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Holistic Teaching Practices through a Growth Mindset Lens: A Case Study Examination of ELA High School Classrooms

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A Case Study Examination of ELA High School Classrooms

By

JOSHUA R. GALLEGOS

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

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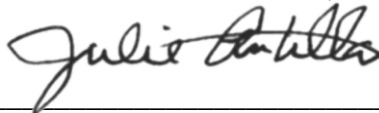Doctor of Philosophy

Seattle Pacific University

April 2023

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Abstract

A prevalent issue that exists in education is students who demonstrate a defeated or fixed

mindset—that is, when students view their intelligence and academic abilities as

something that is inherent and cannot be changed overtime. Most of the research on

growth mindset takes place in math classrooms, as the literature suggests that math is

more frequently viewed as a subject area in which students have fixed mindsets.

Additionally, most of the research on growth mindsets involves the use of quantitative

research methods as opposed to the use of qualitative methods. Furthermore, there is a

lack of research that examines teaching practices holistically in terms of how teachers

may implicitly or explicitly portray growth or fixed mindset messages to students through

their approach towards classroom organization, instruction, and evaluation and

assessment. Therefore, this study sought to examine holistic teaching practices through a

growth mindset lens to determine those general and discipline specific practices that may

perpetuate growth mindset messages to students in high school English Language Arts

classrooms. A case study design has been utilized in which four ELA high school

teachers have been observed to determine how growth mindset messages may be

perpetuated to students. A framework was developed outlining general and discipline-

specific practices that may convey growth mindset messages to students in high school

ELA classrooms. Limitations and directions for future research are also discussed.

Keywords: growth mindset, fixed mindset, social and emotional learning (SEL),

holistic teaching practices, explicit mindset messages, implicit mindset messages, general

teaching practices, discipline specific teaching practice

Chapter One: Introduction

Among many issues that K-12 classroom educators face today, helping students overcome a defeated or fixed mindset about their academic abilities is one of the most complex and challenging obstacles teachers may experience (Dweck, 2010). Students with a fixed mindset may express their perception of a fixed intelligence with statements such as, "I am not good at school," or "I will never be good at English." As a result, students may demonstrate an apathetic attitude towards their learning, which results in disengagement and underperformance. These issues are the result of students' defeated or fixed mindsets—that is, when students view their intelligence and their ability to master academic skills as inherent or unadaptable. To illustrate the thinking of a student with a fixed mindset, these are example statements many students may think or say: "Why would I try if I know I am going to fail?" or "I am never going to be good at this," and "I am just not an English (or x subject) kind of person." As a result of a defeated or fixed mindset about their abilities, students will often be apathetic towards their education.

One strategy to help students overcome their defeated or fixed mindset is to help them develop a growth mindset. Teaching students about growth mindsets can help students overcome the belief that intelligence is inherent and that it can be adapted and shaped overtime. A growth mindset is when students believe that their abilities can develop and improve over time with hard work, patience, and ambition (Dweck, 2010). This contrasts with Dweck's (2010) definition of the coined term "fixed mindset," which refers to students' belief that their ability to grow as scholars is predetermined. Developing a growth mindset attitude for learning helps not only in the current moment but may also help to build life-long learners with the resiliency to accomplish goals that

they seek to achieve. Students that view intelligence as fixed may sacrifice learning

opportunities that do not come to them naturally because they may feel inadequate or that

they do not have the skills needed to persevere in the situation. They may also only value

the appearance of seeming smart rather than the learning of content or acquiring skills. In

contrast, students who develop growth mindsets view the process of learning as exciting

and value the steps they took along the way to achieve the learning outcomes and are not

just excited about appearing smart or getting the answer right. Moreover, students are

also more likely to take intellectual risks in order to achieve their goals because they

recognize "that even geniuses have to work hard to develop their abilities and make their

contributions" (Dweck, 2010, pp. 1-2) and that making mistakes when taking intellectual

risks is part of the learning process.

Purpose of the Study

By conducting a thorough investigation of the literature regarding research on

how growth mindset practices are being implemented in educational settings, it is

apparent that there is consistency in terms of the types of educational settings that are

frequently used in research related to growth mindset implementation in K-12 schools as

well as a pattern in the methods that are used to investigate the impacts of growth mindset

interventions on students. Therefore, this study intended to address gaps in the literature

regarding the educational settings within which most research on growth mindset takes

place, the methods that are used to examine growth mindset implementation in

educational settings, and criticism around the implementation of growth mindsets in

education.

A number of growth mindset studies take place in secondary math classrooms (Blackwell et al., 2007; Bostwick et al., 2017; Sun, 2018; Yeager et al., 2016). The literature suggests that mindset beliefs can be domain specific (Buehl et al., 2002; Yeager & Dweck, 2012) and that it is more common to have a fixed mindset in mathematics than a subject such as history (Jonsson et al., 2012). In other words, students may not only hold a fixed mindset when it comes to their education as a whole but may only hold a fixed view of their ability in one or two academic content areas, which may serve as a barrier to their academic success. Neuromyths, misconceptions about how the brain works through a misunderstanding of science, are a pervasive phenomenon in education (Howard-Jones, 2014; van Elk, 2019). One such neuromyth is the belief that some are inherently better at certain subjects than others, or some are math and science people whereas others are naturally better at English and History, without taking into consideration the efforts of individuals to excel in those areas. The perpetuation of neuromyths, such as a fixed mindset towards intelligence, leads to students' domain-specific beliefs about their academic abilities. As a result, little research on growth mindset implementation in secondary educational settings has taken place outside of math classrooms.

In addition, most of the research involving growth mindset in school settings involves the use of quantitative research methods (Blackwell et al., 2007; Bostwick et al., 2017; Chao et al., 2017; Chen & Tutwiler, 2017; Hass et al., 2016; Hochanadel & Finamore, 2015; Karwowski, 2014; Sommet & Elliot, 2017; Yeager et al., 2016). However, growth mindset is difficult to measure using numeric values. Students who demonstrate a growth mindset will do so through their behavior or their written work,

which requires qualitative methods in order to capture how students demonstrate growth mindset traits. Furthermore, there is a need for qualitative research in general, but more specifically in education (Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 2016). Some problems are too complex to quantify and rely on qualitative techniques to provide context to complex issues, which is the case with research on growth mindset implementation in schools. Students demonstrate behavioral traits that exhibit growth mindset characteristics and, as a result, such characteristics need to be observed through verbal or written communication, which requires qualitative techniques to examine (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2017; Dweck, 2010; Nagle & Taylor, 2017; Robinson, 2017; Sun, 2018). Therefore, this study intended to address the gap of a lack of qualitative research that examines how growth mindset practices are implemented in secondary educational settings.

Moreover, criticism around growth mindset implementation in classrooms suggests that teachers are simply telling students to have a growth mindset, which puts the responsibility of shifting beliefs about intelligence on students without consideration for how contextual factors in a classroom play a role in the adoption of a growth mindset (Edwards et al., 2017). Research surrounding the pervasiveness around neuromyths suggests that these myths become pervasive when certain mindset messages are communicated to students, both implicitly and explicitly (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Howard-Jones, 2014; Sun, 2018; van Elk, 2019). Two studies, Barnes & Fives (2016) and Sun (2018), examined how contextual factors can impact students' abilities in developing a growth mindset and how teacher practice (what teachers say and do) can implicitly and explicitly portray certain mindset messages when it comes to math skill and ability. The

findings from both studies determined similar practices that teachers engaged in to create classroom cultures that reflect growth mindset practices, such as focusing on the process of learning instead of only on the academic outcomes, explicitly recognizing the growth students made overtime, and emphasizing the value of academic risk taking in the classroom by inviting student questions and guiding students to correct answers as opposed to only recognizing right or wrong answers (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Sun, 2018).

In addition to the criticism on how teachers are implementing growth mindsets in the classroom, researchers have questioned the cultural responsiveness of implementing growth mindsets with students in educational settings. Lieber et al. (2017) and Jagers et al. (2018) argued that social and emotional learning (SEL) allows teachers to engage in developmentally appropriate practices that help to promote culturally responsive teaching. However, certain SEL constructs, such as growth mindset, are constructs that ask students to consider themselves individually as a learner, which may conflict with certain cultures that are more communal or place what is good for the whole over the individual. Chao et al. (2017) addressed this concern by explaining that most SEL constructs have been found to be effective among western, white, and affluent student bodies, and little research has been examined among racial and ethnic minorities as well as historically marginalized populations. Moreover, there is a need for growth mindset/SEL practices to be examined in diverse contexts (Herrenkohl et al., 2020). This research study addressed one of these issues by utilizing a sample that consists of a culturally diverse and historically marginalized student population.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to build off previous research that has examined teaching practices in secondary educational settings (Barnes & Fives, 2016;

Sun, 2018) by examining teaching practices holistically in high school ELA classrooms through a growth mindset lens in order to determine which teaching practices and student teacher interactions portray mindset messages. The goal of this study was to address gaps in the literature and criticism around growth mindset implementation in schools by determining the possible contextual factors that may help students build and cultivate a growth mindset to avoid a fixed mindset about their academic abilities and to specifically examine this phenomenon in high school ELA classroom contexts. Both general teaching practices as well discipline-specific practices to ELA were examined. By studying high school ELA teachers who all have discipline-specific expertise and expertise in general teaching strategies, it is possible to identify instructional strategies that help to facilitate a growth mindset for other educators.

Positionality

The 2022-2023 school year marked my 8th year teaching at Richmond High School (RHS), as I have been a social studies and English teacher for the last 7 years (location is a pseudonym). I have witnessed firsthand students' defeated or fixed mindsets about their academic abilities at the school and have struggled to help students overcome the barrier of their mindsets impeding their academic performance and, ultimately, their self-confidence and self-efficacy to excel in school. The quotes that were stated in the introduction of this study are similar to expressions that I have heard from students about their own abilities, often characterizing themselves as "not a school person" or "not an x subject kind of person." The perpetuation of neuromyths, where some people are inherently better at certain subjects than others (Howard-Jones, 2014; van Elk, 2019), is perhaps part of the issue, as these were common neuromyths that many

adults in my life had perpetuated to me while I was going through my own K-12 educational experience. This ultimately inspired the undertaking of this research study, as this is an issue I have faced in my own classroom. I am hoping that with the findings of this study and others after this research study, I can help other educators improve their pedagogy as well as help myself grow and become a better educator.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework draws upon research from psychology around growth mindset implementation in classrooms, previous literature on studies that have examined holistic teaching practices through a growth mindset lens, and literature on ELA pedagogy in order to identify a set of a priori teaching practices that have the potential to communicate mindset messages to students. The a priori list (see Chapter 3) combines both general teaching practices that teachers may adopt on a regular day-to-day basis (e.g., communicating expectations, norm setting), but adapts the framework by adding discipline specific practices that are unique to ELA in this context. Following a similar theoretical framework as Sun's (2018) study that examines holistic teaching practices in middle school math classrooms through a growth mindset lens, this study was conducted to further that research by examining teaching practices in high school ELA classrooms, as most research on growth mindset takes place in math classrooms. This study sought not only to confirm practices that perpetuate growth mindset messages to students, as a result of Sun's research, but to add to our understanding of how growth mindset messages may be communicated to students by creating a framework that intended to analyze teaching practices through a growth mindset lens in an ELA context. In addition, it should be noted that these practices were identified prior to the beginning of the study

after conducting a literature review. However, as a qualitative researcher, the principal investigator intended to take an inductive approach to the research by adding to the theoretical framework of practices that may communicate mindset messages after conducting observations of teaching practices in high school ELA classrooms (Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2017; Gall et al., 2007). The goal of the study was to address criticism in the literature surrounding growth mindsets as well as further the understanding of how holistic teaching practices in high school ELA classrooms may communicate mindset messages in order to better understand discipline-specific practices for both current and future practitioners in the field of education.

