified three components:

1. Culturally responsive education "centralizes teacher identity and student academic outcomes" and "places as much emphasis on teachers' stances as their techniques (p. 5)
2. Teachers are "attuned to hegemonic classroom practices, and willing to examine and reflect upon their own social, educational, and political identities" while also considering the lives, family circumstances, and prior experience of students and the sociopolitical context of the communities in which students live (pp. 5-6).
3. Classrooms are culturally inclusive of all students
4. Bridge students' cultural references to academic concepts by using constructivist pedagogical approaches to engage students in "critical reflection about their own lives and societies, facilitate students' cultural competence, and explicitly name and critique discourses of power." (p. 6)

Although the popularity of Culturally Relevant Education has been increasing since the late 1990s with adoption of some of the tenets in teacher education programs, the growing demands for standardized curricula and pedagogical approaches to address achievement and accountability in the No Child Left Behind movement requires evidence-based research that

documents connections between culturally responsive education and student outcomes (Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Dover, 2013; Sleeter, 2012).

The achievement gap between White and minority students has been persistent, well-documented, and cumulative (Gay, 2010; Gershenson et al., 2017). Along with socioeconomics, parental education, school type (urban, suburban, private), teachers are one of the most important proxies for examining achievement trends (Gershenson et al., 2017). While there are emerging data documenting the short-term effects of teacher-student demographic match on attendance, discipline, and test scores, it has been well documented for decades that "culture plays a critical role in adolescents' development and learning" (Rodriguez, Jones, Pang, & Park, 2004, p. 46). Vygotsky believed that development and learning occur within a sociocultural context. When classroom teachers infuse students' native culture, lived experiences, and language into the curriculum and pedagogical approaches, it positively impacts the teacher-student relationship (Coughran, 2012), engagement (Dimick, 2012), and achievement in reading and math (Hubert, 2013). Conversely, research has also documented the impact of cultural discontinuity, the lack of cohesion between two or more cultures on student-teacher perceptions and achievement for minority students. Sociocultural researchers have examined how the cultural beliefs, values, and attitudes of teachers influence instruction and learning in the classroom.

Despite the plethora of research documenting the impact of culturally relevant pedagogy on the academic outcomes of children of color, these practices are not widely adopted in urban public schools. The Children's Defense Fund Freedom School Initiative provided an excellent case study to explore how the key learnings from the Mississippi Freedom Summer of 1964 and the current research on culturally relevant pedagogy influence student outcomes by incorporating key concepts of culture, racial uplift, racial socialization, and identity.

Mississippi Freedom Summer Project

Literacy for African Americans has historical roots in the pursuit of freedom and participation in American democracy. The Mississippi Summer Project, also known as Freedom Summer, was a grassroots, community-organizing initiative centered on several mass voter registration projects. It was launched in June 1964, led chiefly by members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO), an umbrella organization comprised of four major civil rights groups, SNCC, the Council on Racial Equality (CORE), The National Association of the Advancement of Color People (NAACP) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). The goal of the Mississippi Summer Project was to register disenfranchised African Americans and poor White sympathizers in Mississippi to challenge the racist all-White state Democratic Party (McAdam, 1988; Watson, 2010). Projects were created throughout the summer of 1964 including massive voter registration drives that would rally the support of a newly created Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP).

Mississippi, the southern bastion of social, political, and educational marginalization against African Americans through the use of virulent Jim Crow laws, would require additional supports to build capacity for voter registration. During the summer of 1964 in Mississippi, a network of alternative schools flourished with the express purpose to disrupt the inadequate and inferior nature of the education typically offered to Blacks in Mississippi. The impoverished nature of education prevented Blacks from seizing the right to vote and actively participating in the democratic power structure. These schools would serve as parallel institutions to the public-school system, one that would "provide intellectual stimulation and link learning to participation in the movement to transform the South's segregated society" (Perlstein, 1990, p. 297). The

power of education resonated with SNCC, as it was the first civil rights organization led by Black university students and graduates. SNCC gained popularity from student-led direct-action protest, including the infamous Greensboro sit-ins leading to the removal of racial segregation policies at Woolworth department store chains. They were also instrumental in Freedom Rides, a movement that contested the segregated interstate bus and rail practices in the South, following the Supreme Court *Boynton v. Virginia* (1960) ruling declaring segregation in interstate bus and rail unconstitutional. Fueled by the belief that a change in Mississippi's power structure and participation in a real democracy would have to begin with young people, the creation of a system of alternative schools aimed at youth rather than adult activists distinguished the Freedom School movement from other civil rights educational programs.

SNCC's transitional move from direct action protest to community organizing provided an opportunity for organizers to dispel the miseducation of the Negro, one that "lulled students into a false consciousness" (Watson, 2010, p. 171) of obedience and fear and instead "instilled in the black community the capacity to make a demand" (Perlstein, 1990, p. 299). Organizers confronted White power to demonstrate that the chains that imprisoned people's minds and robbed them of creativity were worse than being jailed and chained physically (Jackson & Howard, 2014; Perlstein, 1990). Charles Cobb, SNCC' s field secretary, was the first to propose the concept of Freedom Schools, often cited as a strategy against the "academic poverty" and "intellectual wastelands" of Mississippi schools for Blacks (Chilcoat & Ligon, 1994). The white power structure in Mississippi zealously implemented racially restrictive tactics to inhibit voter registration for African Americans (Chilcoat & Ligon, 1994; Etienne, 2013; McAdam, 1988; Watson, 2010). The most notable voter suppression tactics were the poll tax, the literacy test, and the lack of quality education for African Americans. While violence maintained complacency

and compliance, the "systematic undereducation of Blacks was used as both a method and excuse for denying" blacks voting rights, as literacy was a requirement for voter registration (Etienne, 2013, p. 456). These sentiments resonated deeply with Cobb and became the fundamental organizing principle for Freedom Schools. Clark's pedagogical practices connected reading and writing to political literacy (Etienne, 2013; McAdam, 1988). Cobb believed that a summer school experience that included academic subjects, cultural programs, political and social studies, and community organizing training would "demonstrate to Blacks throughout Mississippi that such schools could be created…filling an intellectual and creative vacuum in the lives of young Negro Mississippians, and…get them to articulate their own desires, demands, and questions" (Perlstein, 1990, p. 303).

In March of 1964, the National Council of Churches sponsored a curriculum conference in New York. Among the 50 members in attendance was Myles Horton, Director of the Highlander Center in Tennessee. Horton's participatory educational model reflected the belief that "responses to oppression had to grow out of the experiences of the oppressed" (Perlstein, 1990, p. 306). Horton's foundational beliefs were heavily influenced by John Dewey's *Democracy and Education:*

> It is the aim of….education to take part in correcting unfair privilege and unfair deprivation, not to perpetuate them...it must take into account the needs of the existing community life: it must select with the intention of improving the life we live in common. (Perlstein, 1990, p. 306)

Cobbs' and Horton's fundamental principle about education shaped the curriculum that was student-centered, relevant to the current lived experiences of African Americans in Mississippi, and linked education as the structural linchpin for voting and racial uplift.

The primary instructional practices were the framing of questions and motivating discussion as opposed to memorization of facts. The goal was to organize from the bottom up, including all stakeholders in mobilizing for social justice. This was largely influenced by Ella Baker, a seasoned civil rights activist and president of the SCLC. Cobbs believed that questioning was the path leading to enlightenment. The curriculum was developed with the premise to strengthen African Americans academically in preparation for greater social and political empowerment. Since many African Americans had negative experiences with schools and remained largely illiterate, two curricula were developed. The first curriculum consisted of academic components, including reading, creative writing, mathematics, science, English, foreign languages and art. The civic curriculum was the powerhouse of the movement, comprising three components: The Guide to Negro History, Case Studies of Social History, and a Citizenship Curriculum.

The Guide to Negro History was developed to castigate the negative beliefs that white supremacists incessantly promulgated through legalized Jim Crow. A summation of the African American heritage started with the first slave revolt aboard the *Amistad* in 1839. Coupled with the analogies of contemporary civil rights reform, the Guide to Negro History provided positive images of African Americans as heroic people who fought and died to advance the empowerment of African American people (Chilcoat & Ligon, 1994; Etienne, 2013; Perlstein, 1990). Students could see that through their bravery and commitment to education they were joining a legacy of brave men and women dedicated to achieving social, economic, and political justice. This transformative curriculum was aimed at liberation by offering counter-narratives about what it meant to be Black and the rich history of African American scholars, mathematicians, scientists, and courageous leaders forging a new identity—one that connected

Southern Blacks to a broader racial movement to end oppression and injustice. The case studies and Social history curriculum highlighted seven case studies that emphasizing the political, social, and economic forces working against the civil rights of the Negro. It was believed that these case studies, which connected to the experiences and life situations of the students, would "stimulate latent talents and interest," causing high school youth in Mississippi to QUESTION" (Perlstein, 1990, p. 309). The core of the Freedom School's teachings came from the Citizenship Curriculum. It was designed to "facilitate the work of volunteers," Northern Whites, "who would be neither experienced at teaching nor knowledgeable about Afro-American history" (Perlstein, 1990, p. 312). Designed around a series of questions and discussions to promote critical thinking, the citizenship curriculum allowed teachers to elicit the thoughts, perspectives, and beliefs of the students. The curriculum was divided into seven units, each one building on the preceding unit.

The first unit focused on current conditions for African Americans as they related to housing, schools, and employment (Chilcoat & Ligon, 1994; Perlstein, 1990). Unit 2 focused on a comparison of Northern Blacks and Southern Blacks, emphasizing that "geographical region made little difference in the realities of black second-class citizenship" (Chilcoat & Ligon, 1994, p. 144). The remaining units were comprised of lessons that "examined myths perpetuated by white culture to suppress African American through low expectations and negative self-images" (Chilcoat & Ligon, 1994, p. 144); "how the power structure created racial stereotypes and instilled irrational fears in poor whites in order to maintain its power" (Perlstein, 1990, p. 312); and the foundational philosophy of non-violence as the dominant methodology of civil rights.

Freedom School teachers were drawn from Northern elite colleges and universities. It was the intent of Freedom Summer organizers to attract White students from affluent families. The rationale was that by "flooding Mississippi with Northern whites the entire country would be

made dramatically aware of the denial of freedom which existed in the state" (McAdam, 1988, p. 38). The National Council of Churches sponsored two week-long orientation meetings in June 1964 to train the Freedom School teachers (Chilcoat & Ligon, 1994: Etienne, 2013; Perlstein, 1990). Volunteers received extensive training regarding the socio-political culture of Mississippi, race relations, SNCC's non-violent philosophy, African American culture, and the core Freedom School curriculum and instructional strategies. The orientation also discussed the very real possibility of violence. Role-plays were designed to simulate racist beating and the types of racist insults that would be hurled at volunteers. Security and safety procedures dominated the conversation. Lynching, killings, and brutal beatings were commonplace in Mississippi, without any recourse for justice from all-White juries. "Between 1882-1964, 539 Blacks had been lynched in Mississippi" (McAdam, 1988, p. 26). Although the Northern white volunteers were not hopeful in their ability to navigate danger, they were wholeheartedly committed to challenging the broken system in the South. The program was met with unprecedented success, initially planning for 20 schools serving 1,000 people; 41 schools were opened serving between 3,000 and 3,500 students, and attracting over 1,000 Northern volunteers. Schools opened in churches, in homes, on front lawns, and under trees.

A few critical themes emerged from the Freedom School curriculum and summer experience: the power of teaching and learning when the curriculum is embedded within a social justice framework; the value of connecting curriculum to the lived experiences of students; the impact of counter-narratives in restoring a positive racial identity development; connecting disenfranchised communities to a broader racial uplift movement; and the value of building trusting relationships, providing a framework for liberation education. The pedagogical practices of Freedom Schools are congruent with what research has defined as Culturally Relevant

Teaching or (CRT) also known as Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. These pedagogical practices provided the cornerstone for the development of The Children's Defense Fund-Freedom School Initiative and the Kansas City Freedom School Initiative.

Children Defense Fund Freedom Schools

The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) is a non-profit child advocacy organization founded more than 40 years ago by Marian Wright Edelman. CDF champions policies and programs that protect children from harm and abuse, create access to quality health care education, and reduce the compounding effects of poverty on the development of children. Wright, a graduate of Spelman College, a Historical Black College for women, and Yale Law School, was the first African American woman admitted to the Mississippi bar in the mid-1960s. CDF Freedom Schools are six-week, literacy-based, summer learning schools modeled after and emanating from the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Schools. Designed for impoverished children at risk for school failure, the Freedom School program engages students in grades K-12. Since its inception in 1995, more than 135,000 children have been served in 107 cities and 28 states; more than 18,000 college students and graduates have been trained by CDF to implement the curriculum. CDF Freedom Schools partner with local community organizations, churches, and public and private schools to host these literacy-rich summer schools. CDF Freedom Schools have been evaluated nationally, documenting gains in reading levels, improved character development, and cultural appreciation.

The CDF Freedom School Model has four key elements: (1) Educational Enrichment and Cultural Awareness; (2) Parental Involvement; (3) Intergenerational Leadership; and (4) Community Involvement and Social Action. The Educational Enrichment and Cultural Awareness tenet utilizes an Integrated Reading Curriculum consisting of 80 carefully selected

texts, highlighting the cultural richness of African American and other cultural minority groups. Weekly workshops are offered for parents to increase their understanding and ability to assist their child educationally. Freedom School classrooms are staffed by college interns (one intern for every 10 students), known as *servant-leaders.* All servant leaders are required to participate in the National Freedom School Training Institute (NFSTI), which provides professional development, training, and support to new and returning servant leaders to learn how to implement the curriculum. Held annually in Tennessee, the training is "infused with multiculturalism, African tradition, and research-based practices…including 'slavery simulations, race and diversity trainings, panels from Civil Rights leaders'" (Watson, 2014, p. 179).

A key component of this training is centered on the role and purpose of a teacher-activist, liberation education, and social uplift. Watson (2014) reported that more than one-third of the interns' training is dedicated to culturally relevant teaching practices and implementation. The training also includes a review of the current state of educational inequalities for African American children and poor children, the importance of community development, coalition building, African American history, and social action. Guest speakers from across the country who have led or are currently leading social justice/civil rights efforts are invited to guest lecture. The Community Involvement and Social Action component encourages scholars to explore and address the issues and challenges facing their community by developing and taking part in social action projects. These four program tenets were critical to the success of the 1964 Freedom Schools.

CDF Freedom Schools also nurtures the cultural, emotional, and social intelligence of students. Kinesthetic movement including dance, songs, and affirmations are embedded

throughout the Freedom School model. Each morning begins with *Harambee* – a Swahili term meaning *let's pull together* – with origins in East Africa. Led by the student interns, all students gather to sing Freedom School songs that incorporate dance and sign language. The exercise ends with a guest reader from the community reading the book of the day and asking questions based on the concepts in the book. Freedom Schools' primary focus is to disrupt the learning loss that typically occurs over the summer break, to instill a love for reading, and to connect students to their rich cultural heritage.

Kansas City CDF Freedom Schools

The Kansas City CDF Freedom Schools Initiative began in the summer of 1995 at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, through a grant from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. In 2003, the Kauffman Foundation supported the addition of four such schools in Kansas City, increasing the total number to seven. By 2004, the Kauffman Foundation granted a multi-year investment to support the continued expansion of the CDF Freedom Schools program, incrementally increasing the number of sites to twenty in 2008. In 2005, The Kauffman Foundation commissioned the Philliber Research Associates to conduct a three-year evaluation of the Kansas City Freedom Schools program's impact on students, parents, interns, and the host organizations. Findings suggested that scholars' reading abilities improved during Freedom School. While the gains are not large, students' scores generally increased as measured by pre- and post-tests. Additionally, students who participated in Freedom School across multiple years yielded the highest growth in reading scores.

The pedagogical practices in Freedom Schools are congruent with what research has defined as Culturally Relevant education, an inclusive framework that synthesizes culturally responsive teaching and culturally relevant pedagogy (Aronson & Laughter, 2016). Freedom

Schools take place over the summer months, a critical time during which students, particularly low-income students, tend to experience significant learning loss. Many low-income families do not have access to high quality summer learning opportunities, nor do their families have access to excess funds to pay for summer camps and field trips that complement the learning that takes place in schools. Research suggests there is both a need to mitigate summer loss and increase literacy skills over the summer months.