Research Question

The following research question guided this study:

How might English Language Arts teachers in high school classrooms convey mindset messages to students related to their English Language Arts ability in their classrooms?

Definition of Terms

In order for the reader to understand the language and scope of this study, the following is a list of terms that help to operationally define some of the key vocabulary that is used throughout this study.

Culturally Responsive Social and Emotional Learning

Social and emotional learning (SEL) practices that recognize the cultural plurality of students in today's diverse learning environments. These practices not only acknowledge cross-cultural differences but assist in practitioners' abilities to imbed practices that help to sustain students' cultural values and provide inclusion and access to SEL practices.

Discipline-Specific Teaching Practices

Teaching practices that are specific to the discipline of English Language Arts (ELA) will be part of the focus of this study as they relate to growth mindset.

Domain-Specific Beliefs

Domain-specific beliefs pertains to one's belief in their own ability that is specific to a discipline (e.g., math, English, history) rather than their beliefs in their abilities as a student or learner as a whole.

Explicit Mindset Messages

How teachers explicitly convey mindset messages (i.e., teachers teach a lesson or unit on growth mindset, say the words growth mindset and explain its meaning, directly explain how students can develop and/or sustain a growth mindset, artifacts in the classroom that explicitly mention or discuss growth mindset).

Fixed Mindset

When students believe their ability to grow as scholars is predetermined.

General Teaching Practices

General teaching practices that any teacher may use in the context of a classroom.

Growth Mindset

A growth mindset is when students believe that their abilities can develop and improve over time with hard work, patience, and ambition.

Holistic Teaching Practices

Holistic teaching practices refer to what teachers say and do in the classroom. These practices not only consider how the teacher's instructions may convey mindset

messages but also how contextual features may play a role in the development of a

student's mindset.

Implicit Mindset Messages

How teachers may implicitly convey mindset messages to their students (i.e., they

may mention words that are often closely associated with growth mindset such as grit,

resilience, or they may focus on the process of learning rather than just the outcomes of

learning, artifacts in the classroom such as directions on student assignments, classroom

syllabi, or wall charts/posters may have messages that implicitly portray growth mindset

messages to students).

Measurement of Growth Mindset

How previous research has often measured the effectiveness of growth mindset

interventions.

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

When adults or children acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, skills, and

attitudes necessary to understand and manage their emotions, feel and express empathy

for others, set and achieve goals, establish and maintain relationships with others, and

make responsible and caring decisions.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized in five distinct chapters. Chapter 1 includes an

introduction to the complex issue of students who demonstrate a fixed mindset about

their abilities and how this study sought to address gaps in the literature as well as

criticism around growth mindset implementation in educational settings. The theoretical

framework for this study was also discussed in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 includes a synthesis

of the literature on the research surrounding how growth mindsets have been implemented in educational settings. Gaps in the literature are also discussed. Chapter 3 provides a description of the method used in this study to best address the research question as well as the context in which this study took place. Chapter 4 includes a discussion of the study's findings as well as the themes that emerged through a collection of data from multiple sources. Chapter 5 includes an analysis and discussion of the data, limitations of the research, future directions, and answers to the research question through the data were collected.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

A current challenge that many educators face is students who experience a defeated or fixed mindset about their abilities (Dweck, 2010). Students with a fixed mindset may express their sense of a fixed intelligence with statements such as, "I am not good at school," or "I will never be good at English." As a result, students may demonstrate an apathetic attitude towards their learning, which results in disengagement and underperformance. These issues are the result of students' defeated or fixed mindsets (Dweck, 2010)—that is, when students view their intelligence and their ability to master academic skills as inherent or unable to evolve. The pervasiveness of students with a fixed mindset may be a result of the perpetuation of neuromyths in education, or misconceptions about the science behind how the brain works that are communicated implicitly and explicitly to students in educational settings (Howard-Jones, 2014; van Elk, 2019). For example, students who believe that their intelligence is fixed in certain academic subjects over others (i.e., the belief that some people are math and science people while others are inherently better at English and the humanities). Little research in education has been conducted to examine contextual features as well as how teacher practices can portray certain mindset messages to students (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Sun, 2018). This study sought to address this gap in the literature by examining teaching practices holistically in high school English Language Arts (ELA) classrooms and determine which practices may perpetuate certain mindset messages. In Chapter 2, the principal investigator provides a synthesis of the literature surrounding research on how growth mindsets have been implemented in K-12 educational settings. Upon reviewing the literature, a definition and explanation of growth mindsets as a SEL construct is

provided as well as a definition of SEL, the benefits of implementing SEL practices into schools, and how growth mindsets fit into the domains of SEL. Additionally, literature is reviewed to determine which teaching practices have been historically used to help students understand and develop a growth mindset. As a result, it is evident that there is consistency in terms of the types of educational settings that have been frequently used in research related to growth mindset implementation in K-12 schools as well as a pattern in the methods that have been used to investigate the impacts of growth mindset interventions on students.

Growth Mindset

Robinson (2017) explained that a mindset is a set of beliefs or attitudes about what a person is or is not capable of accomplishing. The terms fixed mindset and growth mindset have been coined by Dweck (2010) to describe students' mindsets towards their learning. A growth mindset refers to students' belief that their abilities can develop and improve over time with hard work, patience, and ambition (Dweck, 2010). This contrasts with Dweck's definition of the coined term fixed mindset, which is prevalent among students that believe their ability to grow as scholars is predetermined (Dweck, 2010). Dweck was specific on what growth mindset is and what it is not; growth mindset is when students recognize that the process of learning may entail a few mistakes, but they still persevere because they value the process of learning and the growth that learning entails (Dweck, 2010). Growth mindset is not just focusing on effort and what the right or wrong answer may be, but rather the process they took to achieve that right or wrong answer (Dweck, 2010). Students who demonstrate a growth mindset often will reflect upon how they were successful, how they could continue that success, how and why they

did not achieve a desired outcome, and how they could improve by identifying specific steps they will take to grow academically. For example, a common issue with students who may demonstrate a fixed mindset is students who achieve a high grade but do not recognize the steps they took to achieve this grade (Dweck, 2010). They may boast about the grade they earned but are unable to explain the process it took to earn this grade to their peers. In addition, others who wish to achieve higher grades may not be willing to put forth the effort needed to achieve this goal (Dweck, 2010).

Moreover, growth mindset can be used as a trauma-informed practice by helping to empower students to overcome trauma by teaching them the resiliency skills to learn to cope and move forward from past traumatic experiences (Bindreiff, 2017; Kamenetz, 2017; Lurie et al., 2022; Portell et al., 2018; Symmes, 2019). Students who adopt growth mindsets learn to situate traumatic experiences as single events that do not define them as people, but rather help them to grow as a person. In turn, students avoid a self-fulling prophecy of continuing to repeat patterns of trauma and learn to overcome their traumatic experiences rather than allow their trauma to control their existence. Furthermore, growth mindset is a SEL construct (Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017) as it is closely linked to one of the domains of CASEL's SEL framework: self-awareness (CASEL, 2020; Lieber et al., 2017; Oberle et al., 2016).

Social and Emotional Learning

Social and emotional learning (SEL) can be defined as when adults or children acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to understand and manage their emotions, feel and express empathy for others, set and achieve goals, establish and maintain relationships with others, and make responsible and caring

decisions (CASEL, 2012). Implementing SEL practices into schools helps to provide students with a safe, positive, and engaging environment (Lieber et al., 2017). When educators integrate SEL into their practice, they engage in developmentally appropriate practices that help to promote culturally responsive teaching. SEL supports students to engage in outcomes that are aligned with improving their capacity to be successful in their postsecondary education, life, career, and beyond.

Implementation of SEL practices in schools can lead to academic success and career and college readiness (Lieber et al., 2017). Collaborative Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) is a U.S. organization that is for the promotion of SEL practices in schools (CASEL, 2012). The organization's main goal is to establish evidence-based SEL practices that can be implemented with students in educational settings. CASEL (2020) designed a framework for SEL implementation in schools which promotes knowledge, skills, and attitudes across five domains of SEL: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision making. The goal of the framework is to help schools integrate SEL practices within their systems and to establish equitable learning environments that advance students' learning and development. Students' ability to demonstrate knowledge in core SEL skills is critical for positive outcomes in a school context (Oberle et al., 2016). Children who demonstrate competence in the core competencies are aware of and know how to manage their emotions, establish healthy relationships with their peers and teachers, set realistic and positive goals, and can make responsible and ethical decisions. Self-awareness, which is described as one's ability to understand their emotions, thoughts, and values and how they may influence behavior across contexts (CASEL, 2020), provides an avenue for

students to learn how to be aware of their thoughts about their academic abilities (Lieber et al., 2017). In other words, self-awareness of one's thoughts can help students improve their mindsets and, in turn, help students self-regulate their behavior. Self-regulation skills can help students regulate their thoughts, which can help students develop an ability to persist through difficult and challenging tasks by learning how to approach obstacles with more confidence and a stronger mindset.

In addition, the SEL standards, indicators, and benchmarks (SBIs) that are apart of Washington (WA) State's Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) were adopted in the fall of 2020 and are currently being implemented in WA State schools (Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction [WA OSPI], 2020). These standards include standard 1 (self-awareness) as well as standard 2 (self-management), which are described in a similar way as CASEL's core competencies as they are aligned to CASEL's SEL framework. Both CASEL's definition of self-awareness and WA State's SEL standards (i.e., self-awareness and self-management) pertain to Dweck's (2010) definition of growth mindset. Dweck explained that students who have a growth mindset are more willing to take academic and intellectual risks.

Culturally Responsive SEL & the Cultural Relevancy of Growth Mindset

The literature surrounding research on growth mindset suggests that there is a lack of research which examines how SEL constructs such as growth mindset are implemented in school contexts among ethnic and racial heterogeneous student bodies as well as the impact growth mindset interventions may have on these student populations (Chao et al., 2017; Herrenkohl et al., 2020). This has led to scholars (e.g., Chao et al., 2017; Herrenkohl et al., 2020) questioning the cultural responsiveness to SEL constructs

such as growth mindset, as little research around the implementation of SEL constructs such as growth mindset has been conducted with culturally diverse student samples. In addition, McMain (2022) asserted educators who intend to implement SEL practices and curricula may not always recognize the limitations of SEL. For example, practitioners may not always consider the social and cultural constraints of certain SEL constructs that may conflict with students' cultural values and, therefore, may fail to recognize the limitations of SEL. This may ultimately inflict unintentional harm and ignores the impacts of systemic inequities with marginalized students in the education system.