Linking CRP, Freedom School, and Social Bonding

The aim of this literature review is to provide a snapshot of the extensive literature documenting the failures of U.S schooling in educating children of color with the intent of improving and promoting academic achievement. While educational research has a heuristic affinity with denoting and documenting disparities and the likely causes, there have been a great number of reform efforts targeted to address underachievement under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and the reauthorized Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); however, none of these reforms to date, at scale, have had a significant impact on mitigating the achievement gap for children of color (Payne, 2008; Ravitch, 2010).

Several themes have emerged consistently over time, when controlling for factors such as income, educational attainment, family structure, and school type. Race remains an enduring predictor for negative school and life outcomes, many of which can be correlated to low academic performance and high dropout rates. African American children continue to experience school differently than their White peers. The U.S. school system refers, suspends, excludes, and fails minority children at significantly higher rates compared to their proportional makeup in the school system. White students, regardless of socioeconomic status, continue to outperform

African American students along many academic indicators for school success (Anyon et al., 2016; Gay, 2010, Gregory, Skiba & Noguero, 2010; Peguero et al., 2015)

There seems to be an understatement and oversimplification of the role of culture regarding the observed experiences of White students in U.S. schools "who are taught from middle class Eurocentric frameworks that shape school practices" in and out of the classroom (Gay, 2010, p. 21; Hillard, 1992; Ladson-Billings, 1992, 1995a; Oakes, 1986; Peguero et al., 2011). White students are more often taught by racially matched teachers, with curricula, textbook, and pedagogical practices created largely by white middle-class practitioners. White students are less likely to be tracked into special education programs, are recognized by same-race teachers as gifted, and are more likely to experience their history and culture reflected in major text books across varying subjects. Yet, the academic performance and educational success of White students has been historically attributed to their family structure, income, and school effects even when a substantial body of research findings suggest when controlling for these factors, huge disparities in achievements persist by race.

Gay (2010), one of the most cited and recognized authors on culturally responsive pedagogy, asserted there is

> the notion that education has nothing to do with culture and heritages. It is about teaching intellectual, vocational, and civic skills. Students, especially underachieving ones, need to learn knowledge and skills that they can apply to life and how to meet high standards of academic excellence, rather than wasting time on fanciful notions about culture diversity. (p. 21)

Gay coined this thinking as "cultural blindness."

There have been counternarratives to this "culture blindness" position which highlights the benefits of leveraging the culture of minority students for educational success. Hanley and Noblit (2009) defined culture as "a set of tools, perspectives, and capabilities that students can deploy in the pursuit of learning" (p. 5). The authors further asserted, "when these tools, perspectives and capabilities are suppressed or denied, students are educationally disempowered" (p. 5). Delpit's *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom* (1996) emphasized the important role that both culture and power play in educating other people's children and the specific supports for the achievement of children of color including parental involvement and building relationships and trust.

Gloria Ladson-Billings called for pedagogical practice that "empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes" (Ladson-Billings, 1994, pp.16-17).

The purpose of this dissertation is to situate the four key elements of Freedom Schools within the context of culturally relevant pedagogy and assess the impact of parents' perceptions of their students' cultural appreciation, love of learning, acceptance of responsibility, community involvement, social adjustment, and conflict resolution on reading scores during a six-week summer program. Freedom School's four key elements and the six domains of the parent survey are closely aligned with Hirschi's (1969) four social bond elements of attachment, involvement, commitment, and belief. According to Hirschi's Social Bonds theory, individuals with strong bonds to school have better academic performance. This study assesses if reading ability is significantly better for students participating in Freedom School and the degree to which a student's cultural appreciation, love of learning, acceptance of responsibility, community involvement, social adjustment, and conflict resolution can account for the significance.

Additionally, the investigation explores the extent to which family income influences reading ability for Freedom School students. Research suggests that children from lower income families who do not attend an academic summer school or reading program are more likely to lose some reading gains made during the year. These are often students who are already playing catch-up during the traditional academic year, do not have a rich summer learning opportunity to ameliorate this gap, and are at risk for academic failure and dropping out of school.

Chapter Three: Methods

Data

This study utilized de-identified secondary data collected by the Philliber Research Associates from 18 churches in Kansas City, Missouri, that hosted Freedom Schools in 2005, 2006, and 2007, serving a total of 3,274 scholars. A comparison group of students who lived in the local neighborhoods of the Freedom School host sites who did not attend Freedom Schools but were reported by their parents to be engaged in various forms of summer activities ranging from sports camps to academic summer school, were also tracked for the three program years. The data file included de-identified student and family demographic information including race/ethnicity of the child, age, gender, school type, lunch status, number of siblings, and who the child primarily lived with. In addition to reading achievement metrics, the data set also included demographic information about the parents, including income, level of education, and number of people employed in the household. Special numeric identifiers were used in the data set to link parent surveys to students and track years of participation in the program. Demographic information was captured each year (2005, 2006, 2007) for Freedom School participants; the comparison group demographics were captured in 2006 and 2007 only.

The comparison group of students were recruited through the 18 churches that hosted a Freedom School. The comparison group children lived in the same neighborhood and were the same age range as students enrolled in their local Freedom School site. The Philliber researchers assert that randomly assigned groups would have produced a stronger research-based model; however, it was not practical given that the participating churches had an established practice of serving people. Instead, families and students who expressed interest in enrolling in a Freedom School were admitted. Families and students who lived in the surrounding neighborhood or who

also attended the church but did not have an expressed interest to participate in Freedom Schools were recruited to the control group. Each of the 18 church sites that hosted Freedom Schools recruited their own students and assisted with referring those students who did not express interest to participate in Freedom School. The comparison group of students were administered the GRADE assessment the same week as the Freedom School participants and were also given the follow-up assessment. Parents of the comparison group were also given the parent initial and follow-up survey during the GRADE assessment periods. The comparison group demographics were not captured in program year 2005. The unique identifier code allowed the researcher to link participant and parent survey responses for years 2006 and 2007 to those students who had pre- and post-GRADE and parent survey responses in 2005.

Reading Measures

To assess the effectiveness of Freedom School model on the literacy levels of students, the Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluations (GRADE) were administered to both the Freedom School and control group during the first and last week of the six-week summer program. GRADE is a developmentally based normative diagnostic reading assessment for pre-kindergarten to young adults. Each level contains multiple sections and subtests to assess pre-reading, reading readiness, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and oral language. Each level has two parallel forms that are used to capture pre-test and post-test assessments. According to Pearson Education, Inc., GRADE provides raw scores from each of the subtests that can be converted to stanines, standard scores, percentiles, normal curve equivalences, and grade equivalences. The concurrent and predictive validity has been assessed using a wide range of standardized reading assessments including TerraNova, Iowa Test of Basic Skills, and the

California Achievement Test. The reliability coefficient for alternate form and test-retest were in the .90 range, making it a highly reliable assessment.

Parent Survey

Parents were surveyed about their children at the beginning and end of the Kansas City CDF Freedom School Program. Surveys (see Appendix A) included questions to measure six domains: cultural appreciation, love of learning, acceptance of responsibility, community involvement, social adjustment, and conflict resolution. The survey prompted parents to indicate whether their child(ren) engaged in 27 different activities using a Likert scale, including all of the time, most of the time, some of the time, to almost never. The initial and final parent survey in 2005 did not include the cultural appreciation or the parent involvement domains. Those domains were added in program year 2006 and remained on the survey in 2007. The Philliber Research Associates (2008) indicated that summary scales were created for each of the variables with reliabilities of at least .84 measured by the Cronbach's alpha and the Spearman Brown prophecy formula. Specifically, reliability coefficients were as follows: Cultural appreciation (.94); Love of learning (.88); Acceptance of responsibility (.86); Social adjustment (.91); and Conflict resolution (.84). A single survey question was used to measure Community involvement.

Selection Criteria

For the purpose of this study, to assess the impact of the Kansas City Freedom School Initiative, a cultural enrichment summer literacy program, the six domains of the parent survey, and household income on the changes in the GRADE reading scores across three programmatic years (2005, 2006, 2007). A participant sample was selected for both the Freedom School and Comparison group only if (1) a pre- and post-GRADE assessment was completed for each

program year 2005, 2006, 2007 and (2) a parent pre- and post-survey was completed for each of the three program years 2005, 2006, and 2007. Given the criteria, there were *(n=111)* Freedom School students who participated in all three years, with pre- and post-GRADE and parent survey results for 2005, 2006, and 2007. There were (*n=36*) control group participants with pre- and post-GRADE and parent survey results for each of the three program years 2005, 2006, 2007.

Participants

The comparison group participants ranged in age from 7 years to 13 years, with the mean age being 9.83 (SD= 1.5). There were 16 boys (44%) and 20 girls (55%). Ninety-four percent identified as African American, and five percent identified as Latinx in the comparison group. Seventy-nine percent of the comparison group were identified as free lunch, 8% as reduced lunch, and 11% as full price lunch. The Freedom School participants ranged in age from 4 years to 13 years, with the mean age being 8.91 *(SD=1.2).* Freedom School participants had 54 boys (49%) and 57 girls (51%). One hundred percent of the participants identified as African American. The Freedom School participants were identified 45% as free lunch status, 22% as reduced lunch status, and 36% as full lunch status. A cross tabulation was conducted to examine income by groups across the three program years. In 2005, income was not captured for the comparison group. In 2006, 20 comparison group and nine Freedom School parents reported income between less than $10,000 and $19,999. There were 14 comparison group and 29 Freedom School parents with a reported income between $20,000 and $49,999. The final income category, $50,000 to $100,000, had two families from the comparison group and 24 families from the Freedom School group (see Appendix B).

In 2007, 21 comparison group families and 10 Freedom School families reported income between $10,000 and $19,999. Twelve comparison group families and 47 Freedom School families reported income between $20,000 and $49,999, and two comparison group families and 24 Freedom School families reported income between $50,000 and $100,000 (see Appendix B).

Freedom School Intervention

The Freedom School Program goal is to build strong, literate, and empowered children prepared to make a difference in themselves, their families, their communities and the world by providing summer school reading enrichment to those who may not have access to books or quality summer learning. The Freedom School program utilizes an Integrated Reading Curriculum (IRC) in which a selection of culturally relevant and developmentally appropriate books, activities, field trips, and games are all related and reinforce Freedom School's overarching theme, *I Can Make a Difference,* and weekly subthemes. Week one's theme is *I Can Make a Difference in Myself* and is geared towards promoting a positive self-image. Books selected encourage a celebration of self. Each day during week one a new book is introduced aligned to the theme. The week two theme is focused on *Making a Difference in My Family*. The overarching goal for week two is to enable students to explore family relationships and what constitutes a family. Books selected for this week help students value positive interactions with family members and other adults and peers. Family members are invited to share family rituals. Week three theme is *I Can Make a Difference in My Community* and is focused on helping students develop an appreciation and declare ownership of their communities. The books selected for this week empower and motivate students to help strengthen their communities. Students are provided hands-on opportunities, and classroom visits from various community members/leaders are included. The theme for week four is *I Can Make a Difference in My*

Country. The goal of this week's theme is to help students examine the lives of people, both men and women, who have changed the course of this country's history, particularly those people who reflect the culture, race, and heritage of Freedom School students. The theme for week five is *I Can Make a Difference in My World.* This week's overall goal is to enable students to explore the world. The texts selected provide a springboard to help students look ahead, not only exploring what they want to do to make the world a better place, but also what obstacles and barriers they will need to overcome to achieve their goals.

The theme of the final week, week six, is *I Can Make a Difference with Hope, Education, and Action.* The overall goal for this week is to examine the lives of people who made a difference in their own lives and the lives of others with hope, education, and action. The books selected for this week are geared to inspire and motivate students to do all they can to ensure that they get a high-quality education and empower them to take action to make their hopes and dreams become a reality. Each weekly theme represents a series of carefully selected texts written by and about individuals who represent the diversity of the world. These texts represent some of the best works of the country's best writers (see Appendix C).

The books are developmentally appropriate for kindergarten up through high school, lend themselves to a wide range of interesting and creative activities, and reflect stories of children, women, and men who have made a difference. These stories relate authentic history, culture, and heritage through the eyes of children. The selected texts introduce children to adults and children who have made and continue to make a difference in the lives of others. They offer children ideas and encouragement to involve themselves in community service and help children explore fundamental issues related to self-esteem, expand their capacity to dream, and believe they can make their dream a reality. IRC is grounded in research and best practices, is organized by grade

level and aligned to reading standards, and features activity-based lessons, cooperative group activities, and conflict resolution strategies that extend the multicultural literature-based curriculum. Each week in the six-week summer program, a student receives a book for their home library.

The daily schedule begins with *Harambee* – a Swahili word that means "let's pull together," first used by Jomo Kenyatta upon release from prison in Kenya and still being used by communities today to resolve conflicts, to provide time for informal sharing, and to energize participants and create a positive atmosphere. There is an opening activity, a main activity, a cooperative group activity, a social action activity, and a closing activity for each daily text selected (see Appendix D). Each day students participate in D.EA.R. (Drop Everything and Read), in which students get to select their own books from the class library to read. The afternoon activities include a rotation of culturally enriching activities related to the IRC such as performing arts, drumming, theatre, chess, swimming, science and math labs, computer labs, storytelling, and photography.

Analysis Design

To examine all three research questions, linear regressions were conducted for each of the analyses. Given that Freedom School is a six-week summer program and students return to their regular school during the traditional school year, the researcher isolated the growth in reading scores across two time periods. The first time period (T1) analyzes the growth in GRADE equivalent scores from the initial program year 2005 to 2006, and 2006 to 2007 by looking at the differences in GRADE pretest scores between two consecutive years (between 2005 and 2006/between 2006 and 2007). This growth score is represented as *gain1*. To account for the previous GRADE equivalent scores (*GEQUIV*) in T1, a lag variable was created: *gequiv_lag1*,

which is the GEQUIV score for the previous year. The second time period (T2) analyzes the growth from 2005 to 2007, the beginning year and final year of the research program. This is represented as *gain2.* This is the difference in GRADE pretest scores from 2005 and 2007. To factor the previous GRADE equivalent score in T2, a lag variable was created: *gequiv_lag2*, reflecting the *GEQUIV* score two years ago. Correlational analyses were conducted to discover if the parent survey variables that measure students' cultural appreciation, love of learning, acceptance of responsibility, community involvement, social adjustment, and conflict resolution violated multicollinearity, and had any variables that were too closely related, by checking the variance inflation factor (VIF) values between the predictive variables.

Regression Variables

The variables listed are the key regression variables where *gain1* and *gain2* represent the dependent variables. For T1 (2005-2006) the dependent variable is *gain1*. For T2 (2005-2007) the dependent variable is *gain2*. There are several independent variables from the parent survey that measure a student's cultural appreciation, love of learning, acceptance of responsibility, community involvement, social adjustment, and conflict resolution. Income variables to address research question three are included. Additionally, to assess the degree to which two variables affect one another, the data set includes interaction variables created for the express purpose of the research questions. Definitions have been provided below for key research variables.

GROUP: Dummy variable in which 1=Freedom School, 0=Comparison

PRJCTYR: Dummy variable in which (0=2005, 1=2006, 2=2007)

GEQUIV: (Grade Equivalent at Pre) is a scale measure in which the score on the GRADE reading inventory is equivalent to the school grade reading level (i.e., third grade reading level).

GEQUIV2: (Grade Equivalent at Post) is a scale measure in which the score on the GRADE reading inventory is equivalent to the reading level of a particular school grade.

gain1: Scale variable representing the difference in GEQUIV between two consecutive years, by subtracting the GEQUIV between 2005 and 2006 and between 2006 and 2007 separately and calculating the difference between those two scores. This time period is represented for the researcher as time period one (T1).

gain2: Scale variable representing the difference from 2005 and 2007, by calculating the difference from the GEQUIV from 2005 and 2007.This time period is represented as time period two for the researcher (T2).

gequiv_lag1: Scale variable representing the GEQUIV score in the previous year

gequiv_lag2: Scale variable representing the GEQUIV score two years ago

love: scale variable representing six items on the parent survey that seeks to assess a student's love for learning or attitude towards learning. The items comprising this scale are PLBOOKS, PWELLSCH, PLKESCH, PREADFUN, PNEWTHNG, PTELL (see Appendix A).

SocialAdj: Scale variable representing eight items on the parent survey that seeks to assess a students' social adjustment. The items comprising this scale are PHAPPY, PFGOOD, PGALNGPG, PGALNGBS, PTRUTH, PGALNGFR, PLISTEN, PRESP (see Appendix A).

AcceptRepons*:* Scale variable representing five items on the parent survey that seeks to assess a student's acceptance of responsibility. The items comprising this scale are PDIRECT, PCHORE, PMIND, PCOMPL, PBEHAV (see Appendix A).

appr*:* Scale variable representing five items on the parent survey that seeks to assess a student's cultural appreciation. The items comprising this scale are PIMPLNE, PIMPETH, PHISETH, PFGETH, PLRNETH (see Appendix A).

CommuInvolve**:** Scale variable representing one item on the parent survey that seeks to assess a student's community involvement. The single item representing this scale is PHELPPL (see Appendix A).

ConfResol: Scale variable representing three items on the parent survey that seeks to assess a student's conflict resolution skills. The items comprising this scale are PTALK, PPROB, PDISAGR (see Appendix A).

ParentInvolve*:* Scale variable representing six items on the parent survey that seeks to assess the parents level of involvement with schoolwork. The items representing this scale are PKNWLRN, PAFRAID, PUNABLE, PTLISTN, PTWORKT, PASKSAY (see Appendix A).

INCOME_decoded: Nominal variable representing the seven income categories from the scholar information survey (see Appendix B). Those income categories are coded (0) less than $10k, (1) $10k–$19,999; (2) $20k–$29,999; (3) $30k–$39,999; (4) $40k–$49,999; (5) $50k–$74,999; (6) $75k–$99,999; (7) $100k or more.

INCOME_decoded2: Scale variable representing three income categories (see Appendix B). Those income categories are coded (0) less than $19,999; (1) $20k–$49,999; (3) $50k–$100k or more.

Income_tentwenty: Nominal variable representing income range from $10k-$20k, coded (0) for all other ranges and (1) for the specific range.

Income_twentythirty: Nominal variable representing income range from $20k-$29,999, coded (0) for all other ranges and (1) for the specific income range.

Income_thirtyforty: Nominal variable representing income range from $30k–$39,999, coded (0) for all other ranges and (1) for the specific income range.

Income_fiftyseventyfive: Nominal variable representing income range from $50k–$74,999, coded (0) for all other ranges and (1) for the specific income range.

Income_seventyfivetenK: Nominal variable representing income range from $75k-$100k, coded (0) for all other ranges and (1) for the specific income range.

degree: Dummy variable in which 0=No college degree, 1=College degree.

Groupincomr: An interaction variable created by multiplying the *Group* variable and the *Income_twentythirty* variable.

groupincom: An interaction variable created by multiplying the *Group* variable and *Income_thirtyforty* variable.

groupinco: Interaction variable created by multiplying the *Group* variable and the *Income_tentwenty* variable.

grouplove: An interaction variable created by multiplying Group variable and the love variable.

loveculturereappr: An interaction variable created by multiplying the *love* and *appr* variables.

LIVE: Represents the number of people living in the home (see Appendix B).

These key indicators represent the dependent and independent variables needed to assess each of the three research questions using linear regressions. The main dependent variables to measure student reading growth across two time periods are *gain1* and *gain2.* The remaining variables are used as independent variables, to examine the extent to which the observed changes in reading scores can be explained by contributing factors. The research questions guided the

selection of independent variables for each linear regression equation. Although the comparative group participated in a range of summer activities and were not randomly assigned to the "control" group, a comparative analysis was conducted using the *group* variable.

The Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation is a normative diagnostic reading assessment that determines what developmental skills students have mastered and the areas in which students need instruction. For the purpose of this dissertation, based on the data file that was received, GRADE scores were measured in grade equivalents. Grade equivalents for the GRADE reading assessment tool establish the approximate grade level and month of typical development at the 50th percentile, in tenths of a grade. This assumes 10 months of teaching per academic year. For example, the ninth month of first grade equal 1.9.

Chapter Four: Results

To examine all three research questions, linear regressions were conducted in SPSS 25. The individual regressions for each model are found in Appendix E. The Kansas City Freedom School Initiative is a six-week cultural enrichment summer literacy program. For this dissertation, the researcher isolated the differences in reading scores across two time periods. The first time period (T1) analyzed the difference in GRADE equivalent scores from the initial program year 2005 to the second program year 2006 and the difference in reading scores between 2006 and the final program year 2007. By looking at the differences in the GRADE pretest scores across two consecutive program years (2005 & 2006 and 2006 & 2007), the researcher could analyze the change in reading scores from year to year. This score is represented as *gain1*. To account for the previous GRADE equivalent score in T1, a lag variable was created: *gequiv_lag1*. The second time period (T2) analyzed the differences in GRADE equivalent scores from 2005 to 2007, the beginning year and final year of the research program. This is represented as *gain2*. This is the difference in GRADE pretest scores across the three consecutive summers. To account for the previous grade score, a lag variable was created: *gequiv_lag2*. To restate simply, *gain1* assessed differences in reading scores between years *(annual differences)* and *gain2* assessed differences in reading scores across all three program years. The findings for each research question are represented by the time period. The first set of analyses focuses on T1, which reflects *gain1*.

Time Period 1

In conducting the analyses for T1, each of the variables associated with the three research questions were included in a stepwise fashion to compare regression models. All results are expressed in the form of unstandardized regression coefficients (beta) with standard errors. Table

1 indicates the result for research questions one and two. Question one investigates whether The Kansas City Freedom Schools, a cultural enrichment summer literacy program utilizing culturally relevant pedagogical approaches, have a significant impact on the GRADE reading scores. Question two assesses whether any of the parent survey domains significantly influence the GRADE reading scores. A comparison group of students who did not participate in the Kansas City Freedom Schools but reported involvement in a range of summer activities including summer school were included as a comparative group in the regression (see Table 1).

Table 1

Difference in Gain1 by Previous Reading Scores, Group, Project Year and Parent Domains

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
predictor	*beta*	*Std. Err*	*beta*	*Std. Err*	*beta*	*Std. Err*
Gequiv_lag1	-.105*	.039	-.167**	.053	-.161*	.055
Group	.462*	.239	.666*	.283	.629*	.296
PRJCTYR_2006	-.274	.214	-.505	.287	-.569*	.286
appr			-.298	.289	-.269	.349
love			.625*	.292	.59	.356
AcceptRepons					-.066	.541
CommuInvolve					-.286	.216
ConflResol					.076	.373
ParentInvolve					.416	.494
SocialAdj					.284	.696

Dependent variable: *gain1*, *significance <.05, **significance <.01

Model 1 reflects the extent to which *gain1* is influenced by participation in Freedom School and previous GRADE equivalent score (*gequiv_lag1*). The regression equation accounts

for 4% of the variance observed in reading scores, $R^2 = .04$, $F\ (3, 256) = 3.84$, $p < .05$ suggesting that participation in Freedom School is positively associated with the GRADE equivalent score (*gain1*), although the magnitude of this association is quite limited, accounting for less than 5% of the variance observed in reading scores. However, participation in Freedom Schools slightly improved GRADE reading scores compared to students who did not attend Freedom School. This finding can be interpreted to suggest that students who participated in the Freedom School program are predicted to have higher grade equivalent scores than students who did not attend Freedom School. It is estimated that students who attended Freedom School improved their GRADE reading scores on average by .46 grade equivalent units higher than students in the comparative group. The .46 grade equivalent improvement suggests that during the six-week Freedom School session, Freedom School participants' reading improvement was equivalent to nearly five months of growth. Grade Equivalents assume 10 months of "teaching per academic year," with 1.0 representing a full year growth. The previous score (*gequiv_lag1*) was negatively associated with the growth of the grade equivalent score, suggesting that students who scored higher made less growth on the grade equivalent score. Project year was not a significant predictor for the growth in reading scores.

Germane to Freedom School's four core principles is that literacy is essential to personal empowerment and civic responsibility; therefore igniting a love for learning through culturally relevant and developmentally appropriate books is essential to their mission. Model 2 examines Freedom School's theory of change, assessing the impact of love of learning and cultural appreciation on reading scores. Building upon the previous model, two independent variables from the parent survey were added, *love* and *appr*. A regression was fitted explaining 31% of the observed variance in reading scores, $R^2 = .31$, $F\ (5, 174) = 3.91$, $p < .05$. Participation in

Freedom School increased *gain1* scores by .66 grade equivalent units more than the comparative group, which is nearly seven months of reading skill improvement. Love of learning was also a significant predictor, influencing differences in GRADE reading scores by an estimated .62 grade equivalent units. The previous GRADE equivalent score was negatively associated with growth in reading scores. This negative *beta* suggests an inverse relationship. Students with lower initial scores exhibited greater improvement in reading skills than students with higher initial GRADE reading scores in 2005 and 2006. Cultural appreciation and project year was not significantly associated with growth in reading scores. The 2005 parent survey did not include the cultural appreciation domain; this may have potentially influenced the degree to which cultural appreciation influenced reading score gains.

Model 3 examines research question two, the extent to which the parent survey domains that measure parents' perception of their child(ren)'s cultural appreciation *(appr),* love of learning *(love),* acceptance of responsibility *(AcceptRepons),* community involvement *(CommuInvolve),* social adjustment *(SocialAdj),* and conflict resolution *(ConfResol),* and parent involvement *(ParentInvolve)* influence change in reading scores. The regression equation explained 11% of the variance in reading score gains, $R^2 = .11$, $F\ (10, 167) = 2.18$, $p < .05$. When all seven parent survey domains were included in the analysis, none were significantly associated with GRADE reading scores (*gain1*). However, previous GRADE equivalent score (*gequiv_lag1*), participation in Freedom School, and Project Year 2006, were all significant predictors. These findings suggest that participation in Freedom School, the previous GRADE reading score, and the 2006 program year may have been more influential predictors in the growth of GRADE reading equivalent scores than the parent survey domain variables (see Table 1, Model 3).

A Spearman Rho correlational analysis of all the parent survey variables was conducted to measure the strength of the relationships that exist between variables (see Figure 1). It is a common rule of thumb that a correlation coefficient of ±.7 or higher denotes a strong relationship between two variables. The analysis revealed that social adjustment and acceptance had a Spearman Rho coefficient, r_s= .76, suggesting a strong relationship. Conflict resolution and Acceptance of responsibility (r_s= .70); love of learning and social adjustment (r_s= .69); social adjustment and conflict resolution (r_s= .69). The strong relationships that exist between variables may have affected the relationship of any single variable's significance on the GRADE reading scores.

Correlations

			SocialAdj	AcceptRepons	CommuInvolve	ConfResol	ParentInvolve	love	appr
Spearman's rho	SocialAdj	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.768**	.507**	.693**	.265**	.695**	.636**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	281	281	278	280	225	268	214
	AcceptRepons	Correlation Coefficient	.768**	1.000	.425**	.707**	.231**	.560**	.538**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	281	281	278	280	225	268	214
	CommuInvolve	Correlation Coefficient	.507**	.425**	1.000	.484**	.110	.510**	.516**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000	.103	.000	.000
		N	278	278	278	278	223	267	213
	ConfResol	Correlation Coefficient	.693**	.707**	.484**	1.000	.186**	.574**	.476**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.	.005	.000	.000
		N	280	280	278	280	224	268	214
	ParentInvolve	Correlation Coefficient	.265**	.231**	.110	.186**	1.000	.185**	.265**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.103	.005	.	.007	.000
		N	225	225	223	224	225	215	213
	love	Correlation Coefficient	.695**	.560**	.510**	.574**	.185**	1.000	.635**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.007	.	.000
		N	268	268	267	268	215	268	207
	appr	Correlation Coefficient	.636**	.538**	.516**	.476**	.265**	.635**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	214	214	213	214	213	207	214

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 1. Correlations.

The final research question for T1 assesses whether family income is associated with GRADE reading scores over the summer, and if this effect varies by income levels. The Scholar

information form identified eight annual household income levels for parents to select, ranging from less than $10,000 to $100,000 or more. These income levels are in increments of $10,000. To discern which income levels should be included in the regression, a frequency analysis of income of all participants was conducted in SPSS. Data findings revealed that the majority – 47.5% – of all students' household incomes were in the $20k–$49,999 range. There were 23.9% of family annual household incomes in the less than $10k–$19,999 income range. The remaining 28.5% of family household incomes were in the $50k–$100,000 range. A deeper analysis of income distribution by group revealed (see Chart 1) that 30% of Freedom School families earned income in the $20k-$49,999 range, and another 21.6% of families reported earning income between $50k-$100,000 or more. This is significantly higher than the comparison group, in which 38% of families reported income less than $10k–$19,999 and 24% reported income in the $20k-$49,999 range (see Figure 2) .

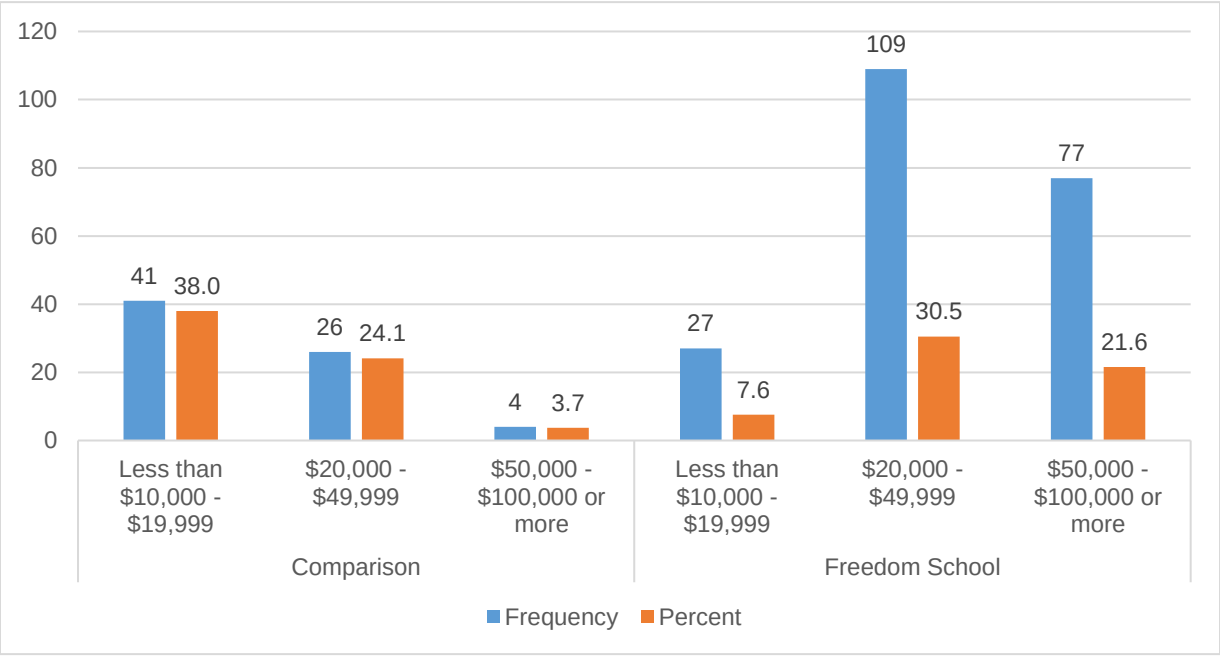

Figure 2. Income Distribution by Group

The Health and Human Service (HHS) poverty guidelines, also called the Federal Poverty line, are used to determine financial eligibility for certain federal program including the National School Lunch Program, which qualifies a student based on family size and income for free, reduced, or full priced lunch. Based on the HHS poverty guidelines in 2005, the first evaluative year of the Kansas City Freedom School, the poverty guideline for a family of four was $19,350. In 2006 the HHS poverty guideline for a family of four was $20,000, and in 2007 the HHS poverty guideline for a family of four was $20,650. A crosstab analysis was conducted in SPSS to differentiate the reported family size (LIVE) and household income by group (see Figure 3).