Furthermore, most SEL curricula/programs include practices that come from a white dominant culture (Herrenkohl et al., 2020). Strategies that include teaching behaviors for social interaction and how to process and manage emotions are, arguably, extensions from a white dominant culture. Chao et al. (2017) argued that educators and policymakers should be cautious when implementing SEL practices in developing regions. Educators who are responsible for implementing SEL practices should be aware of the unspoken assumptions in the social environment that may facilitate growth mindset intervention effectiveness in previous studies (e.g. the experience of autonomy) and should take into consideration social cultural constraints. Chao et al. (2017) asserted that existing policy recommendations about growth mindset interventions have been based almost exclusively on research showing that growth mindset interventions are effective among Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic populations and, as a result, there is a need for growth mindset/SEL practices to be examined in diverse contexts. Therefore, there was need to investigate methods for culturally adapting SEL programs in culturally diverse school settings.

Few studies have investigated the impacts of implementing SEL-based curricula and instruction with historically marginalized student samples across social and cultural contexts (Chao et al., 2017; Herrenkohl et al., 2020). It can be argued that students from diverse backgrounds may have different interpretations or respond differently than students who are from more affluent socioeconomic backgrounds and are from largely homogenous ethnic and racial backgrounds. Most research on growth mindset includes samples of students that are largely homogenous in their ethnic and racial makeup. Chao et al. (2017) argued that this presents an issue when examining how students are impacted or respond to learning about SEL constructs, such as growth mindset. Sun et al. (2021) found that Chinese students perform better academically compared to students in the United States even though they may hold more fixed mindset beliefs. This presents a contradictory pattern of cross-cultural differences related to how students may conceptualize intelligence and its relationship with academic achievement. However, students who hold growth mindset beliefs are more likely in the long-term to find success with their conceptions of mindset beliefs related to academics, as they are more likely to take academic and intellectual risks and recognize that short-term failures and mistakes can provide invaluable learning experiences for long-term success (Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017). Additionally, growth mindset is inherently an individual construct, which may not take into account the sociocultural values of all students and may be the reason behind multiple examples of contradictory patterns of cross-cultural differences between mindset and achievement (Sun et al., 2021). However, although growth mindset is an individual construct, it may seem communal in practice as students in environments

that hold positive relationships with their peers will be more engaged and perform better academically (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Sun, 2018; Yeager et al., 2016, 2019).

Additionally, few studies (Carrizales et al., 2007; Castro-Olivo & Merrell, 2012; Castro-Olivo, 2014; Cramer & Castro-Olivo, 2016) have examined the impacts of SEL on student learning with historically marginalized student populations where SEL curriculum was culturally adapted for multilingual learner (MLL) Latinx immigrant youth. The results showed positive impacts on students' understanding of SEL constructs, as students indicated they felt more culturally represented and could personally relate to the instructional material. However, their scope was limited to understanding how students responded to different scenarios and whether or not they were able to retain the information on learning about SEL concepts as opposed to understanding how their cultural or socioeconomic backgrounds may influence their interpretation of these SEL constructs. The SEL-based instruction was also taught as a separate subject and was not integrated into academic content such as SEL skills being taught in math, science, history, or ELA. There is a need for growth mindset/SEL practices to be examined in diverse contexts (Herrenkohl et al., 2020).

Transformative SEL practices are used to teach students to critically examine the root causes of inequities in order to form an appreciation of similarities and differences within individuals (Jagers et al., 2018). For example, viewing CASEL's SEL framework (CASEL, 2020) through an equity lens, self-awareness, which is linked to the construct of growth mindset, creates a sense of self for all youth and promotes an appreciation for cultural values, orientations, and collective identities (Jagers et al., 2018). One such cultural orientation is a communal orientation towards one culture which is linked to a

growth mindset practice. Sun (2018) found that classrooms that exhibited growth mindset beliefs focused on building a community of learners where the teacher acted as a facilitator of learning and students did most of the mathematical thinking. In addition, the SEL standards, indicators, and benchmarks (SBIs) that are apart of WA State's OSPI's adopted SEL standards that are being implemented in WA State schools are founded upon four principles, one of which is the principal of equity (WA OSPI, 2020). WA State OSPI's adoption of SEL standards indicates that these standards are intended to be implemented in a way that takes into account the individual student's context, culture, and needs. Self-awareness is one of the benchmarks and is explained as understanding one's external influences, which may be cultural. Similarly, Stanford (2022) asserted that when integrating SEL curricula into practice, teachers should use evidence-based practices and avoid a one-size-fits-all approach to help implement SEL in an equitable way.

Moreover, teaching growth mindset as a practice to students helps to provide an avenue for students from marginalized communities to recognize their potentials to overcome a colonialist perspective towards education (Bresciani Ludvik, 2020; Doulatram, 2021). Educational colonialism involves the perpetuation of cultural values from the dominant majority culture onto students from marginalized communities within the school curriculum, which may discourage students from taking pride in their own cultural and ethnic backgrounds. When educators help to build students' growth mindsets, they may help students to be open to a decolonization mindset and recognize how they may overcome systemic inequities that may have been perpetuated in the schooling system for students from marginalized communities. Bresciani Ludvik (2020)

and Doulatram (2021) asserted that growth mindset is meant to be an empowerment tool and not a construct that controls or asserts values that do not fit culturally or contextually with student populations. Teaching growth mindset to students helps to dismantle barriers towards inclusion and provides an avenue for students as a form of empowerment as opposed to taking away power from them. After reviewing literature on empirical, quantitative research surrounding the use of growth mindset as an intervention in K-12 schools, it is apparent that there is a pattern in the methods used to teach students about growth mindset. Teaching neuroplasticity, for example, was a common approach used within multiple studies (Chao et al., 2017; Yeager et al., 2016).

Teaching Neuroplasticity

One classroom approach to teaching growth mindset, as explained by Robinson (2017), includes teaching students about neuroplasticity. Neuroplasticity is the brain's ability to "form and reform new neural connections in response to experiences and changes in the environment," which will help support students' growth mindset (Robinson, 2017, p. 18). Multiple studies utilize this strategy to help students learn about growth mindset (Chao et al., 2017; Yeager et al., 2016) as well as to address issues of the pervasiveness of neuromyths in education or misconceptions about how the brain works through a misunderstanding of science (Howard-Jones, 2014; van Elk, 2019).

Chao et al. (2017) built upon prior research surrounding a growth mindset intervention to help improve academic performance by adding an incentive and rewards system to measure how this system influenced the intervention. The growth mindset intervention is based on a model of achievement motivation in which each person perceives their intelligence differently when it comes to certain subjects or academic

skills. The researchers explained that a belief in the malleability of abilities helps individuals seek challenges because they are less worried about making mistakes, but rather, value growth. Participants were separated between control and intervention groups. In the intervention groups, students were given 10 one-hour lessons on brain development. During the intervention, it was explained that the brain is just like any other muscle in the body; the brain will grow with repeated exercise. Teachers specifically taught students about the malleability of the brain, which is the brain's ability to be shaped and adapted over time, and described how the brain works and how it forms new neural connections (neuroplasticity) as knowledge is acquired, which makes people smarter. Academic setbacks are also emphasized as an opportunity for students to learn and grow. Teachers gave students classroom exercises that helped reinforce these key concepts, which helped with students' understanding of the brain's growth. The researchers ultimately concluded that an incentives and rewards system can help to reinforce growth mindset skills/traits (e.g., students' response to academic setbacks, learning helps the brain physically grow stronger) as well as to improve students' academic achievement.

Similar to the study by Chao et al. (2017), Yeager et al. (2016) implemented an intervention that was built upon prior research by improving the effectiveness of growth mindset interventions. The goals of the study were to determine if formal instruction on growth mindset helps to improve the grade point averages (GPAs) of incoming freshman in high school and to determine if they could take the same intervention given in a different study, redesign the study, and implement it with a different population undergoing the same life situation (i.e., transitioning to high school from middle school).

Yeager et al. (2016) used design thinking as an improvement to a previous growth mindset intervention. The first intervention in their study tested whether the design process produced growth mindset materials that were an improvement over original materials when examining proxy outcomes, such as beliefs, goals, attributions, and challenge-seeking behavior (Yeager et al., 2016). The second intervention tested whether they had developed a revised growth mindset intervention that was actually effective at changing achievement when delivered to a census of students in 10 different schools across the country (Yeager et al., 2016). Part of the growth mindset intervention included students reading an article about teenagers' brains growth (neuroplasticity) through learning so that the information was relevant to the students. As a follow up to the article, teachers then emphasized how the brain was like a muscle that can grow the more one learns and uses their brain. A revised growth mindset intervention showed improvement in terms of short-term proxy outcomes and improved 9th grade core-course GPA and reduced D/F rates for lower achieving students when delivered via the Internet under normal conditions. This research provided a model for how to improve and scale growth mindset interventions and psychological interventions in educational settings. The results of this study also provided insight into how to teach growth mindsets effectively by emphasizing the physical development of the brain. After reviewing literature on growth mindset interventions, it is concluded that most interventions use similar methods, such as self-report Likert surveys and using students' achievement scores to measure the effectiveness of the growth mindset intervention.

Measurement of Growth Mindset Interventions

Multiple studies use academic achievement as a measurement of the effectiveness of growth mindset interventions (Blackwell et al., 2007; Bostwick et al., 2017; Yeager et al., 2016) and some researchers utilize self-report Likert-scale survey to measure the strength or degree of a person's growth mindset (Bangert et al., 2016; Blackwell et al., 2007; Bostwick et al., 2017; Chen & Tutwiler, 2017; Sun, 2018). The studies that use academic achievement as a way to measure the effectiveness of a growth mindset intervention typically use students' GPA from the previous school year as a baseline to compare to students' GPA attained at the end of the intervention (Blackwell et al., 2007; Yeager et al., 2016). Conversely, Bostwick et al. (2017) used a different approach to measure academic achievement after a growth mindset intervention was implemented with students. The researchers used a math test and determined students' growth by examining their ability to solve more difficult equations. Some studies used both academic achievement and a self-report Likert-scale surveys to measure the degree of students' growth mindsets (Blackwell et al., 2007; Bostwick et al., 2017). Blackwell et al. (2007) gave students a pretest survey to measure students' initial motivational profiles by having students self-report their ideas on theories of intelligence, learning and performance goals, and their beliefs about effort. At the end of the study, a posttest survey was given to participants to measure what they could recall as well as how their ideas about the theory of intelligence had changed over time. Likewise, Bostwick et al. (2017) gave participants a survey at the end of the intervention to allow students to self-report their levels of engagement in a math classroom on different levels, such as a behavioral, cognitive, and emotional, on a Likert-scale survey. Bangert et al. (2016) used

Likert-scale surveys to assess schools across a district to determine their schools' culture

by measuring and comparing school staff in terms of which schools' faculty held more

growth mindset beliefs about their students. Another common characteristic among

studies that use growth mindset as an intervention is that the interventions most often take

place in secondary math classroom settings.