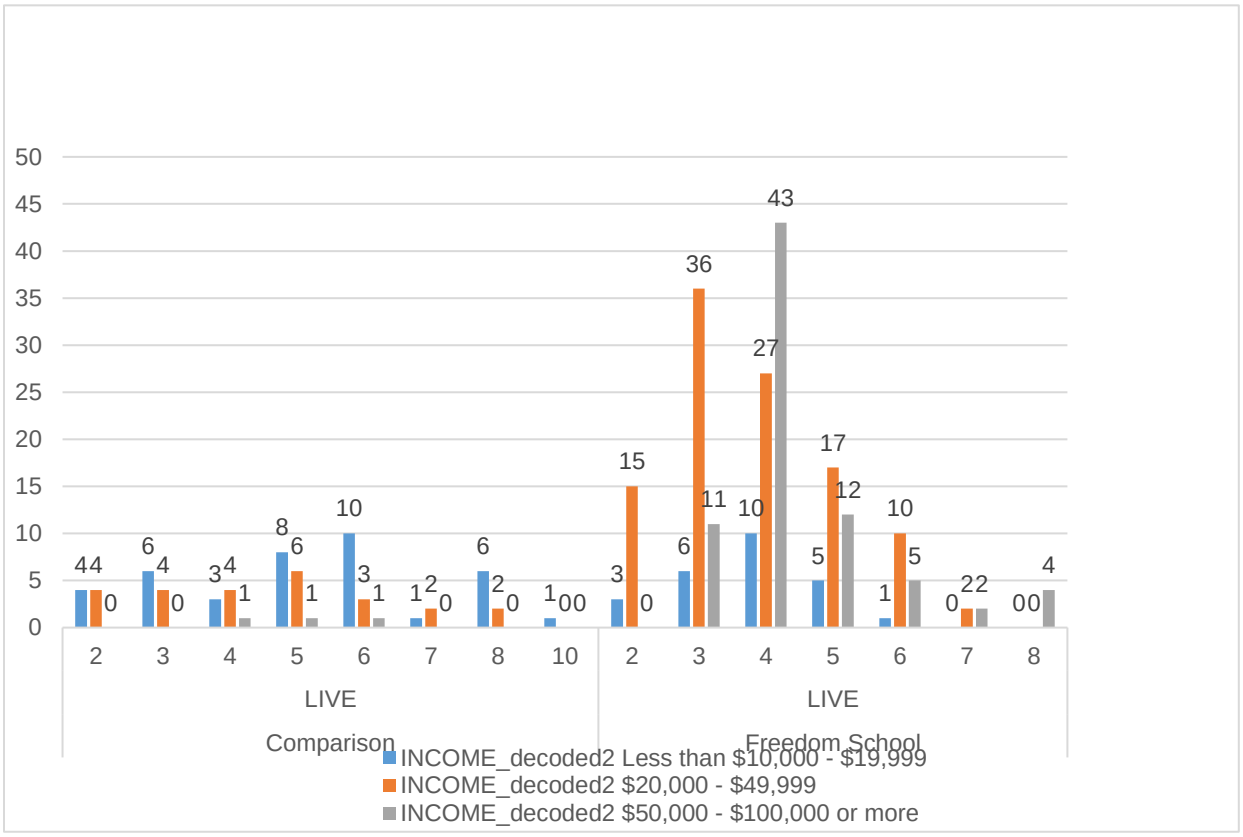

Figure 3. Income and Family Size by Group

On most measures of academic success – grade point average, standardized test, high school completion, college admissions and completion – low income children as a group have historically performed below students from middle class and affluent families (Berliner, 2013; Lacour & Tissington, 2011). In the United States the achievement gap between affluent and low-income students is substantial and well documented. In addition to income effects, the educational level of parents, specifically the mother, has been shown to significantly influence academic achievement. In many studies the educational level of the mother has been shown to be a more significant predictor of academic achievement than income (Lacour & Tissington, 2011). The final research question for T1 assessed whether family income and parental education is associated with GRADE reading scores. Based on the distribution of household income and students, Table 2 reports the findings from the income analyses.

Table 2

Difference in Gain1 by Previous Reading Scores, Group, Love of Learning, Cultural Appreciation and Income

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
predictor	*beta*	*Std. Err*	*beta*	*Std. Err*	*beta*	*Std. Err*
Gequiv_lag1	-.166*	.053	-.127*	.052	-.138*	.053
Group	.237	.322	.693*	.269	.660*	.278
love	.532	.285	.378	.278	.429	.281
appr	-.263	.275	-.057	.268	-.152	.271
income_decoded2						.425
$20,000–$49,999	.785*	.344				
$50,000-$100,000	1.03*	.432				
Income_twentythirty			.860*	.328		
Income_seventyfiveten					.584	.425
Income_twentythirty						
Income_seventyfiveten						

Dependent variable: *gain1*, *significance <.05, **significance<.01

In the first model, three income (*income_decoded2*) levels, less than $10,000–$19,999; $20,000–$49,999; $50,000–$100,000 or more are included. The regression model with five predictor variables produced $R^2 = .12, F (7, 162) = 3.28, p < .05$. Two income levels were significantly associated with the GRADE reading scores, $20,000–$49,999 and $50,000–$100,000 or more. Participation in Freedom School was no longer significantly associated with the observed growth in GRADE reading scores nor was love of learning or cultural appreciation. The findings suggest that income variables may be more impactful to GRADE reading scores than participation in Freedom School or love for learning. Love of learning was close to becoming a significant influencer, with a significance level of .06. Given the broad range of income variables in the regression, each of the significant income variables were run independently to assess if they remained significant predictors and whether *group* and *love* would influence the difference in GRADE reading scores. It is also important to note that *gain1* is isolating the difference in GRADE equivalent reading scores in one-year intervals, 2005–2006 and 2006–2007, by subtracting those scores to discern the difference. This could be a limiting factor, if *love* is a variable that requires time for cultivation and reinforcement. School effects are often difficult to determine in a relatively short time, like a six-week summer program, even when looking at the difference between two consecutive summers. The insignificance of the cultural appreciation variable is not surprising given that the domain was not included on the parent survey in 2005.

Based on the income levels that were significantly associated with the growth in GRADE reading scores and to identify which specific income levels influence the significance of *group*, income variables were created at a $10k interval level. Each of the income levels were regressed individually on reading scores. For Model 2, the regression model with all five predictors

produced, $R^2 = .11$, $F(5, 164) = 4.28$, $p < .05$ Income at the $20,000-$30,000 level was significantly associated with the growth in GRADE equivalent reading scores (see Table 2, Model 2).

Income_ twentythirty unstandardized coefficient suggests that students whose families reported earnings within the $20-30 thousand range experienced growth, adding on average .86 grade equivalent units to their reading scores when all other factors are held constant. *Group,* which represents participation in Freedom School, also evidenced growth, increasing reading scores by .69 grade equivalent units more than students who did not attend a Freedom School. Overall, the *income_twentythirty* had a slightly greater impact on reading performance during the T1 period. Model 3 is analyzing the income range of $75k and higher. This regression predicts less of the variability in reading score gains than Model 2, $R^2 = .08$, $F(5, 164) = 3.20$, $p < .05$. Participation in Freedom School and previous GRADE equivalent scores were the only predictors significantly associated with the growth in GRADE reading scores. Once again, the previous GRADE score was negatively associated with the growth of the GRADE reading scores, indicating that students with higher scores made less growth. Earning a higher income between $75,000–$100,000, love of learning, and cultural appreciation were not significantly associated with the growth in reading scores. Since many of the Freedom School families reported household income in the $50,000–$100,000 category, it is possible that the Freedom School effects are also attributing to the effects of income. Table The omission of the cultural appreciation domain on the 2005 parent survey, the initial evaluation year for the Philliber Research Associates, may speak to a lack of understanding about the historical roots of Freedom School and how assessing cultural appreciation is critical to evaluating the efficacy of a cultural enrichment program whose educational framework is steeped in the belief and practices of

culturally relevant pedagogical practices to support literacy development for African American children. Although income can be a proxy for degree attainment, this is not always the case. In today's economy many college graduates unfortunately experience layoffs, underemployment, or unemployment. The *degree* variable is included in the next analysis to assess whether degree attainment influences the observed differences in GRADE reading scores or impacts the income variables (see Table 3).

Table 3

Difference in Gain1 by Previous Reading Scores, Group, Parent Education, Love of Learning, and Interaction

	Model 1		Model 2	
Predictor	*beta*	*Std. Err*	*beta*	*Std. Err*
Gequiv_lag1	-.134*	.052	-.150*	.049
Group	.587*	.272	.817*	.296
love	.369	.276	.465*	.216
appr	-.077	.027		
degree			.190	-.309
Income_twentythirty	.976**	.331	2.36**	.537
Income_seventyfiveten	.810*	.423	.615	.424
groupincomr			-2.095**	.662

Dependent variable: *gain1*, * significance <.05 level, **significance <.01

A regression was produced for the T1 period explaining 13% of the variability in reading scores, $R^2 = .13$, $F\ (6, 163) = 4.23$, $p < .05$. The first model includes the income range of $20,000–$30,000 and $75,000 and higher together. Participation in Freedom School, previous GRADE equivalent scores, and both income variables were significantly associated with the

differences in GRADE reading scores. When all factors are held constant, students with family income in the $20-30,000 range had the largest growth in reading scores, increasing on average .98 grade equivalent units. This magnitude was significant at the $p < .005$, suggesting there is less than a .5 % chance these results are due to chance. Love of learning and cultural appreciation were not significantly associated with the difference in GRADE reading scores.

In Model 2, an interaction variable was created to determine the extent to which *group* and *Income_twentythirty* interact with each other and influence the main effect of the predictor variables associated with the growth in GRADE reading scores. A regression was produced for the T1 period, $R^2 = .17$, $F\ (7, 171) = 5.22$, $p < .05$. Participation in Freedom School, previous GRADE equivalent scores, *income_ twentythirty*, love of learning and the interaction variable *groupincomr* were all significantly associated with the difference in GRADE reading scores. Parental education *(degree)* and earning an income at a higher level did not significantly impact the reading scores. These findings suggest that the effect of income at the *twentythirty* level on GRADE reading scores is larger for those students who did not attend a Freedom School. Although participation in Freedom School is significantly associated with the improvement in reading scores, low income Freedom School students are not improving as much as those that did not attend Freedom School at the same family income level. The inverse relationship of previous GRADE equivalent score suggests that students with lower scores made better improvements than students with higher previous scores. This could be influencing *income_twentythirty* and the interaction variable. Of the 11 students in the comparison group that reported family income in the $20-$30,000 level, five students reported attending a summer school. Attending a summer school and having low previous GRADE equivalent scores could significantly influence the improvements observed for students in the *income_twentythirty* comparative group for *gain1*.

Overall findings for the T1 period suggest that Freedom School can positively influence growth in GRADE reading scores pending income effects. The parent survey domains that measure parents' perceptions of their child do not seem to influence GRADE reading scores. When *love* and cultural appreciation are the only variables included in the regression, love of learning is shown to significantly influence differences in GRADE reading scores until income variables are controlled in regression. Cultural appreciation remains a non-significant factor in each of the analyses. The second set of analyses for T2 assesses if time across program years 2005-2007 adjust any of the findings observed in T1 for the three research questions.

Time Period 2

Time period two (T2), assessed the difference in GRADE reading scores for students who participated in Freedom School for three consecutive summers 2005-2007. The research questions are identical to T1. For each research question, the variables associated were included in a stepwise fashion to compare regression models. All results are expressed in the form of unstandardized regression coefficients (beta) with standard errors. Table 4 indicates the results for research question one and two. Research question one assessed whether the Kansas City Freedom Schools have a significant impact on the GRADE reading scores. Research question two analyzed whether any of the parent survey domains significantly influence the GRADE reading scores. A comparison group of students who did not participate in the Kansas City Freedom Schools but reported involvement in a range of summer activities including summer school were included in the regression.

In analyzing research question one with the second-time period 2005–2007, a regression for T2 was calculated to examine *gain2* based on participation in group (Freedom School) and previous GRADE equivalent score (gequiv_lag2). A regression equation was fitted, $R^2 = .06$, F

(2, 126) = 4.16, p < .05, which suggests that participation in Freedom School is significantly associated with differences in GRADE scores (*gain2*). The previous score *(gequiv_lag2)* was not significantly associated with differences of GRADE scores in T2. This finding suggests that students who participated in the six-week Freedom School summer session for three consecutive summers, GRADE reading scores increased by .90 grade equivalent units. This improvement suggests that Freedom School students reading skills improvement is equivalent to 9 months of reading growth (see Table 4, Model 1). Given that the T1 Freedom School effect for Model 1 produced an improvement of .46 grade equivalent units, it appears that attending Freedom School over time produced greater improvements to the GRADE reading scores.

Table 4

Difference in Gain2 by Previous Reading Scores, Group, Project Year and Parent Domains

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
predictor	*beta*	*Std. Err*	*beta*	*Std. Err*	*beta*	*Std. Err*
Gequiv_lag2	-.137	.039	-.180*	.080	-.200*	.082
Group	.906*	.239	1.16*	.481	1.38*	.505
appr			-.680	.509	-.737	.619
love			1.29*	.465	1.17*	.555
AcceptRepons					-2.01*	.996
CommuInvolve					-.321	.375
ConflResol					.849	.649
ParentInvolve					.525	.751
SocialAdj					1.83	1.18

Dependent variable: *gain2 ,* *significance <.05 **significance<.01

Model 2 examined Freedom School's theory of change, assessing the impact of love of learning and cultural appreciation on reading scores. Building upon the previous model, two

independent variables from the parent survey were added, *love* and *appr*. A regression equation was produced, $R^2 = .17, F(4, 94) = 5.08, p < .05$, indicating that participation in Freedom School on average improved reading scores by 1.16 grade equivalent units across three years compared to the control group. A difference in love of learning is estimated to influence a difference in GRADE scores on an average of 1.2 grade equivalent units across three years. This finding suggests that students who experienced love for learning and participated in Freedom School across three consecutive summers could potentially realize a reading score difference equivalent to two years of reading growth. Previous GRADE equivalent score was significant and negative, inferring that students with lower reading scores evidenced a greater improvement in reading scores compared to students with higher previous reading scores. While this impact may be small, adding .18 grade equivalents units, or nearly a two month increase in reading skills for students who may be below grade level readers, this improvement in reading over the summer may provide the extra boost needed to catch up. Certainly, these students benefit by not losing reading skills over the summer, which could exacerbate the proficiency gap for a struggling reader. Again, cultural appreciation was not significantly associated with growth in reading scores across the three program years.

Model 3 presents the regression findings when all seven parent survey domains are included, $R^2 = .23, F(7, 89) = 2.95, p < .05$. Love of learning and acceptance of responsibility are the only two parent domains significantly influencing differences in GRADE reading scores. These findings suggest that participation in Freedom School increases GRADE reading scores by 1. 3 grade equivalent units compared to those who did not participate. Love for learning, based on parent surveys, is predicted to influence an estimated difference of 1.1 grade equivalent units to the GRADE reading score. Students whose parents rated them low on acceptance of

responsibility could be predicted to influence a difference of 2.0 grade equivalent units to the GRADE reading score. The negative *beta* in acceptance of responsibility, suggests that students with low acceptance of responsibility evidenced greater differences in reading scores than students whose parents rated them high on acceptance of responsibility.

One plausible explanation of this inverse relationship between acceptance of responsibility and GRADE reading scores could be that parents' perceptions were influenced by the conditions that existed at home compared to school. For example, questions on the parent survey using a Likert scale ask parents the degree to which their student completes chores, follows directions, and listens to what other people have to say before making up their mind. Many parents will attest that students in grades K-5 often struggle with completing all their chores and following directives given to parents. Research on brain development suggests that young children and adolescent brains work differently than those of adults when making decisions and solving problems (Blakemore & Robbins, 2012).

The compounding effect of Freedom School participation over three consecutive summers had a positive impact on students' reading abilities. Additionally, love for learning or connectedness to learning also evidenced significant impact on their reading performance. Although attending Freedom School had a larger impact than *love* on GRADE reading scores, students in both groups *(freedom and comparison)* were influenced. An interpretation of this finding suggests that love of learning may influence behaviors that lead to academic success. One example could be that students incorporate reading books over the summer if they are not attending summer school. Research suggests that students not engaged in enriching activities over the summer are at risk of experiencing a decline in reading development. This loss is exacerbated by income and race (Kim, 2007; Kim & White, 2011).

The final research question for T2 analyzed whether family income is associated with GRADE reading score, and if this effect varies by income level. When this analysis was run for the T1 period, assessing difference between years, neither group, love of learning, or cultural appreciation was a significant predictor of GRADE reading scores when controlling for income. The T2 analysis produced a slightly different finding, $R^2 = .24$, $F (5, 85) = 5.53$, $p < .05$, explaining 24 % of the observed variance in GRADE reading scores (see Table 5, Model 1).