Domain Specific Beliefs

Multiple studies take place in secondary math classrooms (Blackwell et al., 2007;

Bostwick et al., 2017; Sun, 2018; Yeager et al., 2016). Two studies explained the

rationale behind using a math classroom, which is that students often view math as

subject that is a fixed skill, which leads to underperformance on both state testing as well

as in the math classroom (Blackwell et al., 2007; Sun, 2018). The literature suggests that

mindset beliefs can be domain specific (Buehl et al., 2002; Yeager & Dweck, 2012) and

that it is more common to have a fixed mindset in mathematics than in a subject such as

history (Jonsson et al., 2012). Research suggests that teachers' mindsets towards their

own math ability, or teachers who express anxiety around their own ability to effectively

provide math instruction to students, can play a part in the anxiety that students face

when undertaking math assignments (Beilock et al., 2010) and impact their achievement

in math (Ramirez et al., 2018), illustrating that it is even prevalent for teachers as well as

students to experience math anxiety. Although most of the literature includes studies that

take place in secondary math classrooms, a few studies have examined growth mindset in

the context of other subject areas, such as the humanities (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Hass et

al., 2016; Karwowski, 2014; Nagle & Taylor, 2017). However, two of these studies took

place in higher education (Hass et al., 2016; Karwowski, 2014), and two took place in

middle school classrooms (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Nagle & Taylor, 2017). One study used

a middle school humanities (social studies/English in this context) classroom as the

subject of intervention (Nagle & Taylor, 2017). Nagle and Taylor (2017) used qualitative

sources of data to explain the impact of integrating a state-mandated personal learning

plan curriculum in a 7th grade humanities classroom (Nagle & Taylor, 2017). The

researchers concluded that students who approach the learning plan requirement with a

growth mindset were the most successful with the implementation of the personal

learning plans and met their academic goals. Although most of the literature includes

research that uses quantitative research methods, a few studies have used qualitative

research methods (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Nagle & Taylor, 2017; Sun, 2018).

Qualitative Methods Used in Growth Mindset Studies

Most of the research involving growth mindset implementation involves the use

of quantitative research methods (Blackwell et al., 2007; Bostwick et al., 2017; Chao et

al., 2017; Chen & Tutwiler, 2017; Hass et al., 2016; Hochanadel & Finamore, 2015;

Karwowski, 2014; Sommet & Elliot, 2017; Yeager et al., 2016). One study uses a mixed-

method approach by using informal qualitative techniques such as one-on-one interviews,

focus group interviews, and other sources of qualitative data (Yeager et al., 2016).

Blackwell et al. (2007) included mostly quantitative sources of data, including

observational data, to measure how students responded to the growth mindset orientation

by noticing changes in behavior such as engagement and their response to academic

failures. However, three studies used qualitative methods and research designs (Barnes &

Fives, 2016; Nagle & Taylor, 2017; Sun, 2018). Barnes and Fives (2016) and Sun (2018)

examined how teaching practices in middle school classrooms can portray certain

mindset messages that can either perpetuate a fixed or growth mindset.

Holistic Teaching Practices

Criticism around growth mindset implementation in classrooms suggests that

teachers are simply telling students to have a growth mindset, which puts the

responsibility of shifting beliefs about intelligence on students without consideration for

how contextual factors in a classroom play a role in the adoption of a growth mindset

(Edwards et al., 2017). Yeager et el. (2019) argued that future research on growth

mindset should examine how contextual factors play a part in the development of

students' growth mindsets. However, two studies examined how contextual factors can

impact students' abilities in developing a growth mindset and how teacher practice (what

teachers say and do) can implicitly and explicitly portray certain mindset messages

regarding math skill and ability (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Sun, 2018). Both studies that

investigated holistic teaching practices in middle school classrooms used a case study

design approach. Barnes and Fives (2016) used a naturalistic case study design in a 5th

grade ELA classroom, while Sun (2018) used a multisite case study research design and

compared the teaching practices of multiple math classrooms in a middle school. Both

studies used triangulation by including multiple sources of data such as interviews,

observations, and artifacts or analysis of student work and course documents. Both

studies had similar findings. For example, the classrooms that experienced the most

growth, or that perpetuated a growth mindset implicitly and explicitly, were the

classrooms in which teachers gave process-oriented praise, gave timely feedback, and

emphasized effort over products (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Sun, 2018). However, the two

studies differ in that Sun (2018) focused more specifically on how a growth or fixed mindset was portrayed in the context of math as a subject area, whereas Barnes and Fives (2016) focused on growth mindset from a general perspective. The following synthesis of the two studies, as well as literature surrounding ELA pedagogy, consists of five categories of teaching practices which were used to analyze teaching practices in the context of high school ELA classrooms.

Sorting and Classroom Organization

In the two studies that examined holistic teaching practices through a growth mindset lens, there are a couple of key findings that were either specific to one study or were common across both studies (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Sun, 2018). For example, Sun (2018) examined how teachers label and compare students in interviews. The researcher concluded that the teachers that demonstrate a more fixed mindset about math skills (determined by a Likert-scale survey given on the onset of the study) use a more deficit view of students' math abilities, whereas one teacher who demonstrated the highest degree of growth mindset uses a strengths-based approach, implying that success in math can be displayed in a variety of ways. This is different from Barnes and Fives' (2016) study, in which the authors did not discuss success specific to a content area, but rather focused on growth or success from a general perspective by communicating the importance of handling mistakes and reflection. Sun (2018) found that middle school math instructors who held more fixed mindset beliefs were more likely to identify specific students as unlikely to be successful in math. Therefore, the literature suggests the way in which teachers group students may send implicit mindset messages to students about their abilities (Sun, 2018).

In addition, teachers' fixed mindset messages about student ability may be implicitly communicated to students without the teacher's knowledge. Another part to this category of teaching codes is how teachers are communicating expectations towards students and whether or not they hold high expectations for all students and how this may be explicitly or implicitly communicated to students. Dweck (2010) asserted that it is pivotal for teachers to hold students to high expectations in order to perpetuate growth mindset messages to students; however, Sun (2018) found that teachers who hold more fixed mindset beliefs often have differing expectations for students, depending on how they view their math abilities. Moreover, the way in which teachers frame language when they communicate expectations is important to consider when conveying mindset messages to students (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017; Sun, 2018). Framing language in a way where students believe in their abilities as writers, readers, scientists, and mathematicians can be a powerful way to communicate growth mindset messages to students (Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017). Framing language in a way that shapes students' success by saying phrases such as "not meeting standard yet" can help to communicate growth mindset messages to students (Robinson, 2017, p. 19). Teacher mindset in regard to ELA instruction and student ability as well as the language teachers use to frame expectations and instruction were examined during the course of this study.

Explicit Teaching of Growth Mindset Concepts

Multiple studies in the literature have investigated the impacts of explicitly teaching lessons on growth mindset (Blackwell et al., 2007; Chao et al., 2017; Yeager et al., 2016). In Sun's (2018) study, the teachers that demonstrated higher degrees of growth mindset specifically explained the physical development of the brain by teaching the

concept of neuroplasticity, a strategy that was highlighted in an earlier part of this literature review (Chao et al., 2017; Robinson, 2017; Yeager et al., 2016). Teaching about the science behind how the brain works helps to explicitly avoid the perpetuation of neuromyths and illustrates for students how the brain processes information. Providing visuals can also be a helpful strategy for students to visualize the learning process. A key component of explicitly teaching growth mindset concepts is emphasizing academic error and intellectual risk taking (Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017). Dweck (2010) explained that students with a fixed mindset may be more hesitant to take academic risks by answering teacher questions or persevering through challenging work for fear of failure and how their peers and teachers may perceive their intelligence. In contrast, students with a growth mindset are more likely to take intellectual risks as they see risk-taking as a pivotal part of the learning process. A key part to this type of instruction involves teachers emphasizing the long-term benefits of academic risk-taking, which could involve understanding concepts at a deeper level versus knowing and understanding concepts at a surface level. In addition, the type of verbal and written praise teachers may provide to students can also communicate the benefits of academic risk-taking by praising students for attempting to answer questions regardless of whether they were correct or incorrect. Teachers' emphasis of academic risk-taking helps to explicitly perpetuate growth mindset messages to students. In Sun's (2018) and Barnes and Fives' (2016) studies, the teachers who held growth mindset beliefs about learning openly emphasized taking risks, and the teacher in Barnes and Fives' study taught students how to respond to taking risks when they were not right. Furthermore, this category emphasizes how teachers explicitly address growth mindset towards their students in the

form of explicitly teaching lessons about how to build and cultivate growth mindset as well as whether or not they emphasize academic risk taking and to what extent.

Classroom Culture as it Pertains to Growth Mindset (Explicit/Implicit)

This category addresses the extent to which the classroom culture is structured in a way that explicitly or implicitly communicates growth mindset messages to students. Dweck (2010) and Robinson (2017) asserted that making mistakes and failures is integral toward building classroom cultures that emphasize growth mindset values. Robinson (2017) provided examples such as having wall posters like "FAIL- first attempt in learning" as well as having teachers share their own experiences with failures and how they responded to these failures. Anderson (2005) asserted that teachers should embrace students' mistakes as an integral part to learning how to write grammatically correct sentences by explaining that "the heart of good grammar teaching is loving students' mistakes" (p. 4) when it comes to grammar instruction in ELA classrooms. In Barnes and Fives' (2016) study, the 5th grade teacher openly admitted she makes mistakes and that it is important to learn from one's mistakes. In Sun's (2018) study, in terms of examining how teachers handled mistakes made in the classroom, there were conflicting approaches from teachers. Some teachers immediately corrected an incorrect answer with little to no student input. Conversely, other teachers discussed the problem, worked through the problem with the students, and reflected on what they could do differently next time, engaging the students in classroom conversation and giving them agency in their learning. In addition, the literature suggests that students will respond differently when addressing mistakes as a part of the learning process depending on their views of learning and their abilities (i.e., fixed versus growth). Students with a fixed mindset may also be

more likely to shift the blame for their failures on external factors rather than taking ownership and reflecting on what they could do to improve, which is more likely the behavior that students with a growth mindset will demonstrate, as they are more likely to have the awareness of where they went wrong and how they could improve. In this regard, students with a growth mindset are able to be more metacognitive about their own learning by being able to self-examine where they went wrong and reflect on how they could improve. Therefore, it is evident from the literature that failures in classrooms exist every day, but the way in which students and teachers respond to these failures can help lead to success (Robinson, 2017). It is up to teachers to shape the culture of the classroom in a way that embraces failures and mistakes as a key part to the learning process.

Additionally, a pivotal part to creating classroom cultures that center around growth mindset values includes focusing on the process of learning in contrast to only focusing on academic outcomes such as achievement. Barnes and Fives (2016) created a growth-centered classroom by emphasizing the process of learning rather than only focusing on outcomes. The teacher spoke about the importance of each step of the writing process as opposed to only having students write one draft and turn that in as a final piece. The teacher had them engage in prewriting activities, write multiple drafts, and help each other revise and edit before accepting a final draft of writing as complete. Similarly, in Sun's (2018) study, some teachers immediately corrected incorrect responses and only focused on the outcomes of learning (i.e., whether an answer was correct or incorrect) whereas other teachers who were a part of the study emphasized the process of learning by working through problems with students. When students were asked to work on their own or with others, those students in classrooms where the process

of learning was emphasized demonstrated higher levels of engagement in math activities and experienced greater levels of achievement.

Furthermore, a final part to this category is whether or not teachers explicitly recognize growth as opposed to achievement. In Sun's (2018) study, the same students' scores were posted every week, and the chart emphasized outcomes rather than growth. This contrasts with the approach used by the teacher in Barnes and Fives' (2016) study, where a chart was used in the classroom to display and recognize students' growth over the course of a period. The teacher in the study also explicitly highlighted students' growth in the classroom both verbally and through written feedback on assignments as well as during parent-teacher conferences where she spoke towards students' abilities in ELA with a more growth-focused view as opposed to only focusing on outcomes. As a result of a synthesis of the literature, category three of examining teaching practices holistically focuses on how teachers create a culture explicitly or implicitly expressing growth mindset messages to students, such as focusing on the process of learning versus only outcomes, explicitly recognizing growth over achievement, and how mistakes are viewed in terms of learning.

Giving Feedback and Assessment

The literature suggests that part of establishing classroom cultures that are growth mindset-oriented involves teachers providing some element of their grading system that focuses on the growth students make as opposed to only focusing on products (Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017). This assertion is congruent with the findings from Barnes and Fives' (2016) study where the teacher emphasized growth over products and openly provided feedback to students about their growth.

Moreover, the type of feedback is provided towards students is another area that was examined in Barnes and Fives' (2016) and Sun's (2018) research. Two types of feedback were defined in Sun's (2018) study: verbal praise and written feedback. Teachers who held more fixed mindset beliefs about the nature of learning related to math also communicated these beliefs implicitly through the type of feedback that was given to students (Rattan et al., 2012; Sun, 2018). For example, these teachers frequently provided comforting feedback towards students' low math abilities, which was less likely to promote engagement in math tasks. These students who received this type of feedback also reported lower levels of motivation and held lower levels of self-efficacy when it came to their perceptions about their own math abilities. It was explained that this helped students further their understanding of math work and continued to engage them in that current work or problem they were working to complete. Moreover, some of the teachers simply said, "good job" or "nice work," whereas a few of the teachers made their feedback more specific to math work. Teachers who used more discipline-specific feedback utilized strategy-focused feedback that was related to discipline-specific practices related to math and gave students a sense of direction regarding what to do and how to apply the advice to their math work. This helped students further their understanding of math work and continued to engage them in the current work or problem they were working to complete. This finding is congruent with the findings from Barnes and Fives' (2016) study, where the teacher emphasized effort and growth over outcomes during conferences and established a classroom culture where students felt comfortable discussing their feedback (Barnes & Fives, 2016).

In terms of written feedback, there is little evidence of written feedback given to students on their math work in the artifacts that were collected in Sun's (2018) study. This contrasts with the findings of Barnes and Fives (2016), where the teacher emphasized timely, formative, and process-oriented feedback. The teacher used "love-notes" to provide feedback to students. This allows the teacher to provide feedback to individuals or groups in a timely manner. The teacher gives the student the note and walks away, allowing them time to reflect on the feedback. The teacher then checks back in with the student after feedback is provided. After providing feedback, the teacher demonstrates/models the process of going back to check work, making sure students understand and know how to use feedback.

In Sun's (2018) study, some of the teachers did not allow students to redo work, which sends the message to students that if they do not understand a math concept or know how to solve a math problem, there is no reward for trying to persevere through the challenge of understanding their mistake, as they are not allowed to redo work. However, the teacher in Barnes and Fives (2016) study allowed students to redo work on assignments, which sends the message to students that if they do not know the answer right away, they can work through challenging assignments and correct their own mistakes. Additionally, the teacher allowed students to discuss their scores and provided opportunities for students to explain why they agree or disagree with scores, and then supported their assertion with evidence.

In secondary education, messaging and conversations around assessment practices can be pivotal in helping to develop students' growth mindsets (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Sun, 2018). For example, when conversations around assessment practices are more

growth and process oriented, students are more adaptive and are likely to be more engaged and invested in what they are learning. As the nature of instruction changes and expectations related to achievement are higher in secondary education, it is crucial for learners to be able to make sense of assessment-related feedback and interpret this in a way that supports their overall well-being. The lack of discussion around assessment-related practices and feedback can send fixed or growth mindset messages to students (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017). When identity development is at the forefront of students' developmental stages in secondary education, conversations around assessment and assessment-related feedback provides a foundation for students' future actions and decisions and can set the tone for their mindset about their academic abilities. As aforementioned, students with a growth mindset are more likely to accept challenges, be resilient in the face of adversity, and appreciate learning opportunities. Therefore, messaging about the nature of assessment in secondary education helps to shape their future educational journeys. Therefore, the way in which teachers assess students and how they provide feedback was a focus area for this study.

Engaging in ELA Tasks

This category focuses on how teachers engage students in ELA tasks and which discipline-specific practices help to perpetuate growth mindset messages for students. It is evident from the literature that there are clear differences between the type of instruction that is provided to students when teachers hold more fixed mindset beliefs about learning compared to teachers that hold more growth mindset beliefs about learning in math or ELA (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Sun, 2018). One teacher in Sun's (2018) study focused on multidimensional skills, such as supporting others to understand, organizing

data, and engaging in others' ideas, whereas other teachers focused only on outcomes. Teachers who focused on the process of math learning helped to illustrate to their students that being successful in math can look different depending on the type of math skill students are working to cultivate. In contrast, in a few of the classrooms, the teachers used an initiate, response, evaluate structure. In one of the classrooms, for example, the teacher graphed a line, students would repeat the steps, and then they would do it on their own while the teacher evaluated their math work. In another classroom, students were doing the majority of the mathematical thinking, convincing each other of their own ideas and strategies for problem solving. The teacher, in this case, acted as more of a facilitator who would respond to student thinking. Therefore, a focus of this study was on how teachers engage students in learning.

Smagorinsky (2019) asserted that teachers should create conceptual units which guide instruction and take into consideration students' areas of interests. Smagorinsky explained that effective ELA pedagogy should take a constructivist approach in which teachers gather inventories on their students and learn about students' interests. This approach helps students connect what they have previously learned to what they may be currently learning. Langer's (2001) research on ELA pedagogy concluded that effective ELA pedagogy involves teachers asking students to make connections to what they already know. Robinson (2017) asserted that involving students in the learning process, such as through interest inventories to help guide unit planning or by asking them to make connections to what they already know about a topic, helps to include students in the learning process and sets the message that their prior experience is valuable to their current setting. Similarly, Smagorinsky (2019) asserted that teachers should regularly use

interest inventories when designing and planning instruction for conceptual units in order to validate students' interests and prior learning experiences. This helps to send growth mindset messages, as students will view their learning on a continuum rather than something that is static and ends with one year and begins with another.

Teachers often ask students to draw upon their prior experiences in order to connect learnings to their previous experiences. In the National Council for Teachers of English's (NCTE) and International Reading Association's (IRA) standards, standard three requires students to draw upon a variety of strategies to "comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts" (NCTE, 2022, Standard 3). This standard helps to assert that learning in an ELA classroom requires the use of multidimensional skill use as opposed to only focusing on the outcomes of learning. Learning in ELA can be nuanced, and success in this case can be measured in a variety of ways, which gives students more agency over their learning as they can determine which route to take to achieve the standard. Langer (2001) focused on the practice of ELA teachers who were able to increase achievement with students and found that teachers saw improvement when they gave them opportunities to connect their learning to their prior experiences (e.g., learning from their personal/cultural backgrounds as well as previous classes). Gritter (2012) examined the impacts on students when textual discussions were permeable (i.e., students engaged in text discussions where they were invited to make connections to their own lives).

Providing autonomy by allowing students to connect materials to prior knowledge may allow students to take ownership of their learning, which helps to promote growth mindset beliefs (Chen & Tutwiler, 2017). Autonomy can consist of student choice by

giving them opportunities to connect their learning by asking students to draw upon their prior experiences (Gritter, 2012; Langer, 2001; Smagorinsky, 2019). Additionally Common Core State Standards (CCSS) ELA-LiteracyW11-12 asks students to write narratives about their own lived experiences, which openly invites students to write about their personal experiences. Therefore, how teachers engage students by asking them to connect their learning to previous educational experiences by making text-to-text, self, and world connections (but not limited to this way) was examined.

In addition, how teachers scaffold instruction for students to learn skills in ELA can be pivotal in communicating mindset messages. Robinson (2017) concluded that creating classroom cultures that emphasize growth mindset values involves teachers using active learning methods to learn skills. In an ELA classroom, this may involve how teachers scaffold students to think about how to engage in ELA tasks, such as how they engage them in reading and writing tasks. Smagorinsky (2019) and Langer (2001) discussed providing tools for students to be able to process their ideas and thoughts as they are reading texts and illustrate for students how they should be engaging with texts as opposed to passively reading or viewing a text. For example, if students are reading a period piece, the teacher may provide a political cartoon or primary source document that represents the time period in which the text takes place and then help students engage with the text by walking through and discussing how one may read and interpret a text, such as a political cartoon or primary source document. Additionally, engaging students in ELA skills such as learning grammar should not be done in isolation or out of context; rather, grammar instruction should incorporate active learning methods that help students connect what they are learning to a current unit, text they are reading, and/or writing

assignment (Anderson, 2005). Furthermore, when it comes to framing language in ELA classrooms, Min-Young and Bloome (2021) called upon ELA teachers to incorporate language thinking practices for students in order to communicate ways of thinking for students (e.g., the way in which a teacher may ask students to think about a text). A teacher may, for example, communicate to their students something along the lines of "Not only do I want you to think about theme of the text, but I also would like you to think about how you personally connect with one of the characters presented in the text." This helps to scaffold social practices that teachers and students may engage in during ELA instruction where students and teachers can discuss, display, and communicate thinking. When teachers frame thinking through language, this helps to validate multiple ways of thinking, emphasizing that learning and thinking can take on a variety of approaches in an ELA classroom. This process helps students label their ways of thinking when engaging in ELA tasks and creates a reflective space for students to learn in ELA classrooms (Min-Young & Bloome, 2021).

Another focus area for this category was whether or not teachers provide students with opportunities to collaborate with one another. In Sun's (2018) study, the teachers that held more growth mindset beliefs established cultures where students were learning from another. These classrooms experienced higher levels of engagement and achievement compared to classrooms where most of the learning and thinking was independent. Langer (2001) concluded that teachers who "beat the odds" incorporate collaboration techniques with students in their ELA classroom instruction. Additionally, Christensen (2017) explained that ELA teachers can create classroom communities where students feel comfortable to share their writing with other students and that, in order to do

so, there needs to be a classroom culture established in which students feel comfortable doing this with their peers. This involves intellectual risk-taking, which is a key component of establishing a classroom culture that emphasizes growth mindset (Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017). Similarly, Stengel et al. (2019) explained that in order for teachers to create cultures where students can collaboratively engage in discourse centered around ELA texts, teachers must first work toward establishing cultures in which students feel comfortable taking risks. Some strategies that were highlighted involve teaching students humility, or recognizing when their knowledge is limited on a certain topic, and how they could learn more by going back to a text or learning from others. Another strategy is appreciation, which involves students recognizing other students for their contributions to classroom discourse. Teaching students to recognize that their learning on some topics may be limited emphasizes the learning process as a continuum rather than something that is static, which helps to communicate growth mindset messages to students. CCSS (2022) standard ELA-Literacy.9-10 asks students to "Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively" (p. 50). In addition, NCTE/IRA standard 11 asks students to "participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities" (NCTE, 2022, Standard 11). Therefore, as a part of effective ELA instruction, teachers should incorporate methods for collaboration. This was examined as a part of this study. Furthermore, in order to address gaps in the literature, criticism regarding how growth mindset has previously been implemented in classrooms, and to answer the research

question, the principal investigator examined the holistic teaching practices of high school ELA teachers in order to determine which discipline-specific practices for ELA instruction help to perpetuate growth mindset messages in ELA high school classrooms.