Table 5

Difference in Gain2 by Previous Reading Scores, Group, Love of Learning, Cultural Appreciation and Income

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
predictor	*beta*	*Std. Err*	*beta*	*Std. Err*	*beta*	*Std. Err*
Gequiv_lag2	-.239**	.079	-.192*	.079	-.2.15*	.083
Group	.418	.547	1.16*	.475	1.04*	.489
love	1.20*	.455	1.24*	.461	1.28*	.468
appr	-.582	.489	-.548	.498	-.644	.503
income_decoded2	.851*	.359				
$20,00–$49,999						
$50,000-$100,000						
Income_twentythirty			.923	.540		
Income_seventyfiveten					.432	.743

Dependent variable: *gain2*, *significance <.05 **significance<.01

Although the *income_decoded2* variable remains significantly associated with the differences in GRADE equivalent reading scores for *gain*2, love of learning contributes significantly as well. This finding was not evidenced in the T1 period. Additionally, the impact

of love of learning is greater than the income effect. Parents who perceived their student to possess love of learning are predicted to evidence a 1.20 grade equivalent unit difference in the GRADE reading scores compared to students who do not possess a love of learning. This finding supports School Connectedness research findings that students who feel connected to school and learning tend to have better academic outcomes. For many students, as indicated in the literature, love of learning is influenced by family, friends, and school.

When all income levels are added to the regression in Model 1, the Freedom School effect is insignificant. Previous GRADE equivalent scores *(gequiv_lag2)* are significant and negatively associated, which can be interpreted that students with lower GRADE equivalent the previous year demonstrated greater improvements than students with higher previous GRADE equivalent scores. As with the T1 income analysis, controlling for such a broad range of incomes could subsume the main effects for *group* variable. This finding could also reflect the stark demographic differences between the Freedom School and comparative groups. The Freedom School group had more affluent and college degreed parents. Based on the income levels that were significantly associated with the growth in GRADE reading scores in the first time period (T1), those identical income levels, *Income_twentythirty* and *Income_seventyfiveten* were regressed for T2 and produced significantly different findings (see Table 5, Models 2, 3). At the T2 level, both *Income_twentythirty* and *Income_seventyfiveten*, impact on reading scores are minimized greatly, resulting in neither being a significant predictor for the difference in GRADE reading scores. However, love of learning, participation in Freedom Schools, and previous grade scores are significantly impacting the difference in GRADE reading scores. Love of learning has a slightly larger effect on reading scores than participation in Freedom Schools and previous reading scores for both models. These two analyses can suggest for this data set that the

influence of family incomes is more salient in the initial program year or when assessing reading score differences between years. However, over time love of learning and participation in Freedom Schools were shown to have a more salient effect on reading scores compared to income. In the final two analyses for research question three, both income levels were controlled for to see if this alters the significance of love of learning, Freedom School participation, or income. Finally, to remain fully aligned to the sequence of analyses for T1, the interaction variable of *group* and *Income_ twentythirty* was included for T2 (see Table 6).

Table 6

Difference in Gain2 by Previous Reading Scores, Group, Parent Education, Love of Learning , and Interaction Variable

	Model 1		Model 2	
predictor	*beta*	*Std. Err*	*beta*	*Std. Err*
Gequiv_lag2	-.209*	.082	-.204*	.078
Group	1.08*	.484	1.71*	.536
love	1.24*	.462	.970**	.329
appr	-.557	.499		
Income_twentythirty	.976	.547	3.09**	.871
Income_seventyfiveten	.632	.741	.378	.733
degree			.197	.543
groupincomr			-3.37**	1.08

Dependent variable: *gain2* , * significance <.05 level, **significance <.01

Model 1 regression, including two income predictors, produced a regression, $R^2 = .19$, $F(5, 85) = 4.22$, $p < .05$. Participation in Freedom School, previous GRADE equivalent scores, and love for learning are all significantly associated with the difference of GRADE equivalent reading scores. However, income and cultural appreciation were not significantly associated with

the difference in GRADE in reading scores. This finding is consistent with the analyses of income levels regressed individually on grade reading scores (see Table 5). Participation in Freedom School is predicted to increase the GRADE equivalent reading scores by 1.0 grade equivalent unit, which is akin to one school year of reading growth. Research attests that summer loss is cumulative and known to occur across the elementary years (Kim & White, 2011). For those students who may enter kindergarten behind, even small improvements in reading skills over the summer for three consecutive years could potentially help close the achievement gap observed nationally in third grade reading scores. The previous GRADE equivalent score is inversely related to the differences observed, suggesting that students with lower scores evidenced high gains than students who did not have a previous low score.

For Model 2 (see Table 6), a similar trend observed in T1 emerges, producing a fitted regression, $R^2 = .26$, $F\ (7, 90) = 4.51$, $p < .05$. The effect of participation in Freedom School, love of learning, *income_ twentythirty*, and *groupincomr* are more impactful to the growth in GRADE reading scores in T2 than in T1 (see Table 3). Students from family households that earned between $20,000-$30,000 a year improved GRADE reading score over the course of three summers; however the interaction variable is negative, asserting that Freedom School students with family income in the $20,000–$30,000 income range did not experience reading score gains as much as those students not attending Freedom School in the same income range. Although participation in Freedom School was shown to be a significant predictor of the differences in grade equivalent scores, the interaction variable would suggest that students in the *twentythirty* income level are not performing as well as other income level students. Students with lower previous GRADE scores made better improvements than students with higher initial GRADE scores.

Overall the T2 findings suggest that love of learning, the degree to which parents report their child likes schools, likes to learn new things, likes to read for fun, and likes to share new things they have learned, are highly linked to improving literacy performance irrespective of attending Freedom School, family income, and educational attainment of parents in this dataset. Attending Freedom School for three consecutive years had a greater effect on the growth in reading scores compared to the gains observed between years. Over the course of the three consecutive summers, attending a Freedom School mitigated the income effects observed in T1.

Chapter Five: Discussion

Literacy is unquestionably one of the most important and powerful skills for children to acquire to be successful in life. Yet, African American students' illiteracy rate is at a level of crisis, impacting not only their ability to learn new material and successfully matriculate through school, but ultimately affecting their ability to access and complete college and secure stable housing, employment, and financial stability. This disadvantage places students of color at a higher risk for delinquency and involvement in the juvenile and criminal justice system. While there is long-standing evidence that ties poor academic performance to family structure, economic disadvantage, inequitable distribution of school funding, and neighborhood conditions, racial disparities continue to exist after controlling for these factors (Anyon et al., 2014; Priest et. al, 2010; Voight et al., 2015; Yang & Anyon, 2016). One premise for this enduring racial effect that is gaining recognition has been evidence from school bonding research which spans several fields. As it relates to education, there has been increasing interest in how children of color experience schools differently, suggesting that discontinuity between home and school culture could lead to feelings of alienation and disconnectedness from school.

Burgeoning research suggests that employing culturally relevant/responsive pedagogical practices is one way to address the discontinuity that diverse students of color experience with U.S. schooling (Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Bui & Fagan, 2017; Choi, 2013; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995b; Ladson-Billings, 2006b; Sleeter, 2012; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Culturally Relevant Pedagogy is a theoretical and pedagogical framework whose major goal is to give students from diverse backgrounds an equal chance to experience educational success and mobility.

This dissertation examined social bonding/connectedness from a Social Development and Social Control theoretical lens, hypothesizing Freedom School, a cultural enrichment summer literacy program, as an educational practice to improve literacy development and skills for African American children using secondary data from the Kansas City Freedom Summer School Initiative. School Connectedness research suggests that students with higher academic achievement are more likely to possess strong connections to school (Blum, 2005a, 2005b; Hirschi, 1969; Libbey, 2004; Klem & Connell, 2004).

Freedom School utilizes parent surveys to measure parents' perception of students' cultural appreciation, love of learning, acceptance of responsibility, community involvement, social adjustment, and conflict resolution. These six domains reflect affective and behavioral dimensions aligned with Hirschi's (1969) four social bonds of attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief, which also have affective and behavioral dimensions. Additionally, this research adds to the body of knowledge by conducting an exploratory examination of a culturally relevant pedagogical approach and its impact on literacy during the summer months when many students are at risk of learning loss. Three research questions were identified for the purpose of this study:

(1) Does culturally relevant pedagogy as utilized in Kansas City Freedom Schools have a significant impact on student literacy outcomes (over the summer) for African American children who participated? If so, how do Freedom School students' reading scores compare to those of students who did not attend Freedom School but were engaged in a variety of summer activities?

(2) Are any of the survey domains that measure parents' perceptions of their student's cultural appreciation, love of learning, acceptance of responsibility, community

involvement, social adjustment, and conflict resolution related to growth in reading score as measured by GRADE reading assessment?

(3) In what ways does family income impact the summer reading growth for students in Freedom School, and does this growth vary by household income?

Research Question One

To assess the impact of Freedom School on reading ability, both the Freedom School and the control group participants were administered the Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE) during the first and last week of the six-week summer program in 2005, 2006, and 2007. GRADE is a developmentally based, group administered assessment for pre-kindergarten to young adults. Each level has two parallel forms of the assessment to use at the beginning and end of the summer months. GRADE is made up of a series of subsets; students may complete the entire assessment or only particular subsets. Freedom School and control group participants were asked to complete the sections on reading comprehension. Scores on the GRADE assessment are normed to provide stanines, percentile ranks, grade equivalents, and normal curve equivalents in addition to raw scores. For the purpose of this study, GRADE was measured in grade equivalent units for the pretest, posttest, and gain variables.

To assess research question one, a linear regression analysis was utilized to examine if participation in Freedom School significantly impacted the differences in GRADE reading scores. Only students who participated in the study during the evaluative program years of 2005, 2006, 2007 with both parent pre- and post- surveys and GRADE reading scores were selected as cases from the Freedom School and comparative groups assessment. Parents from the comparative group were asked about the summer plans of their children. More than half of the students, 58%, reported their child attended a summer school program. The data set did not offer

any additional information on the type of school site or rigor of the summer school activities. The only condition to be admitted to the comparative group from the Philliber Research Firm, was that students were in the target age range, lived within the surrounding community of the Freedom School host sites, and that they did not attend a Freedom School program during the program years of the study. The first time period (T1) analyzed the differences in GRADE reading equivalents of both the Freedom and comparison groups from 2005, the first program year; 2006, the second program year; and 2006 to 2007, the last evaluation year. The findings suggested that GRADE reading scores of students who participated in Freedom School increased on average 462 grade equivalent units more than those of students who did not attend. This represents an increase of about half a year. The previous score *(gequiv_lag1)* was negatively significantly associated with growth in reading scores. The inverse relationship suggests that students with lower GRADE scores on their pretest experienced larger grade equivalent increases than students who had higher GRADE scores on the pretest.

The T2 *(gain2)* period analyzed differences in GRADE scores across three consecutive summer terms. Over time, participation in Freedom School improved GRADE scores by .90 grade equivalent units, or nine months of growth. These findings suggest that reading performance increased with years of participation. Additionally, a comparative analysis suggested that these students experienced higher reading gains than students who did not participate in Freedom Schools but were engaged in a variety of summer activities including summer school. Although these findings are significant, generalizations regarding the impact of Freedom School exclusively, as it relates to the comparative analysis, may be premature. Random assignment to the control group of participants who attended a reading summer program

would have provided an experiment with higher external validity and improved generalizations about the impact of Freedom School experience and the curricula impact on reading scores.

Freedom School's expressed mission is to ignite a love for learning in African American students through the use of carefully selected, culturally relevant books and activities that authentically reflect the lived experiences of African American and other students of color. Ladson-Billings (1994), one of the most cited authors on culturally relevant pedagogical practices and curricula, asserted that children of color need to be exposed to meaningful curriculum that will enable them to be successful at school. McClellan and Fields (2004) indicated that reading is an essential skill for young children to chart a course for school success, and books are a powerful asset in connecting children with stories and images that can have a lasting impact on their desire for continued reading and literary skills. The authors purport that curricula are more inclusive and effective when the experiences of African American children are reflected in an authentic manner. Authenticity refers to the extent to which literature addresses the values and beliefs of African American culture and is free of stereotypes and misrepresentations.

The Children's Defense Fund, led by Marian Wright Edelman, carefully selected books that represented the wide variety of cultures of students of color, written for and by a diverse constituency of America's best writers. The books included in the Integrated Reading curriculum have daily lesson plans that provide structure and activities to help students engage and think critically about each book. The activities allowed students to explore various aspects of books including the characters, plot, sequence of story line, and application for real life. Freedom School provides opportunities for cooperative learning, verve, movement, dance, and call and response. These techniques have been shown to support the connection between home and

school culture for African American children (Boykin & Allen, 1988; Carter, Hawkins, & Natesan, 2008). Freedom School creators believe that culturally relevant pedagogy and affirmative cultural experiences helps students of color foster a love and desire for continued learning, which over time, could improve academic outcomes for students. This was a core component in the success of northern White and SNCC college students during the 1964 Freedom Summer. To assess the effectiveness of these core tenets, two parent surveys domains, love of learning and cultural appreciation, were added to the regression equation to test whether there was a significant association with the differences in GRADE reading scores for three consecutive program summers.

The regression findings suggest participation in Freedom School and love of learning are significantly associated with the growth in GRADE reading scores. Participation in Freedom School improved GRADE reading scores by 1.1 grade equivalents units. Love of learning is predicted to influence a difference in the growth of GRADE reading scores by 1.2 grade equivalent units respectively. These findings suggest that students who participated in Freedom School and love of learning are predicted to have grade equivalent scores higher than students who do not. Independently, the love of learning construct has a larger impact on the GRADE reading scores than participation in Freedom Schools.

Arguably, the love construct may not be as stable an indicator as participation in Freedom School. The parent survey gauges the parents' perceptions, attitudes, opinions, and beliefs about their child(ren), which could be reflective of the how the child would respond directly or be completely different, so cross-matching the response of the student with the responses of the parents would increase the validity of the parent survey. Additionally, the parent survey uses a Likert scale, asking parents how often something happens, all of the time, most of the time, some

of the time, almost never. This assumes that the difference between the points on the scale are equidistant. Although the Likert scale is pragmatic and informative about the degree to which something happens compared to a binary outcome, the scale used for the parent survey is unidimensional and gives only four options. In reality we know that attitudes and perceptions on one particular item exist on a vast, multidimensional continuum. Participation in Freedom School is more easily discernible. The love of learning domain, however, asked six questions that are universally accepted as characteristics of a child who likes learning. Those questions include how the child likes reading books, likes learning new information, works hard to do well in school, reads or looks at books for fun, likes to learn new things, and tells you about something he or she has read.

A comparison of the means between Freedom School participants and the comparison group was conducted to compare the average score for the love of learning domain for each of the three program years. The comparison group had a higher mean for *love* in 2005 (m= 2.36) but lower in 2007 (m = 2.21); however, the Freedom group had a lower mean in 2005 than the comparative group (m = 2.11) but increased in 2007 (m = 2.27), exceeding the mean of the comparison group. To account for any missing variables, the researcher selected only students who consistently participated in the survey (pre- and post-) every year. The comparison group's mean continuously fell from 2.42 (2005) to 2.36 (2006), and again to 2.18 (2007). The Freedom group's mean increased from 2.15 (2005), to 2.32 (2006), and to 2.33 (2007). The Freedom group's mean was lower than that of the comparison group initially, for the consistently measured students, but made better improvements on love of learning survey measures. A test of means revealed that the differences between the Freedom and comparative group, although clearly observed, are not statistically significant.

Cultural appreciation was not found to be significantly associated with the growth in reading scores over time. Parents were asked five questions about the degree to which their child(ren) felt it was important to learn about their ethnic group, knew of important things accomplished by their respective ethnic group, knew about the history of their ethnic group, felt good about their ethnic group, and liked learning about their ethnic group. The summated scale for cultural appreciation yielded a reliability of .94, and although the changes in cultural appreciation were not significantly associated with the growth in reading scores, parents of Freedom School students reported a slight increase in cultural appreciation. The mean score was 2.16 in 2006 and improved slightly in 2007 to 2.24. Additionally, the cultural appreciation domain was added to the parent pre- and post-survey in 2006 and remained on the form in 2007 for both the pre- and post-survey. However, the first research year was 2005. This could impact both the regression analyses for both time periods, given that T1 assessed the difference between scores in 2005 and 2006 and between 2006 and 2007. The T2 period assessed the difference in scores from pretest 2005–pretest 2007.