Summary

A growth mindset occurs when students believe that their abilities can develop and improve over time with hard work, patience, and ambition (Dweck, 2010). This contrasts with Dweck's (2010) definition of the coined term fixed mindset, which means students believe their ability to grow as scholars is predetermined. A common issue faced by many educators is having to manage teaching academic content while overcoming students' defeated or fixed mindsets before students' even enter the classroom (Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017). A defeated or fixed mindset expressed by a student can be expressed in regard to education as a whole (Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017) and can also be domain specific (Buehl et al., 2002; Yeager & Dweck, 2012). A common strategy utilized in many studies to help teach students about growth mindset is the idea of teaching neuroplasticity (Chao et al., 2017; Sun, 2018; Yeager et al., 2016), or the physical development of the brain in which the brain makes new neural connections as a response to changes in the environment (Robinson, 2017).

Many studies have taken place in math classrooms (Blackwell et al., 2007; Bostwick et al., 2017; Chao et al., 2017; Yeager et al., 2016), as math is a subject for which students have a tendency, more so than in other subjects, to view the subject as a fixed skill (Jonsson et al., 2012). There were a few studies that took place in content areas other than math and also took place in a secondary education setting (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Nagle & Taylor, 2017). This is a gap in the literature, as students can have a fixed

view over their education as a whole or when it comes to other subjects and skills such as writing, reading, scientific thinking, or even physical education.

Finally, only a few studies used a purely qualitative method (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Nagle & Taylor, 2017; Sun, 2018). The principal investigator views this as a gap as well, as more research is needed involving growth mindset in classroom settings using qualitative methods. Although it may be more feasible to utilize a quasi-experimental research design, growth mindset is difficult to measure using numeric values and is most often expressed through behavior, written work, or is verbalized by students, which requires the use of qualitative methods in order to capture students' growth mindset. Moreover, only two studies examined teaching practices holistically (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Sun, 2018). This research was much needed, as most research has only looked at mindset messaging from teachers rather than holistic teaching practices. However, one of these studies used a middle school math classroom (Sun, 2018), whereas the other study included a 5th grade ELA classroom (Barnes & Fives, 2016). This is a gap in two facets. First, more research is needed that views teaching practices holistically in terms of how teachers can implicitly or explicitly perpetuate a fixed or growth mindset when it comes to learning from a general view. Second, more research is needed that is domain specific in content areas other than math. Other secondary education content area teachers would benefit from more research that views growth mindset specific to other content areas. Table 1 provides a summary of the literature review.

Table 1

Literature Review Chart

Category of the literature review and importance/connection to growth mindset	Research methods
Culturally Responsive SEL & the Culturally Relevancy of Growth Mindset	N/A
There is a lack of research involving the implementation of SEL constructs such as growth mindset that utilize historically marginalized and culturally diverse student samples (Chao et al., 2017; Herrenkohl et al., 2020).	
Students who are from culturally diverse backgrounds may have different interpretations of SEL constructs such as growth mindset (Chao et al., 2017; Herrenkohl et al., 2020).	
Therefore, there is a need for more research to investigate how culturally diverse student samples respond to and are impacted by the teaching of SEL constructs such as growth mindset (Chao et al., 2017; Herrenkohl et al., 2020).	
Teaching Neuroplasticity	
1. Explains neuroplasticity as a method for teaching students about GM (Robinson, 2017)	Quantitative and Mixed Method
2. When students are taught about neuroplasticity this helps to illustrate the importance of having a GM (Chao et al., 2017; Robinson, 2017; Yeager et al., 2016).	
Measurement of Growth Mindset Interventions	Quantitative
1. Most research on GM in educational settings has used quantitative methods (Blackwell et al., 2007; Bostwick et al., 2017; Chao et al., 2017; Chen & Tutwiler, 2017; Hass et al., 2016; Hochanadel & Finamore, 2015; Karwowski, 2014; Sommet & Elliot, 2017; Yeager et al., 2016).	
2. Most studies either use a self-report Likert scale to measure students' self-reported levels of GM (Bangert et al., 2016; Blackwell et al., 2007; Bostwick et al., 2017; Chen & Tutwiler, 2017; Sun, 2018) or involves using academic achievement such as students' grade point averages (GPA) to measure the effectiveness of GM interventions (Blackwell et al., 2007; Bostwick et al., 2017; Yeager et al., 2016).	

Category of the literature review and importance/connection to growth mindset	Research methods
Domain Specific Beliefs	Quantitative
1. Multiple studies involving GM in educational settings take place in math classrooms (Blackwell et al., 2007; Bostwick et al., 2017; Sun, 2018; Yeager et al., 2016).	
2. The literature suggests that mindset beliefs can be domain specific (Buehl et al., 2002; Yeager & Dweck, 2012) and that it is more common to have a fixed mindset when it comes to mathematics than a subject such as history (Jonsson et al., 2012).	
3. Teacher mindset around their own math ability can impact students when undertaking math assignments (Beilock et al., 2010) and can also impact math achievement (Ramirez et al., 2018).	
4. Few research studies involving GM take place in other content areas other than math (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Hass et al., 2016; Karwowski, 2014; Nagle & Taylor, 2017).	
Qualitative Methods Used in Growth Mindset Studies	
There are few research studies involving GM in educational settings that use qualitative research methods (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Nagle & Taylor, 2017; Sun, 2018).	Qualitative
Holistic Teaching Practices	
1. Criticism around implementing GM in classrooms suggest that teachers may be just telling students to have a GM without considering how contextual factors play a role in the adoption of a GM.	Qualitative
	Naturalistic case study
2. Two studies address criticism around the implementation of GM in classrooms by examining how contextual factors can impact students' abilities in developing a growth mindset and how teacher practice (what teachers say and do) can implicitly and explicitly portray certain mindset messages when it comes to math skill and ability (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Sun, 2018).	Multisite case study design
3. Teachers can use strategies such give process-oriented praise, give timely feedback, and emphasize effort over products in order to shape a classroom environment to align with GM (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Sun, 2018).	
4. There is a need for more research that examines holistic teaching practices in subject areas other than math (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Sun, 2018).	

Furthermore, the theoretical framework that guided this study incorporates

literature from psychology around growth mindset implementation in educational settings

as well as how this has been examined, previous studies that have examined holistic

teaching practices through a growth mindset lens, as well as the literature on effective

ELA pedagogy in order to determine a set of a priori teaching codes that can be used

during this study to address the research question.

Chapter Three: Research Method

The purpose of this study was to examine and describe the holistic teaching practices of high school ELA teachers through a growth mindset lens. This study sought to investigate the following research question:

How might English Language Arts teachers in high school classrooms convey certain mindset messages to students related to their English Language Arts ability in their classrooms?

In order to address a gap in the literature and to best answer the research question, the principal investigator employed a qualitative research method with a multiple case study research design in order to examine teaching practices holistically in high school ELA classrooms. Qualitative techniques involve examination from an interpretative paradigm in which researchers examine issues from people's subjective experiences (Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 2016). Qualitative research is particularly interested in understanding people's stories, how they view world issues, and how they experience different phenomena. Education is a value-laden field which inherently creates a subjective reality where people's emotions, actions, and behavior become a part of everyday routines (Gall et al., 2007). Therefore, there was a need for continued use of qualitative research in education in order to understand the innerworkings of the field from people's subjective realities. Some problems are too complex to quantify and rely on qualitative techniques to provide context to complex issues (Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 2016). Growth mindset is a complex phenomenon to investigate because of the nuanced interpretation of how one may demonstrate a growth mindset, the limitations of the way in which growth mindset interventions have been measured in the past, as well as

understanding how a teacher may incorporate growth mindset into their practice (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Sun, 2018). However, few research studies have incorporated the use of qualitative techniques to investigate this phenomenon, as much of the literature on growth mindset in education has utilized quantitative research methods (Blackwell et al., 2007; Bostwick et al., 2017; Chao et al., 2017; Chen & Tutwiler, 2017; Hass et al., 2016; Hochanadel & Finamore, 2015; Karwowski, 2014; Sommet & Elliot, 2017; Yeager et al., 2016). Therefore, there was a need to investigate the use of growth mindset with students in education using qualitative techniques, which is ultimately why a multiple case study design was utilized. In this chapter, the principal investigator describes the rationale for the research method and design, the participants and sampling procedures, the measures that were used, the processes for data collection, the sources of data, and a description of how the data were analyzed in order to best address the research question.

Rationale for Research Method and Design

In qualitative research, the researcher utilizes a constructivist epistemological approach to investigate a phenomenon (Gall et al., 2007). The researcher utilizes the interpretive paradigm in order to grasp the meaning of phenomena from people's subjective realities. As Bogdan and Knopp Biklen (2016) asserted, "qualitative research is particularly interested in the way in which the world is understood, experimented on, or produced by people's lives, behavior, interactions, and narratives" (p. 4). As qualitative research takes place in nonmanipulated settings, this allows the researcher to examine complex social phenomenon, like growth mindset, holistically (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). One of the five major designs to qualitative research, a case study, is the study of a single context in order to explain a phenomenon and gain an in-depth understanding of a

single case (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Yin (2002) and Yazan (2015) asserted that case study research involves the study of a real-life context or setting where a single case is examined. Creswell and Poth (2017) asserted that case study research is a type of qualitative research design that can be both the object of study as well as the product of inquiry. In other words, case study research is a qualitative approach in which the researcher explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case), or multiple cases in this context, where the researcher uses procedures that involve in-depth and detailed data collection involving multiple sources of data and reports a case description as well as themes (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

Both previous studies that examined holistic teaching practices used a case study approach. Barnes and Fives (2016) utilized a naturalistic single case study to describe one teachers' classroom, and Sun (2018) utilized a multisite multiple case study design to describe and compare multiple classrooms across schools. For the purposes of this research study, a multiple within site case study design was utilized where the principal investigator examined multiple classrooms within the same school. The use of a case study design allowed the principal investigator to address the methodological gap in the literature as well as the research question under investigation, as qualitative research relies on techniques that utilize a constructivist, interpretative approach (Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2017). The nature of subjectivity that is inherent in qualitative research helped to best understand teachers' holistic practices through a growth mindset lens as opposed to attempting to manipulate the setting in order to understand which practices perpetuate growth mindset messages to students.

A key aspect of case study research is the use of observation to understand a phenomenon or situation. In order to examine holistic teaching practices in the context of high school ELA classrooms, the principal investigator utilized observation as a source of data collection in order to observe teachers' pedagogical approach towards ELA instruction through a growth mindset lens while confirming whether certain practices, as outlined in theoretical framework of this chapter, do help to perpetuate growth mindset messages to students. In addition, utilizing a triangulation of data sources allows the researcher to affirm what is observed in practice and fill in gaps of missing information that cannot be explained or described through direct observation as well as ensure the reliability and validity of the research. Triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods of data collection to understand the phenomenon under investigation (Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2017). Using multiple sources of data helps to validate the findings because the data are derived from more than one source, which helps to validate the results and adds to the credibility of the study. In this context, using multiple sources of data to affirm findings from the primary source of data and observations or to fill in gaps of missing information helps to explain how teachers are utilizing techniques that incorporate implicit or explicit growth mindset messages to students, which ultimately addresses the research question under investigation.

In order to best address the research question and carry out a case study design, the principal investigator used an interpretivist epistemological approach. Crowe et al. (2011) explained that an interpretivist approach to case study research involves understanding contexts as perceived from different perspectives. An interpretivist case study approach involves the researcher attempting to understand individual and social

shared meanings. In the context of this study, the principal investigator observed the teaching practices of ELA teachers in a high school context in order to understand how the teachers' practices aligned with growth mindset traits. An interpretivist approach allowed the principal investigator to interpret teaching practices based off a set of a prior teaching practices that align with growth mindset characteristics.

Context of the Study

This study took place in a suburban high school context at Richmond High School (RHS) located in Washington State during the 2022–2023 school year. The student body consisted of a culturally diverse student population where 47% of the students were Hispanic/Latinx, 13% were Black/African American, 10.1% were two or more races, 8.1% were Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, and 4.3% were Asian (Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction [WA OSPI], 2022). Additionally, 18.1% of the student body were multilingual learners, and 80.1% identified as low-income and qualified for free and reduced lunch. Therefore, this sample of students represents a historically marginalized student body racially/ethnically and socioeconomically. In addition, 18.1% of the student body are students with disabilities and 2.8% have a 504 plan. The total student population in the 2022–2023 school year was 1,315 students. During the 2021–2022 school year, only 37.6% of students at RHS met standard in ELA, only 7.7% met standard in the math smarter balanced assessments, and only 16.4% met standard in science for the Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science (WCAS; WA OSPI, 2022). One of the impacts of students who demonstrate a fixed mindset is underperformance in education, including on standardized assessments (Dweck, 2010).

This population of students not only represented a historically marginalized group but have also underperformed on standardized assessments.

RHS is located in suburban area of Washington State and is placed in a community next to a thriving business area, which allows families to live close to the school and be able to shop for their essentials or find activities to partake in, such as dining and shopping, during non-school hours. This also provides opportunities for students to gain work experience within walking distance from the school. Many current and former students of RHS have worked at various businesses located in the Towne Center and are able to easily drive from the school to work or simply walk, as it only takes about 5 to 10 minutes. There is a commitment to education within the community, as there are multiple elementary schools where students at RHS either have younger siblings who attend these schools and/or once attended these schools themselves. Additionally, there is representation of faith and spirituality through multiple churches. Some of these churches provide virtual options for services as well as services offered in both Spanish and English, which speaks to the demographics of the student population at RHS as well as to the commitment of these organizations to meet the needs of those within the community. Furthermore, there are multiple neighborhoods located within the school community vicinity of RHS. There are low-income apartment homes just across the street as well as an area with neighborhood homes across the street of the school behind the community library. These multiple options for housing along with the educational, recreational, and spiritual areas/facilities demonstrate a community committed to family-oriented values.

Participants and Sampling Procedures

All participants were teachers or students from RHS. Teachers were faculty from

the ELA department, and the students were enrolled in these teachers' classes. Nine

teachers participated in the initial survey (see Appendix A for full list of survey items),

and of those, the researcher purposefully sampled four teachers, following the

administration of the survey, to be observed (Creswell & Gutterman, 2019; Creswell &

Poth, 2017). The original method going into the survey administration was to determine

which teachers held the highest self-reported growth mindset beliefs. This would allow

the principal investigator to use a strengths-based approach to selecting teachers to

observe in terms of their practice of demonstrating growth mindset beliefs towards

students and their ELA skills and abilities. Strengths-based approaches are a common

strategy used in educational research as it helps to highlight what works rather than focus

on what does not (Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 2016). This would allow the principal

investigator to maintain a rapport with their colleagues as they would focus on teachers'

practices that assist in the development of growth mindset for students. This approach

ultimately helps to assist practitioners and future educators in determining which

practices help facilitate a growth mindset, which is another common approach in

educational qualitative research: using the findings to help improve or enhance practice in

the field. However, most teachers held high levels of beliefs on Likert-scale items

regarding growth mindset beliefs related to ELA ability (see results in Appendix B).

Therefore, teachers were selected based on those who agreed to be observed and/or

interviewed as well as the principal investigator's attempt to examine a variety of

different contexts (i.e., different grade level classes as well as different levels of rigor

such as Advanced Placement classes and non-Advanced Placement classes). In addition, selecting four teachers to observe met Creswell and Poth's (2017) minimum recommendation of a sample size of 4-5 participants for case study research. All teachers represented a diverse sample of age, years of teaching experience, and grade level position within the ELA department at RHS. Following is a description of each classroom context.

Classroom 1: Ms. Adams

Ms. Adams has been teaching English at RHS for 8 years and has over 15 years of teaching experience in education at a variety of grade levels. She currently teaches three sections of Senior Bridge to College English (this is the general Senior English class that seniors take if they choose not to take AP English) as well as three sections of English 11. The principal investigator observed Ms. Adams' third period Bridge to College Senior English class 10 times starting in January 2023 and ending in February 2023. Ms. Adams also participated in a one-on-one semi-structured interview on January 5, 2023.

Classroom 2: Ms. Jones

Ms. Jones has been teaching English and Social Studies for the past 9 years at RHS and has over 10 years of teaching experience teaching high school grade levels 9-12. She currently teaches one section of Advanced Placement (AP) Capstone Seminar (ELA) and five sections of AP Human Geography. The principal investigator observed her third period 10th and 11th grade AP Capstone Seminar class five times throughout the month of January 2023. Ms. Jones also participated in a one-on-one semi-structured interview on January 5, 2023.

Classroom 3: Ms. Baker

Ms. Baker has been teaching ELA for the past 7 years at RHS and has over 10 years of teaching experience teaching high school grade levels 9-12 in ELA and Drama/Theater courses. She currently teaches four sections of English 10, where two of those sections are co-taught with a multilingual learner certificated teacher, and two sections of AP Literature to seniors. The principal investigator observed her third period ELA 10 class on January 23, 2023 when the class was partaking in a discussion activity. Ms. Baker also participated in a semi-structured one-on-one interview on January 11, 2023.

Classroom 4: Ms. Barnes

Ms. Barnes has been teaching ELA and Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) courses for RHS for the past 5 years, which reflects her full-time position in education overall. She currently teaches English 9 and AVID for seniors. The principal investigator observed her third period English 9 class on February 1, 2023 when the class was partaking in a textual discussion activity.

Student Participants

All students who were enrolled in the four teachers' classrooms were participants during the observed sessions. However, eight students were purposefully sampled to take part in semi-structured interviews. The criteria consisted of those students who had completed consent and assent forms, and ELA teachers also helped the principal investigator select students to participate. Ultimately, three students, all 10th graders, were selected to be interviewed from Ms. Jones' class on February 7, 2023. Five students from Ms. Adams' class interviewed. All were seniors; four were 17 at the time of being

interviewed, and one was 18 years old. Interviews were conducted on February 7, 2023, and February 9, 2023. All interviews for this study were one-on-one and semi-structured. The students who participated in an interview represented a diverse sample in terms of age, ethnicity, and gender (see Appendix E and F for student interview questions and transcripts). Table 2 and 3 below show a list of the student participants who were interviewed.

Table 2

Ms. Adams' Students

Student	Gender	Age/Grade Level	Race/Ethnicity
Jeremiah	M	18/12th Grade	African American
Mjaay	F	17/12th Grade	Asian/Pacific Islander
Zero	F	17/12th Grade	Asian/Pacific Islander
Casper	M	17/12th Grade	White/Caucasian
Jay	M	17/12th Grade	African American

Table 3

Ms. Jones' Students

Student	Gender	Age/Grade Level	Race/Ethnicity
Annette	F	15/10th Grade	White/Caucasian
Ezra	F	15/10th Grade	White/Caucasian
Naomi	F	16/10th Grade	African American

Student demographic information was collected from Ms. Jones' and Ms. Adams' students, as a considerable amount of time was spent in those classrooms as opposed to Ms. Baker and Ms. Barnes' classrooms where the principal investigator only observed one class period for each of those classes. There were no students on individualized education plans (IEPs) in Ms. Jones' class, as it is not very common to have students on IEPs in an AP classroom; there were also no students who required 504 accommodations. In Ms. Adams' classroom, there were no students on IEPs; there was one student who had 504 accommodations; this student was ultimately not selected to be interviewed as they did not complete a consent form.

Ms. Jones' class was an AP class which means students were generally doing well academically. However, Dweck (2010) asserts that students who are higher achievers can sometimes demonstrate fixed mindset beliefs as they will attribute their academic success to inherent ability. Sun (2021) also found a contradictory pattern of growth mindset beliefs as Chinese students are found to outperform American students on standardized assessments. Therefore, Ms. Jones class was chosen for this study as the principal investigator sought to examine practices in diverse academic settings which meant not only grade level but whether classes were advanced/honors classes or at grade-level classes. In addition, Ms. Jones consented to full participation in the study which is why her classroom was also chosen.

As aforementioned, the student body at this high school represents a culturally diverse and historically marginalized population. The literature suggests that much of the research on SEL constructs, such as growth mindset has indicated that most research has taken place among homogenous groups of students who are typically white, affluent

students, and there is a need to examine growth mindset in educational settings among diverse groups of students (Chao et al., 2017; Herrenkohl et al., 2020). Therefore, the sample of students this study drew upon helped to address this gap in the research in terms of the context in which growth mindset interventions take place.

Pseudonyms were used to describe the participants, both teachers and students, in the results and discussion sections of this study in order to protect the confidentiality of the participants in this study. A pseudonym was used to describe the school in an earlier section of this chapter and will continue to be used in the next two chapters of this study.

Measures

Following a similar procedure as Sun's (2018) study, data collection for this purposeful sampling of teachers included four measures: a survey administered to teachers, observations of teachers' practice, interviews with teachers and students, and artifacts and documents. Descriptive data were gathered through a survey (see Appendix A for full list of survey items), which allows teachers to self-report their levels of growth mindset beliefs when it comes to learning and ELA practices by responding to Likert-scale items. The survey also consists of open-ended items in order to allow participants to expand on their responses to the Likert-scale items through their own words. Next, for the administration of the initial survey, the descriptive data allowed the principal investigator to determine which teachers demonstrated the highest levels of self-reported growth mindset beliefs as well as which ones indicated they would be willing to be observed teaching. The qualitative items on the survey were used in order to allow the principal investigator to expand upon any thoughts or common themes that emerged through interviews with teachers. Four English teachers took part in the observation phase of data

collection where the principal investigator observed their practice. Three teachers took part in interviews following the administration of the initial survey, which allowed teachers to explain their practice through their own words and to gain further insight into how teacher practices in ELA high school classrooms can perpetuate growth mindset messages to students. Nine student interviews were conducted with students to help affirm and validate findings from the observations as well as to gain insight into how students perceive teacher practice. Classroom artifacts and documents were collected as a tertiary source of data to help affirm findings from the other sources of data as well as to be able to see visuals that are posted in the classroom and to observe how language is used on course documents that may perpetuate growth mindset messages.