An interaction variable was created to assess the influences of cultural appreciation and participation in Freedom School. Although the interaction variable was a significant predictor of the GRADE reading scores at the .05 level, the variance inflation factor, a measure to assess how much the variance of the estimated regression coefficients are inflated as compared to when the predictor variables are not linearly related, revealed a VIF of 14.25, indicating issues of multicollinearity. Cultural appreciation and Freedom School participation are highly correlated. Given the historical lineage of The Mississippi Freedom School, the intentionality of leveraging culturally relevant pedagogical practices and development of the liberation curricula connected to sociopolitical consciousness and racial uplift, multicollinearity between these two variables is

not surprising. Perhaps the survey could have be constructed differently to measure changes in cultural appreciation regarding self-esteem, racial identity, diverse characters in story books, and learning about African American history as it related to the curricula content taught by Freedom Schools instead of the broad overarching constructs the current survey measured.

Lastly, the survey was not created by the Children's Defense Fund, the creators of the Freedom School curricula and initiatives. The parent survey was created by a third-party consultant firm hired to evaluate the Kansas City Freedom School as a grantee of a major foundation. In full transparency, the degree to which the research firm collaborated with the Children's Defense Fund or the leadership of the Kansas City Freedom Initiative in developing the survey tool was not assessed or inquired about. Clearly, having an assessment tool created by the Children's Defense Fund to specifically assess the efficacy of the curricula and program would have been more beneficial to analyses in this dissertation.

Research Question Two

Many of the parent survey domains created by the Philliber Research Firm are topically aligned to the weekly content of the Freedom School curriculum. Research question two considered whether any of the parent survey domains that measure students' cultural appreciation *(appr),* love of learning *(love),* acceptance of responsibility *(AcceptRepons),* community involvement *(CommuInvolve),* social adjustment *(SocialAdj), conflict resolution (ConfResol),* and parent involvement *(ParentInvolve)* are related to growth in reading scores as measured by GRADE reading assessment for time periods one and two (T1 and T2). The analysis revealed over time that love of learning and acceptance of responsibility were the only two parent survey domains significantly associated with the changes in GRADE scores.

Acceptance of responsibility, a summative scale that asked five questions related to how often the students follows directions, listens to what others say, completes things, and accepts consequences for behavior, is inversely related to the observed changes in the reading score, indicating that one unit of decrease in acceptance of responsibility would improve the GRADE reading score by 2.01 grade equivalent units. In essence, students whose parents perceived them as having a low degree of acceptance or a declining acceptance score over the course of three summers, increased their reading scores. Again, these findings could suggest that parents are assessing their child on home life versus their acceptance of responsibility at school, given the nature of the questions. It is also plausible that these parents rated their students lower on acceptance with each passing year, or that parents scored children low at the beginning of the summer and that score remain consistently low over the years despite the reading gains made. Another factor to consider would be any discipline issues that students may have experienced during the summer session. Disciplinary data, if any, were not included in the data file received from the Philliber Research firm. Freedom Schools place an emphasis on character development, addressing conflict in positive ways, and being an agent of positive change in the community by helping people they may not necessarily know. The Children's Defense Fund requires Freedom School sites to be co-located in institutions embedded within the community. All Kansas City Freedom Schools were hosted in faith-based organizations in traditionally low-income urban communities. Hirschi's social control theory suggests that when people have a strong social bond to conventional community institutions such as churches, they are less likely to engage in deviant behavior. Over the course of the six-week summer session, students would engage with and build relationships with several church personnel, students, summer school teachers who are African American, college interns, community members, and parents. The Freedom School curriculum

requires community members to serve as guest readers for morning read-aloud time using a book chosen from Freedom Schools' Integrated Reading Curricula and aligned to the weekly themes.

Students also attended field trips and participated in extracurricular activities. These opportunities to build relationships with community members and organizations provided multiple linkages with children and family to social institutions that could have lasting relationships with students beyond the summer months. This connects with Hirschi's premise of establishing strong bonds through attachments, involvement, and belief. Hirschi postulated that students with strong, stable attachments within society, who are invested in social activities and institutions, spend large amounts of structured time in socially approved activities and believe in a set of principles and norms about behavior, consequences, and fairness of a conventional system, are less likely to engage in deviant behavior and more likely to experience success in school. Parents are also required to attend weekly parent meetings in the evening. This provided an opportunity for interns teaching the class to share critical academic information and tips to support reading at home while also building a sense of community among parents.

Although there was an intentional focus on character, conflict resolution, community involvement, social adjustment, and parent participation, none of these domains was significantly associated with the growth in GRADE reading scores. These factors are non-cognitive skills, and although improvement in these domains may improve overall character development, one would not expect a direct link to academic improvement. A review of the survey questions for each of these domains reveals that content of the questions and the directions did not require parents to focus exclusively on behavior as it relates to school. For example, the social adjustment domain asks parents, "how often would you say your child …is happy; feels good about himself or

herself; gets along with parents or guardians; tells the truth even if it gets him/her in trouble; gets along with friends; listens to others; is respectful towards other people." Freedom Schools served students in grades K-8. The survey does not account for the age or developmental maturity of the students by providing a differential survey based on age ranges of students. The directions also do not ask parents to assess these behaviors at school or evaluate at the end of the summer if these activities or behaviors have increased, decreased, or stayed the same. This strategy would allow a better comparative analysis to measure whether there has been a change in any of the categories over the course of the summer.

It is quite possible that the Philliber Research firm created the questions solely to measure changes in individual behaviors, not to assess the impact, if any, on GRADE reading scores or exposure to the Freedom School experience. The rationale for selecting and creating questions based on completing a comparative analysis to the changes in reading abilities, as this research study attempted, might have generated a different scope and sequence of questions to evaluate the efficacy of the curricular impacts on social development as well as on the observed differences in reading scores. Given that the data used for this dissertation was secondary, observations on how the survey was explained to parents or the verbal instructions given to parents at the time of completion is unknown.

The community involvement domain asked only one question: How often would you say your child looks for ways to help people he or she does not know? Most of the parent survey domains are comprised of 5-7 questions. This question is not reflective of the role and importance of community in the Freedom School model. This could be an indication of the lack of communication between the Kansas City Freedom School leadership and the research firm that created the survey regarding core principles or historical relevance of Freedom School. A

single item survey question is not a reliable scale. Omission of the cultural appreciation domain on the 2005 survey, the first program evaluation year, and the single item measurement for community involvement, two central features of Freedom School, have implications for assessing these domains' impact, if any, on the GRADE reading scores. Lastly, as it relates to the observed changes in the GRADE reading score and the parent survey domains, in 2006 the parental involvement domain was added to the survey and remained in 2007. Each of the regression analyses for T1 and T2 used data from the 2005 program year. Missing values in these domains for 2005 may have influenced the association of these domains on the differences in GRADE reading scores for both the Freedom and comparative groups.

Research Question Three

The final analyses examined the impact of income on reading abilities. It is widely accepted that income and academic performance are positively correlated. Household income is also highly correlated to parents' background and education. Students whose parents have earned a college degree often have access to more rigorous schools, are taught by more experienced teachers, and are often exposed to enriched learning opportunities in the summer months, and thus tend to have better academic outcomes year round. Conversely, students from low income families typically enter school behind, attend less rigorous schools, are taught by more inexperienced teachers, and often do not have access to enriched summer learning opportunities over the summer, so any gains made throughout the typical school year are at risk for summer learning loss. Freedom School is intentional with respect to selecting community-based organizations in low income communities as host sites for the summer reading program. Kansas City's focus was on local churches, with deep historical roots in community and civic engagement. However, the students recruited from these churches, located in low-income

communities, did not reflect the socioeconomics of the surrounding community. There were more students from middle class and affluent dual-parent households than in the comparison group. This suggests that some families that attend church in low-income communities in Kansas City may no longer live in the surrounding neighborhood. It may be the church their parents attended, or they may have grown up in the local community but moved out due to challenges associated with low-income urban communities.

The results indicate that income can be a powerful influence on GRADE reading scores when analyzing differences in GRADE equivalents between years (*gain1)* as compared to the cumulative effect across three consecutive summer sessions *(gain2).* When all three income levels, less than $10k–$19,999, $20k–$49,999, and $50k–$100,000 were added to the regression for *gain1* and *gain 2*, participation in Freedom School was not significantly associated with improvements in GRADE reading scores. This could be attributed to controlling for a wide range of income levels. Over the three consecutive summers (2005, 2006, 2007), love of learning on average created a difference in GRADE reading scores by 1.2 grade equivalent units.

Given that income was a significant influencer, a series of regressions were run to explicate which income thresholds were significantly related to the difference in GRADE reading scores. This analysis revealed two income levels – $20k-$30,000 and $75k-$100,000. When only these two income levels are included in the regression with *group, love,* previous GRADE score, and cultural appreciation, participation in Freedom School and previous GRADE score are significantly influencing the growth in GRADE reading scores for the T1 period. The $20k-$30,000 income level was the strongest influencer to the GRADE reading scores at a significance level of .004. This finding suggests there is a high probability that the interaction between GRADE reading scores and the $20k-$30,000 income level is not simply due to chance;

a strong relationship exists between these variables. When the analysis was run for the T2 period, the income effects were reversed. Neither the $20k–$30,000 or the $75k-$100,000 were significant predictors of the growth in GRADE reading scores. Over time, participation in Freedom School and love of learning become more impactful to the growth in reading scores when controlling for income at the $20,000–$30,000 and $75,000–$100,000 income levels (see Table 6). These findings suggest that love of learning and participation in Freedom Schools for three consecutive summers is a stronger predictor than income on the differences observed in GRADE reading scores over time. Reviewing the unstandardized coefficients for previous GRADE equivalent scores *(Gequiv_lag2)* in Table 5, the magnitude of this predictor changes significantly when the various income levels are controlled for. Although previous GRADE equivalent scores maintain an inverse relationship with the growth in GRADE reading scores, suggesting students with low scores made the most gains, this status increases reading scores .19 grade equivalent units when controlling for income level $20,000-$30,000. However, when income level $75,000–$100,000 is held constant, students who have low previous GRADE scores, on average improved their scores by 2.15 grade equivalent units. This is a huge shift. Perhaps the students whose families earned less money are also the students who demonstrated the greatest growth in reading scores from 2005 to 2007.

To assess the degree to which participation in Freedom School and *income_twentythirty* influenced each other and the main effect of each predictor, an interaction variable was created and included in the regression. The *degree* variable was also included to control for parents' education. Although earning a college degree is often correlated with earning a higher income than $20k-30,000, it is possible that the parent(s) have earned a college degree but due to other factors, are currently employed in a lower wage job. The assumption made here is that parents

with a college degree will place an emphasis on the importance of education and doing well in school, and this could be influencing the significance of the income variable.

The regression for *gain1* and *gain2* analyses did not support the premise. *Degree* was not a significant variable. *Group* (Freedom School), *love of learning*, *income_twentythirty*, and previous GRADE equivalent score were all significant influencers in the growth of GRADE reading score, each contributing positively, except for previous GRADE equivalent score, for both time periods. The interaction variable, although a significant predictor, suggests that low-income students in the Freedom School group evidenced fewer improvements in their GRADE reading scores than low-income students in the comparative group. This is an interesting finding, given that research suggests that low-income students in the comparison group who did not attend summer schools or engage in enriching academic activities are at a higher risk for reading loss, were the students who experienced the greatest growth and improvement in GRADE reading scores. A descriptive analysis including only students with reported household income of $20,000–$30,000 and disaggregated by *group* revealed for the control group (*n=36*) that 30% or 11 students, were from families with $20-30K income, and none of those parents reported having a degree, but 45% of those students' parents reported their child(ren) attending summer school. Conversely, Freedom School (*n=111*) had 13% or 15 students from families with reported income in the $20k-30k range. Of these 15 families, seven reported having earned a college degree. Students with degreed parents had higher GRADE equivalent scores than the students in the control group whose parents were not degreed. The inference drawn from this analysis is that the significance of the interaction variable on the growth of GRADE reading scores and the main effects of *group* and *income_twentythirty* is influenced by participation in summer school for the control group and the degree attainment of parents in the Freedom School group.

In conclusion, there are a few salient points from this dissertation to highlight. The love of learning was consistently associated with the growth in grade-equivalent reading scores for both the Freedom School and Comparative group. Freedom School intervention positively contributed to the growth in GRADE reading scores, and this impact became more pronounced over time. The interplay of parental education and income as influencers of reading outcomes for students was reinforced. Throughout the analyses, there was an attempt to understand how Freedom School participation, income, and the parent survey domains influenced the growth in GRADE reading scores. It was hypothesized that the cultural enrichment and pedagogical framework of Freedom School would foster love for learning and this would significantly influence the growth in GRADE reading scores. A major limitation of this dataset was the inability to measure the cultural appreciation variable given it was not included on the 2005 parent survey. Additionally, when interaction variables of cultural appreciation and *group*, or cultural appreciation and *love* were created, these variables were significant predictors of the growth in GRADE reading scores but exhibited high severity of multicollinearity. Secondary data used for this study created limitations to fully addressing the research question, which are highlighted below.

In summary, the aim of this dissertation was to shed light on how culturally relevant pedagogical frameworks can be utilized to bridge and strengthen the social bonds of African American students to schools and mitigate the summer loss by increasing the reading abilities of students. It was hypothesized that Freedom Schools, a cultural enrichment summer literacy program, would be a good case study to explore the interactions of culturally relevant pedagogy, connectedness to school (learning), and improving the reading abilities of African American students. Given the persistent academic failure and negative experiences of African American

students in K-12 schools across the nation, providing evidence-based research to improve academic performance and connectedness to learning in schools could add to the scant research that currently exists.

The positive contribution of Freedom School on the reading skills of African American students over time certainly suggests a need for additional research that investigates whether culturally relevant pedagogical practices and strategies are the leading driver for growth in reading scores. The limitations of this study included not allowing for an analysis to test the curricular components. Given the alignment of CDF Freedom School and training of teacher-activists with the central principle, tenets, and aim of liberation education, it is difficult to separate the "school effect" from the "curricular effect," given the dataset used for this dissertation. Certainly, as we grapple with the poor academic performance of African American children in our nation's schools, there is an opportunity to do more than just explicate these egregious disparities through the lens of fixed demographic, school, and social status. We must design strategies and practices that chip away at underperformance.

School Bonding, CRP, and School Effects

This case study of the Kansas City Freedom School summer initiative offered an opportunity to examine the utility of both Hirschi's Social Control theory and Ladson-Billings' Culturally Relevant Pedagogy to explore the school effects of social bonding on academic achievement for African American students. Although research linking school bonding and academic related outcomes is studied across a plethora of fields, little is known about how race/ethnicity impacts social bonds to school. Constructivism denotes that learning is an active, contextualized process of constructing knowledge rather than simply acquiring it. The learner constructs knowledge through social interaction with people and the environment. Yang and

Anyon (2016) provide evidence that suggests a student's relationship to school is a powerful influence on individual behavior and health.

Hirschi posits there are four elements required for establishing strong bonds to social institutions such as schools. The first element, attachment, addresses the degree to which students feel that adults in the school care about them; commitment is reflected by the time and effort an individual invests in learning, the intrinsic value on getting good grades, and concern for future achievement; involvement represents structured time spent in socially approved activities; and belief is acceptance of the moral validity of shared social values and norms. School climate research suggests that there is a direct relationship between the quality of the school environment and school bonding. Cohen, McCabe, Michelli and Pickernal (2009) suggest that there are four dimensions of school climate: safety, teaching and learning, relationships, and environmental/structural.

An ecological approach to understanding the relationship between social bonds to schools and academic outcomes must also acknowledge that students are strongly influenced by the social context in which teaching and learning occurs. African American children continue to experience school differently than their white peers. The U.S. School system refers, suspends, excludes, and fails minority children at significantly higher rates compared to their proportional makeup in the school system. (Anyon et al., 2016; Gay, 2010, Gregory et al., 2010; Peguero et al., 2015. Although attention to the differential experiences of students of color in public school has been highlighted across an extensive body of observational, experimental, and qualitative research, little is known about how race/ethnicity impacts social bonds to school and the resulting effect on academic outcomes and school persistence. Feelings of alienation, discrimination, and isolation can have a profound impact on a student's ability to establish bonds

to school (Bondy et al., 2016; Eitle & Eitle, 2007; Maddox & Prinz, 2003; Peguero et al., 2015). Culturally Relevant Pedagogy is defined by Ladson-Billings (1995a) as a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes. CRP uses culture as a vehicle for teaching and establishing authentic relationships between students and teachers. Within the school bonding context, teacher–student interactions have been a lead indicator for investigating students' attachment to school and achievement. This positions CRP as a viable approach to address the discontinuity many African American students experience due to the documented challenges in achieving an equitable quality education.

Amid the growing demands for standardized curricula and pedagogical approaches to address achievement and accountability, evidence-based research that documents connections between culturally responsive education and student outcomes is needed (Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Dover, 2013; Sleeter, 2012). The goal of this dissertation was to explore whether Freedom Schools could serve as a case study to explore the connections between CRP, social bonding, and literacy improvement for African American children.

Isolating school effects establishes the impact on a student outcome that is attributable to a particular practice or policy. For this dissertation, to isolate the school effects would necessitate identifying the proportion of variance in literacy scores attributable to Freedom School's culturally relevant pedagogical practices and curricula. To achieve this goal of isolating school effects, the participant groups would need to be randomly assigned to Freedom or a comparison group, with both groups attending a similar literacy summer school program. Freedom School's use of CRP practices and curricula would serve as the tested intervention to assess the effect of a cultural enrichment curriculum on the reading score gains. Examining students' connectedness to

school would also require a well-constructed survey to ascertain the factors that inhibit or contribute to the sense of belonging or connectedness to school. Even with a well-constructed research design, school effects are often difficult to demonstrate within the limited timeframe of a summer school schedule. Many studies focusing on school effects lean towards analyzing longitudinal student data. These limitations, along with others highlighted below, created insurmountable challenges with linking the CRP Freedom School curricula with the observed differences in GRADE reading scores. This is not to suggest that Freedom School participants did not evidence gains in literacy development. The degree to which that variance can be attributable exclusively to participation in Freedom Schools, the culturally relevant curricula, or the love for learning domain as a vehicle for school bonding could not be evaluated with this dataset.

Freedom Schools were created with the express purpose to disrupt the inadequate and inferior nature of the education typically offered to African Americans in Mississippi. Given the prolific and enduring underperformance of minority students in public schools across the U.S., practitioners and researchers alike must elevate opportunities for scientific inquiry explicating the role of culture in school bonding and academic success for African American children.

Limitations and Future Research

There are several limitations that I would like to highlight. This research utilized secondary research data from the Philliber Research Firm, whose purpose as a third-party evaluator was to assess the return on investment on behalf of a local Kansas City foundation. As such, the research questions guiding the initial research design and data collection created restraints that impacted the ability to generalize the findings of this dissertation broadly. The results presented here were from a relatively small sample size, and the selection of groups was

not random or matched for congruence, which would have produced stronger research findings. In an attempt to track the performance of students over time, both the control group and the Freedom School group selections were restricted to those that participated across three consecutive years, which further reduced the sample size. Although participants were selected from local African American churches in low-income communities, there were observed income differences between control group participants who were recruited from the surrounding neighborhoods and Freedom School participants that were recruited both from the neighborhood and from the church membership. This can be attributed to the growing "drive-in" membership of African American churches that were historically neighborhood-based in terms of membership. Many members of African American churches have deep roots to the church, although they may no longer live in the surrounding community. Typically, the church may be located in the neighborhood they grew up in as children. Their parents, grandparents, great grandparents, or extended family were members of the church, and regardless of where they may have moved physically, their commitment and attachment is to the church, so they "drive in" from other communities to attend their "home" church.

This research also looked at gains in reading ability as evidenced by the GRADE reading assessment using parallel pre-test and post-test assessments. GRADE equivalent scores by year were compared within and across years to examine the differences in GRADE reading scores. The GRADE scores and growth was measured in grade equivalents. Grade equivalents, in general, which have been described as both a growth score and a status score, should be interpreted with caution, and should not be used as a sole indicator of promotion to an advanced grade. For the purpose of this study, if students increased their reading comprehension skill by

two grade levels, this should not be interpreted to assume that they should be promoted two grade levels beyond their current grade.

There are also other critical components of Freedom School that were not captured in the data set received by the researcher from the Philliber Research firm but could have added to the exploration of Freedom School's ability to foster attachment to school personnel. All Freedom School summer classes are taught by African American college students in various stages of the collegiate journey (i.e. Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior), who spend two weeks at the historic Haley Farm which is owned by The Children's Defense Fund. Haley Farm is a 157-acre farm that once belong to the Pulitzer Prize author of *Roots: The Saga of An American Family,* Alex Haley. Haley's novel spent 46 weeks on the *New York Times* Best Seller List, including 22 weeks in that list's top spot. During the two weeks Freedom School college interns learn the history of the Civil Rights movement, the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Summer, how to implement the Integrated Reading Curriculum, and daily lesson plans. Scholars are also introduced to the wide array of literary texts for each of the six-week summer session and have an opportunity to meet and befriend other college interns across the county who are opting to serve as a Freedom School teacher for the summer. The impact on the college persistence and academic outcomes for those students is another key aspect that should be examined as well as the impact of racially matched teachers.

The Freedom School's use of college interns as servant leaders (teachers) provides young Freedom School students with an opportunity to build intergenerational relationships with African American college students and reinforces the importance of giving back to their community through service. The Philliber Research firm reported that 305 of the 363 college interns who served at the 18 Kansas City Freedom School sites completed surveys during the

training about their involvement in Freedom School and their interest in community. Although the focus of this research was on the participants of Freedom School, not the interns, an investigation of the interns' experience could have been analyzed to support the importance of culture and its role in the academic performance of students.

Lastly, during this research period 2005-2007, the Kansas City Freedom School initiative experienced growth. What started with one church in 1995 grew into 18 church host sites by 2007. During the summer of 2005, 12 churches were host sites for Freedom School. Freedom School sites increased from 15 in 2006 to 18 in 2007. Given the variability of students across sites, the researcher selected only participants who were enrolled in Freedom School for three consecutive years. Although this reduced the sample size, it increased the internal validity of the study.

It must be acknowledged that the Freedom School model was implemented with some degree of variability across 18 distinct sites. In fact, one of the findings from the initial Philliber (2008) report was that Freedom School sites that implemented the CDF Freedom School model with a high degree of fidelity had better academic results. The Philliber report did not include information about which sites performed better than others, or the degree to which a site fully implemented the model. Model fidelity, if provided, would have been included as a primary driver for participant selection for this study. If participant selection was restricted to the Freedom School sites with the highest degree of fidelity of implementation, this would increase generalizability of the study. Additionally, it is plausible that the academic impact for Freedom School students would have improved. In spite of the limitations of this study, examining the Kansas City Freedom School model to assess culturally relevant pedagogical strategies' impact on improving literacy outcomes for African American students is critically important to a

research community that seeks to disrupts the cycle of underperformance for African American students.

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Appendix A: Parent Survey

	1	2	3	4
How often would you say your child…	*All of the time*	*Most of the time*	*Some of the time*	*Almost never*
Is happy	PHAPPY			
Follows directions	PDIRECT			
Feels good about himself or herself	PFGOOD			
Likes reading or looking at books	PLBOOKS			
Feels it is important to learn about his or her own ethnic or racial group	PIMPLNE			
Looks for ways to help people he or she does not know	PHELPPL			
Works hard to do well in school	PWELLSCH			
Solves problems by talking with others	PTALK			
Gets along with parents (or guardians)	PGALNGPG			
Gets along with brothers and sisters *Leave blank if there are none*	PGALNGBS			
Listens to what other people have to say before making up his or her mind	PMIND			
Knows important things done by his or her own ethnic or racial group	PIMPETH			
Does chores	PCHORE			
Tells the truth even if it gets him or her into trouble	PTRUTH			
Likes school	PLKESCH			
Gets along with friends	PGALNGFR			
Reads or looks at books for fun	PREADFUN			
Is willing to meet others half way when there is a problem	PPROB			
Listens to others	PLISTEN			
Knows about the history of his or her own ethnic or racial group	PHISTETH			
Disagrees with others without becoming angry	PDISAGR			
Likes learning new things	PNEWTHNG			
Feels good about his or her ethnic or racial group	PFGETH			
Tells you about something he or she has read	PTELL			
Completes things he or she starts	PCOMPL			
Is respectful toward other people	PRESP			
Likes learning about his or her own ethnic or racial group	PLRNETH			
Wants to stay home from school when he or she is not sick	PNSICK			
Takes responsibility for behavior by accepting the consequences	PBEHAV			
How often do you feel like this?	*All of the time* 1	*Most of the time* 2	*Some of the time* 3	*Almost never* 4
I know what children in my child's grade should be learning in school	PKNWLRN			
I am afraid to disagree with my child's teachers	PAFRAID			
I feel unable to help my child with schoolwork	PUNABLE			
When I talk to my child's teachers they listen to what I have to say	PTLISTN			
My child's teachers and I work together to do what is best for my child	PTWORKT			
When I talk to my child's teachers I feel I don't know what to ask or say	PASICSAY			

We need to be able to contact you in the fall and again next spring. We want to know what happens to you and your child after your Freedom School experience. Please provide us your address, phone number, and email so we may locate you.

Name: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

_____ Email: _____

Appendix B : Scholar Information Form

Kansas City Freedom School Initiative
Scholar Information Form

Please take a few minutes and complete this Scholar Information Form for each child you have who is attending Freedom School this summer. Please complete a separate form for each child.

Child's Name: _____

Freedom School Attended: _____

How many summers has your child participated in Freedom School, including this summer? SUMNUM

How many children do you have attending Freedom School this summer? CHILDNUM

Date of Child's Birth: ____ / ____ / ____ (Month / Day / Year)

Age of Child on Last Birthday: AGE years old

Gender of Child:
- ☐ Male GENDER
- ☐ Female

Race/Ethnicity of Child:
- ☐ African-American / Black AFRICAN
- ☐ White WHITE
- ☐ Latino / Hispanic LATIND
- ☐ Other OTHER / OTHWHT (Please describe)

What language is normally spoken in your home?
- ☐ English LANGUAG
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ Other OTHLANG (Please describe)

Did your child attend school last year?
- ☐ No SCHLYR
- ☐ Yes

What grade was your child in last year? GRDLYR

What type of school did your child attend?
- ☐ Public SCHOOL
- ☐ Private
- ☐ Charter
- ☐ Faith-based
- ☐ Other OTHSCH (Please describe)

Is your child's lunch at school…
- ☐ Full price LUNCH
- ☐ Reduced price
- ☐ Free

What is your relationship to the child?
- ☐ Mother
- ☐ Father RELAT
- ☐ Step-parent
- ☐ Grand parent
- ☐ Foster parent
- ☐ Brother or Sister
- ☐ Other relative OTHRELW (Please describe)
- ☐ Non-relative OTHNRELW (Please describe)

How much education have you completed?
- ☐ Less than high school graduate EDUC
- ☐ High school graduate
- ☐ Some college or technical school
- ☐ Two-year college degree
- ☐ Four-year college degree or more

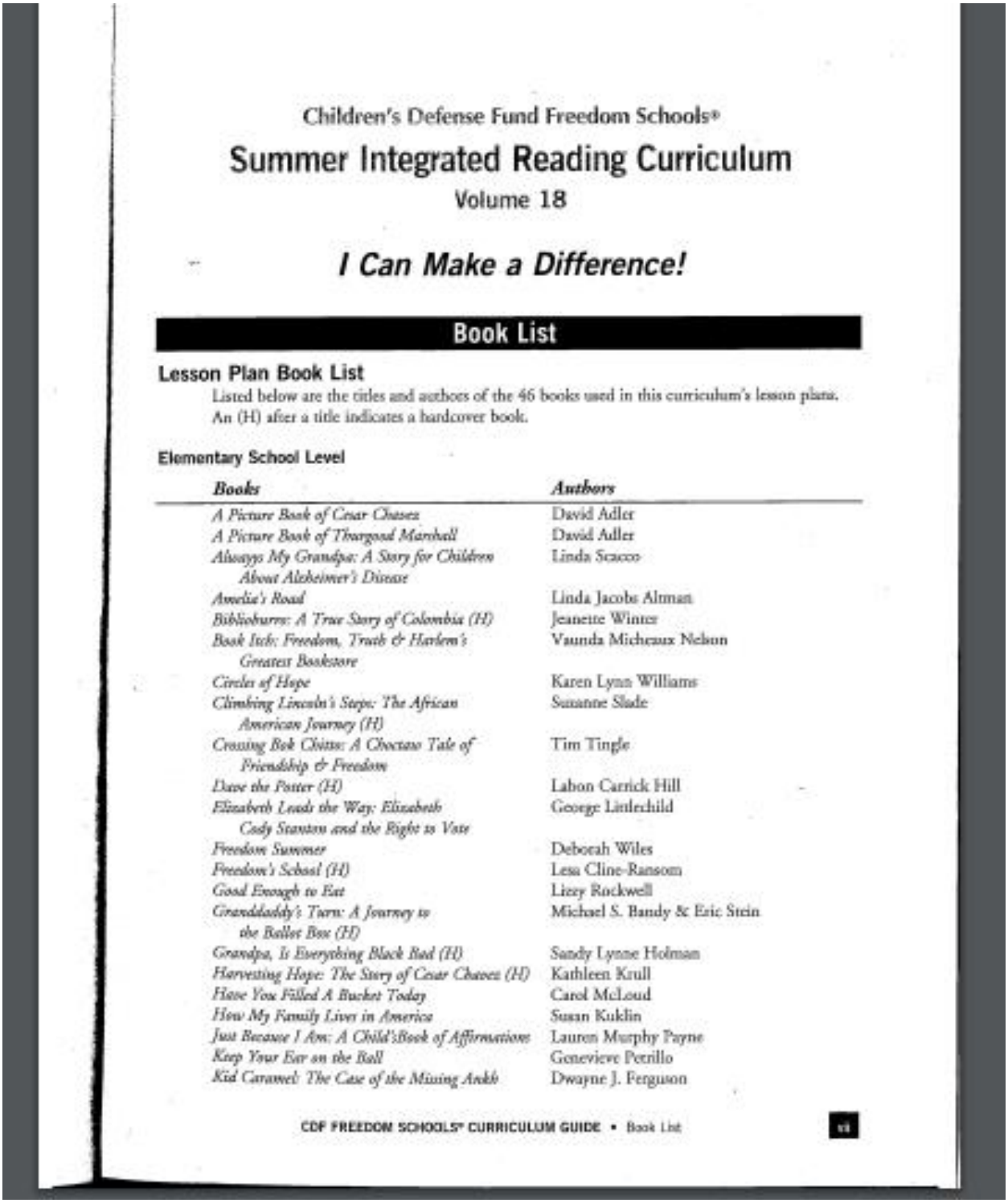
Whom does your child live with most of the time?
Check all that apply
- ☐ Mother MOM
- ☐ Father DAD
- ☐ Step-parent STEPPRNT
- ☐ Grand parent GRNDPRNT
- ☐ Foster parent FOSTPRNT
- ☐ Brothers & Sisters **How many?** SIB / SIBNUM
- ☐ Other relatives OTHREL / ORELWHO (Please describe)
- ☐ Non-relatives OTHNREL / ONRELWHO (Please describe)

How many people live in your home? LIVE

How many people who live in your home are employed? EMPLOY

What is your family's annual income?
- ☐ Less than $10,000
- ☐ $10,000 - $19,999 INCOME
- ☐ $20,000 - $29,999
- ☐ $30,000 - $39,999
- ☐ $40,000 - $49,999
- ☐ $50,000 - $74,999
- ☐ $75,000 - $99,999
- ☐ $100,000 or more

Appendix C: Books in Integrated Reading Curriculum



Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools®

Summer Integrated Reading Curriculum

Volume 18

I Can Make a Difference!

Book List

Lesson Plan Book List

Listed below are the titles and authors of the 46 books used in this curriculum's lesson plans. An (H) after a title indicates a hardcover book.

Elementary School Level

Books	*Authors*
A Picture Book of Cesar Chavez	David Adler
A Picture Book of Thurgood Marshall	David Adler
Always My Grandpa: A Story for Children About Alzheimer's Disease	Linda Scacco
Amelia's Road	Linda Jacobs Altman
Bibliosburro: A True Story of Colombia (H)	Jeanette Winter
Book Itch: Freedom, Truth & Harlem's Greatest Bookstore	Vaunda Micheaux Nelson
Circles of Hope	Karen Lynn Williams
Climbing Lincoln's Steps: The African American Journey (H)	Suzanne Slade
Crossing Bok Chitto: A Choctaw Tale of Friendship & Freedom	Tim Tingle
Dave the Potter (H)	Laban Carrick Hill
Elizabeth Leads the Way: Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Right to Vote	George Littlechild
Freedom Summer	Deborah Wiles
Freedom's School (H)	Lesa Cline-Ransom
Good Enough to Eat	Lizzy Rockwell
Granddaddy's Turn: A Journey to the Ballot Box (H)	Michael S. Bandy & Eric Stein
Grandpa, Is Everything Black Bad (H)	Sandy Lynne Holman
Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez (H)	Kathleen Krull
Have You Filled A Bucket Today	Carol McLoud
How My Family Lives in America	Susan Kuklin
Just Because I Am: A Child's Book of Affirmations	Lauren Murphy Payne
Keep Your Eye on the Ball	Genevieve Petrillo
Kid Caramel: The Case of the Missing Ankh	Dwayne J. Ferguson

Light in the Darkness: A Story About How Slaves Learned to Secret (H)	Lesa-Cline Ransome
Lillian's Right to Vote (H)	Jonah Winter
Malala, a Brave Girl from Pakistan/Iqbal, a Brave Boy from Pakistan: Two Stories of Bravery	Jeanette Winter
Mama Miti (H)	Donna JoNapoli
Miss Little's Gift (H)	Douglas Wood
Miss Tizzy	Libba Moore Gray
Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom (H)	Carole Boston Weatherford
Mr. George Baker	Amy Hest
One Hen: How One Loan Made a Difference	Katie Smith Milway
Ordinary Mary's Extraordinary Deed (H)	Emily Pearson
¡Sí, Se Puede! Yes We Can!: Janitor Strike in L.A.	Diana Cohn
Smokey Night	Eve Bunting
Sweet Potato Pie	Kathleen D. Lindsey
Tanuka and the Wisdom Rings	Camille Yarbrough
The Day Gogo Went to Vote	Elinor Batezat Sisulu
The Good Garden (H)	Katie Smith Milway
The Storyteller's Candle	Lucia Gonzalez
Those Shoes	Maribeth Boelts
Tucky Jo and Little Heart (H)	Patricia Pollaco
Twenty-two Cents: Muhammad Yunus and the Village Bank (H)	Paula Yoo

Middle School and High School Level

Books	*Authors*
Can't Get There From Here	Todd Strasser
Confessions of a Former Bully	Trudy Ludwig
Enchanted Air: Two Cultures, Two Wings (H)	Margarita Engle
Getting Away With Murder: The True Story of the Emmett Till Case (H)	Chris Crowe
Monster	Walter Dean Myers
Out of My Mind	Sharon Draper
Romiette and Julio	Sharon Draper
The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates	Wes Moore
The Watsons Go to Birmingham, 1963	Christopher Paul Curtis
The Road to Paris	Nikki Grimes
We Beat the Street: How a Friendship Pact Led to Success	Drs. Sampson Davis, George Jenkins, and Rameck Hunt with Sharon Draper
You Don't Even Know Me: Stories and	Sharon G. Flake

Appendix D: Sample Daily Schedule

LEVEL III **Week One**

Weekly Theme: Self

The overall goal for the week is to promote a positive self-image. This selection of books will encourage the celebration of self!

DAY: 1

BOOK: *Out of My Mind*

AUTHOR: Sharon M. Draper

DAILY THEMES: personal resilience; acceptance and tolerance of "differently-abled" people

FOCUS SKILL: figurative language

COMMON CORE STANDARDS:

- RL.8.1. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RL.8.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RL.8.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
- SL.8.5. Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.
- Which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

FOCUS PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES: Students should be able to:

- Identify and interpret figurative language used in the story to convey meanings.
- Analyze the similes in the story in order to create original similes.

MATERIALS: markers/pens/pencils/writing paper/drawing paper

OPENING ACTIVITY: Have students look at the front cover of the book and think about what the phrase "out of my mind" means. Ask students if they have used or heard this expression used. If so, have students share when they have used the phrase or heard others use it. Ask students what they think about the fish jumping out of the bowl. Would they want to be that fish? Why might the fish want out? Will the fish survive outside the bowl? Ask students if they have ever wanted out of a situation. Have they ever wanted to be out of their own minds? Have students make predictions about what the story will be about based on the title and picture on the cover.

MAIN ACTIVITY: Read and discuss the book, *Out of My Mind*, Chapters 1-7, Pages 1-60.

Read aloud Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, Pages 1-8. What predictions can the reader make about the narrator of the story? Have students speculate about why the narrator has never spoken a single word. Ask students how they would feel if they were not able to talk. How would they communicate their feelings and ideas to others? Brainstorm how people communicate without words.

Group students into pairs. Have each pair read and summarize a chapter from Chapters 3-7, Pages 9-60. Students should make summaries as creative as possible using skits, pictures, commercials, reports, etc.

Recommendations for discussion:

- In Chapter 1, Melody says that she loves words. She describes them as "sweet, liquid gifts" that she "drank… like lemonade." Ask students how words can be like gifts. Ask students if they can really "drink" words. What does that mean? Have students think about why the narrator might describe words in this way.
- How would you feel if you couldn't use words to express yourself? How does Melody feel? Ask students if there are things they can't do, but wish they could. How do they feel when they can't do something other people can do? How do they handle their frustration?
- Ask students what they think of the bold print that begins each chapter. Ask students who they think is telling or narrating the story. Define "point of view" for students and explain that the story is being told in first-person point of view (POV). Explain to students that we know when a story is in first-person POV when a) a character in the story is the narrator, and b) the narrator uses the pronouns I, me and we.
- In Chapter 3 we learn Melody's name. Knowing what we know about Melody, why does this name seem appropriate? What is a melody?
- Describe Melody's dad. What is he like? How would you describe his relationship with Melody? How does he treat her? Why does he tell her that her life will not be easy?
- What is Melody's special gift? What is frustrating to Melody about having this gift? What are some things you are good at? Do you have special gifts that no one knows you have?
- What is fitting about Doctor Hugely's name? What assumptions does the doctor make about Melody? What do you think Melody would tell Doctor Hugely if she could? Have you ever been made to feel stupid by an adult? What did you do?
- How does Melody feel about school? How does she fit in with her classmates and what makes her different from the rest of the children in H-5? What would be Melody's ideal school situation?
- How do Mrs. Tracy and Mrs. Billups differ? How are Mrs. Billups and Dr. Hugely similar? What assumptions have they made about Melody? How does Melody's mom set them straight? What would happen to Melody if she didn't have her mother to advocate for her?

COOPERATIVE GROUP ACTIVITIES:

Required: Discuss the literary terms "simile" and "connotation" and explain that similes should evoke the writer's feelings/beliefs about the object being described. Melody likes words because she uses words like "sweet" and "gift" to describe them, and compares words to "lemonade," a drink that has positive connotations. Ask students to think about what words Draper could have used if Melody didn't like words. What things could she have compared words to in order to show a negative connotation? Divide students into pairs, and have them discuss how they feel about words, or have them share favorite words. Then have students create their own similes about words. Tell students to fill in the blank: Words are like_____. Students can then illustrate their similes. (Examples: Words are like puzzles; Words are like hot coals; etc.)

Choose at least two: Divide students into pairs and have them work together to create their own "life soundtracks." First, have each pair discuss their favorite kinds of music, favorite artists, favorite songs, etc. Then have students think about songs that represent them. Have students list 8-10 songs that they think represent their lives, and who they are. Then have the student pairs work together to create a CD cover that represents both students and the songs they have chosen.

Write a letter from Melody to either Dr. Hugely or Mrs. Billups explaining how their assumptions about her are wrong. In the letter, have Melody explain how she would like the doctor and teacher to "see" her and think about disability issues from a different perspective.

Have students put themselves in Melody's chair. Working in pairs, have students write a paragraph that tells what it would be like to be Melody for one day. Be sure to write about the feelings and frustrations you would experience.

SOCIAL ACTION ACTIVITY: The "R" Word: In Chapter 4, Melody says that she has little confidence in doctors, so she usually acts like the "retarded" person they think she is. In Chapter 5, she tells us she hates the "r-word."

Play the YouTube video about the "r" word: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T549VoLca_Q. Explain to students that many people—those with or without disabilities—think the word "retarded" is offensive and could be considered hate speech. Explain to students that hateful speech can lead to hateful actions. To exemplify, teach students the "Ladder of Prejudice." Draw a ladder with five rungs on the board or on chart paper. Write the terms of the five rungs: speech, avoidance, discrimination, physical attack, and extermination on chart paper then discuss what the terms mean. Ask students to place the terms on the ladder in order of severity (placing the most severe at the top of the ladder). The ladder begins with speech—people talking about others. The gossip leads to the avoidance of a group of people. Once people begin to avoid one another, the discrimination begins—treating people differently. The next level is the physical attack, which finally leads to extermination. Once the terms are defined and placed on the ladder, ask the students to write on a Post-It Note something that has happened in their school or community that could be posted somewhere on the ladder. Have students put their Post-It Notes on the ladder and discuss what this reveals. Consider with students ways they can intervene when they experience others acting "on the ladder."

Share the following resources with students: R-Word: Spread the Word to End the Word Campaign: http://www.r-word.org/

CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have students present work completed in cooperative groups.

Appendix E: Regression Tables

Table 1: *Growth by group, previous grade score and project year*

gain1: 2005-2006

Variable	B	Std.Err	SIG
Gequiv_lag1	-.105	.039	.008*
GROUP	.462	.239	.054*
PRJCTYR_2006	-.274	.214	.202

*Significance <.05

Table 1a: *Growth by group, previous grade score, love of learning, cultural appreciation and project year gain1*: 2005-2006

Variable	B	Std.Err	SIG
Gequiv_lag1	-.167	.053	.002*
GROUP	.666	.283	.020*
appr	-.298	.289	.305
love	.625	.292	.034*
PRJCTYR_2006	-.505	.287	.060

*Significance<.05

Table 2: *Growth by group and previous grade score*

gain2: 2005-2007

Variable	B	Std.Err	SIG
Gequiv_lag2	-.137	.039	.060
GROUP	.906	.239	.041*

*Significant<.05

Table 2a: *Growth by group, previous grade score, love of learning and cultural appreciation gain2:* 2005-2007

Variable	B	Std.Err	SIG
Gequiv_lag2	-.180	.080	.026*
GROUP	1.16	.481	.018*
appr	-.680	.509	.185
love	1.29	.465	.006*

*Significance <.05

Table 3:

Growth by previous grade, group, project year and parent survey domains

*gain1:*2005-2006

Variable	B	Std.Err	SIG
Gequiv_lag1	-.161	.055	.004*
GROUP	.629	.296	.035*
PRJCTYR_2006	-.569	.286	.048*
love	.590	.356	.099
appr	-.269	.349	.441
AcceptRepons	-.066	.541	.904
CommuInvolve	-.286	.216	.187
ConflResol	.076	.373	.839
ParentInvolve	.416	.494	.401
SocialAdj	.284	.696	.684

*Significant<.05

Table 4

Growth by previous grade, group and parent survey domains

gain2: 2005-2007

Variable	B	Std.Err	SIG
Gequiv_lag2	-.200	.082	.017*
GROUP	1.38	.505	.008*
love	1.17	.555	.038*
appr	-.737	.619	.237
AcceptRepons	-2.01	.996	.046*
CommuInvolve	-.321	.375	.395
ConflResol	.849	.649	.194
ParentInvolve	.525	.751	.486
SocialAdj	1.83	1.18	.127

*Significant<.05

Table 5: *Growth by group, previous grade score, acceptance of responsibility and love of learning gain1*: 2005-2006

Variable	B	Std.Err	SIG
Gequiv_lag1	-.159	.039	.008*
GROUP	.617	.273	.025*
AcceptRepons	-.083	.314	.791
love	.463	.290	.112

*Significance <.05

Table 6: *Growth by group, previous grade score, acceptance of responsibility and love of learning gain2:* (2005-2007)

Variable	B	Std.Err	SIG
Gequiv_lag1	-.162	.079	.041*
GROUP	1. 18	.239	.012*
AcceptRepons	-.411	-.097	.405
love	.991	.283	.016*

*Significance <.05

Table 7: *Growth by group, previous grade score, love of learning, culture and income*

gain1: 2005-2006

Variable	B	Std.Err	SIG
Gequiv_lag1	-.166	.053	.002*
GROUP	.237	.322	.463
love	.532	.285	.064
appr	-.263	.275	.340
INCOME_decoded2			
$20,000- $49,000	.785	.344	.024*
$50,000- $100,000+	1.03	.432	.016*

*Significance <.05

Table 8: *Growth by group, previous grade score, love of learning, culture and income gain2: 2005*-2007

Variable	B	Std.Err	SIG
Gequiv_lag2	-.239	.079	.003*
GROUP	.418	.547	.447
love	1.202	.455	.010*
appr	-.582	.489	.237
INCOME_decoded2	.851	.359	.020*

*Significance <.05

Table 9: *Growth by group, previous grade score, love of learning, culture and income gain1:* 2005-2006

Variable	B	Std.Err	SIG
Gequiv_lag1	-.127	.052	.016*
GROUP	.693	.269	.011*
love	.378	.278	.176
appr	-.057	.268	.832
Income_twentythirty	.860	.328	.010*

*Significance <.05

Table 10: *Growth by group, previous grade score, love of learning, culture and income gain2*: 2005-2007

Variable	B	Std.Err	SIG
Gequiv_lag2	-.192	.079	.017*
GROUP	1.16	.475	.017*
love	1.24	.461	.008*
appr	-.548	.498	.275
Income_twentythirty	.923	.540	.091

*Significance <.05

Table 11: *Growth by group, previous grade score, love of learning, culture and income gain1:* 2005-2006

Variable	B	Std.Err	SIG
Gequiv_lag1	-.138	.053	.010*
GROUP	.660	.278	.019*
love	.429	.281	.129
appr	-.152	.271	.577
Income_seventyfivetenk	.584	.425	.171

*Significance <.05

Table 12: *Growth by group, previous grade score, love of learning, culture, and income gain2*: 2005-2007

Variable	B	Std.Err	SIG
Gequiv_lag2	-2.15	.083	.011*
GROUP	1.041	.489	.036*
love	1.28	.468	.007*
appr	-.644	.503	.204
Income_seventyfivetenk	.432	.743	.581

*Significance <.05

Table 13: *Growth by group, previous grade score, love of learning, culture and income gain1:* 2005-2006

Variable	B	Std.Err	SIG
Gequiv_lag1	-.134	.052	.011*
GROUP	.587	.272	.033*
love	.369	.276	.182
appr	-.077	.027	.772
Income_twentythirty	.976	.331	.004*
Income_seventyfivetenk	.810	.423	.057*

Table 14: *Growth by group, previous grade score, love of learning, culture, and income gain2:* 2005-2007

Variable	B	Std.Err	SIG
Gequiv_lag2	-.209	.082	.012*
GROUP	1.08	.484	.027*
love	1.24	.462	.009*
appr	-.557	.499	.268
Income_twentythirty	.993	.547	.073
Income_seventyfivetenk	.632	.741	.397

*Significance <.05

Table 15: *Growth by group, previous grade score, love of learning, degree, income, and group*income interaction*

gain1: 2005-2006

Variable	B	Std.Err	SIG
Gequiv_lag1	-.150	.049	.003*
GROUP	.817	.296	.006*
degree	.190	-.309	.540
Income_twentythirty	2.36	.537	.000*
Income_seventyfivetenK	.615	.424	.149
love	.465	.216	.033*
groupincomr	-2.095	.662	.002*

*Significance<.05

Table 16: *Growth by group, previous grade score, love of learning, degree, income, and group*income interaction*

gain2: 2005-2007

Variable	B	Std.Err	SIG
Gequiv_lag2	-.204	.078	.010*
GROUP	1.71	.536	.002*
degree	.197	.543	.718
Income_twentythirty	3.09	.871	.001*
Income_seventyfivetenK	.378	.733	.607
love	.970	.329	.004*
groupincomr	-3.37	1.08	.002*

*Significance <.05