In order to address issues with validity and reliability, procedures were utilized in order to validate the research process. Data sources were triangulated as a way to help validate the findings and add to the credibility of the research (Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 2016). Using multiple sources of data helps to validate the findings because the data are derived from more than one source, which helps to validate the results and adds to the credibility of the study. In the context of this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers and students to help validate the findings from the observations of teacher practice during the course of the study (see Appendices B and C for interview questions). This also allowed the principal investigator to expand upon any potential unclear areas or misconceptions of practice by giving the observed teachers a voice in their practice. In addition, this allowed students to expand upon how they are perceiving their teachers' actions and whether or not they are receiving growth mindset messages.

After each source of data was collected, the principal investigator began writing drafts of what had been gathered, and member checking was used in order to ensure the reliability of the results and that each teacher was portrayed accurately. Member checking is a technique used in qualitative research where the researcher shares drafts of what they write with their participants in order to make sure they are portrayed in the way they feel is appropriate (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Member checking is a technique qualitative researchers use to help validate their research and build a rapport with their participants. Qualitative researchers often become close with their participants because they often spend a considerable amount of time conducting fieldwork where they are observing their behavior. It is important that participants feel they are portrayed appropriately. Otherwise, this could hurt the credibility of the principal investigator and tarnish their chances of being able to carry out future studies in the same location. It is also important for qualitative researchers to ensure their subjects feel they are being portrayed appropriately, as qualitative research seeks to understand a phenomenon from participants' perspectives. Member checking is a crucial technique one can use to carry out research in education. A qualitative researcher looks for confirmability rather than objectivity in establishing the value of data (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Ultimately, this helps to establish credibility when one is conducting research in education using a qualitative approach and, in the context of this study, helped to give participants a voice in how they are portrayed.

Data Collection

A survey was administered to teachers in the ELA department at Richmond High School through email on December 9, 2022, in the form of a Google Forms survey.

Responses were collected through January 2023. The survey consists of six Likert-scale items on a 1 to 5 scale, where 1 = *strongly disagree* and 5 = *strongly agree*. The Likert-scale survey items were taken from Sun's (2018) study in which the researcher examined holistic teaching practices in the context of middle school math classrooms. However, items were adapted for the context of this study as the focus was on examining teaching practices in high school ELA classrooms. Therefore, item one in Sun's (2018) study stated, "there are limits to how much people can improve their basic math ability," whereas, in the survey used for this study, this item was reworded by stating, "there are limits to how much people can improve their writing and literacy skills." In addition, the survey also consisted of two open-ended items which allowed participants to expand upon their thoughts, feelings, and opinions that they could not express in the Likert-scale items. The survey also asked ELA teachers if they would be willing to be observed teaching as well as whether or not they would be willing to participate in an interview regarding their beliefs about mindset and ELA abilities. A full copy of the survey is reported in the appendices of this study (see Appendix A).

The survey that was utilized in this study was the first source of data collected in order to gain initial descriptive information on teachers in the ELA department at the high school and to determine which teachers to observe for the purposes of examining their holistic teaching practice. Using quantitative data in qualitative research is a common first place to start, especially in education, to gain interest for participation in a study, to reach a wider audience, and to be able to provide general descriptive information about a particular setting (Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 2016; Sun, 2018). The survey produced quantitative data; however, the data from this survey were used mostly for the purpose of

determining areas that could be explored through further observations of teachers'

practices as well as through one-on-one interviews.

Observations were utilized as a primary source of data from which the principal

investigator was able to examine teachers' holistic teaching practices through a growth

mindset lens by taking extensive field notes and using the a priori list of teaching codes in

order to examine the data collected from observations. Observations took place in

teachers' classrooms during regularly scheduled class time and consisted of the principal

investigator observing teachers instruct students in ELA. Observations as a primary

source of data allows the researcher to best address the research question. Extensive notes

were taken and recorded in a journal as field notes (Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 2016). The

journal was electronic on a Microsoft Word document as well as in Google Sheets so that

the principal investigator could use the a priori list of teaching codes to analyze the

practice of teachers through a growth mindset lens. Observations were not only the

primary source of data for this study, but are also a common way to collect data in

educational research that takes a qualitative approach (Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 2016).

While conducting observations, a record of thoughts, observations, and notes in a journal

or in a document that would be considered field notes should be recorded and stored in a

safe location by the researcher. Field notes are a record of what the researcher hears, sees,

and feels while conducting observations in the field (pp. 115-116). Field notes help to

validate the qualitative research study as it is a record of the researcher conducting

observations. This source of data helped the principal investigator answer the research

question and carry out the research method by providing the principal investigator with

the opportunity to examine teachers' practice in their natural setting in order to examine practice through a growth mindset lens.

Interviews were conducted at various points throughout the study in order to confirm the findings from the observations and answer the research question. Interviews are another common data source used in qualitative research, as it allows the researcher to understand behavior through participants' own frame of reference (Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 2016). In the context of this study, the interviews allowed the teachers to clarify any misconceptions about their practice, validate their approach towards using discipline-specific practices that help convey growth mindset messages, as well as expand upon their beliefs regarding mindset and ELA abilities first reported through the survey. The principal investigator used a semi-structured interview approach in order to interview classroom teachers that were observed teaching as well as those students who were in the classrooms that were observed. Students were selected at random and at the discretion of the principal investigator as those who seemed to be responding best to the classroom practices exhibited by the teacher. The principal investigator also used those same students' work to evaluate in terms of analyzing the feedback the teacher provided on assignments. A common strategy in qualitative research is to follow participants across language events in classrooms in order to focus on particular social participants to illustrate a phenomenon (Haas-Dyson & Genishi, 2005).

Classroom artifacts were used as a tertiary source of data which allowed the principal investigator to examine how growth mindset messages may be perpetuated through course documents such as syllabi, instructions on classroom assignments, as well as—but not limited to—any posters on the walls of the classroom that may convey

mindset messages to students. Documents are one of four main sources of qualitative data (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Using documents as a data source ultimately helps to compliment the primary and secondary source of data, to confirm the findings from the first two sources of data, and adds to the validity and credibility of the findings to this study.

Data Analysis

Procedures for data analysis differed among sources of data but also took on a similar approach, depending on the data source. For example, the purpose of the survey was to allow teachers to measure their own beliefs regarding mindset and ELA abilities, to allow the principal investigator to gain an initial description of the sample of teachers, and to help generate interest in taking part in this study for the purposes of conducting observations. In contrast, data analysis procedures for the observations consisted of examining the findings to determine those general and discipline-specific practices which may communicate growth mindset messages to students. A description of the data analysis procedures along with a rationale by data source follows.

Survey

Once the survey was administered to teachers and data were collected, the principal investigator calculated the descriptive statistics such as the frequency, raw scores, and percentages; measures of central tendency, such as the mean, median, and mode; and measures of variability, such as the range and standard deviation, for the survey as a whole; as well as responses to individual questions (Gall et al., 2007). Using these statistics to analyze survey data is a common approach when analyzing quantitative data from surveys. The frequency illustrated how many ELA teachers responded to the

survey which was helpful to note once participants were narrowed down to a smaller number for the purposes of conducting observations. The measures of central tendency explain and describe the extent to which teachers feel regarding mindset beliefs and ELA abilities in regard to the extent to which a student can improve on their ELA abilities or whether or not they feel specific ELA skills are fixed measures of intelligence and ability. Measures of variability explain and describe how the ELA department feels as a whole when it comes mindset and ELA abilities. Patterns and themes within the data were examined in terms of the results of the survey and what they mean in context in helping answer the research question (Robson, 2017).

Observations, Interviews, Classroom Artifacts

Observations were conducted in order to help answer the research question and examine teaching practices through a growth mindset lens. In order to determine which practices may perpetuate growth mindset messages to students, a table of teaching practice codes was used in order to classify practices as those that may perpetuate growth mindset messages to students. The use of the teaching practice codes speaks to the theoretical framework that was used as the rationale for this study. In Chapter 2, the literature review illustrated how the a priori list of teaching codes consists of a synthesis of the findings from studies surrounding growth mindset implementation, previous literature that has examined holistic teaching practices through a growth mindset lens, and literature on ELA pedagogy that may have the potential communicate growth mindset messages to students. The a priori list (see Table 4) was used to analyze findings from the observations in order to determine those general and discipline-specific practices to ELA instruction that communicate growth mindset messages to students. The

intended use of the theoretical framework was to examine teaching practices and to confirm that certain practices in the context of ELA do, in fact, perpetuate growth mindset messages to students. The theoretical framework and a priori list is similar to the framework that was used in Sun's (2018) study, however, the framework used in this study was adapted for ELA contexts in a high school setting.

The categories of teaching practices are discussed in Chapter 2, along with a description of the specific codes. Any codes that emerged from the data were added to the code list in order to best analyze teaching practices and answer the research question. For example, in Sun's (2018) study, the researcher did not identify handling and correcting mistakes as a potential practice identified from the literature, but then recognized this as a common practice found among those teachers whose practices demonstrated growth mindset beliefs regarding math ability; thus, the principal investigator in Sun's study added it as an emergent code to the table. Findings from the interviews and artifact data collection were also analyzed using this framework. Language vignettes are used in the discussion chapter of this study in order to illustrate classroom conversations that portray a specific theme within the data (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Bogdan & Knopp Biklen, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2017; Sun, 2018).

Table 4

Teaching Practice Codes and Units of Analyses Across Data Sources

		Units of analysis		
Practice code	Description	Classroom observation	Interviews	Course documents
Category 1: Sorting & Classroom Organization- How are students classified, grouped, or compared?				
1.Communicating Expectations (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Dweck, 2010; Sun, 2018)	How do teachers communicate expectations of students? Is there a focus on achievement or growth? Both?	Teacher verbalization of expectations related to English achievement	Teacher description of expectations of students related to ELA achievement.	Text in course syllabi related to course expectations, powerpoint slides, written instructions on assignments
2. Seating arrangement (Sun, 2018)	How are students grouped/arranged?	Are students grouped by ability or some other measure?	Teacher rationale for grouping strategy or student description of grouping strategies	N/A
3. Labeling and comparison of students (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Sun, 2018)	How are students compared? How does the teacher label students?	Teacher verbalization comparing different groups in class.	Teacher's perceptions of different groups of students or student description of comparative structures in class	Public displays of student work. Postings on walls related to ranking students.
Category 2: Explicit Teaching of Growth Mindset Concepts				
4. Explicit mindset messaging (Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017; Sun, 2018; Yeager et al., 2016).	How do teachers talk about mindset or the neuroscience about growth?	Teacher verbalization of growth-mindset phrases (e.g., "growth"). Teacher presentation on mindset.	Teacher or student describes classroom use of growth-mindset language or talk about the brain's ability to grow.	Syllabi or wall posters mentioning growth mindset.

Practice code	Description	Units of analysis		
		Classroom observation	Interviews	Course documents
5. Need for risk taking/ Modeling academic errors (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017)	How do teacher encourage students to take risks? How do teachers' model reflection on making academic errors?	Teacher verbalizations related to risk taking in the context of ELA tasks. Teacher models how to respond to academic errors.	Teacher or student verbalizations related to risk taking in the context of ELA tasks.	Syllabi or wall postings addressing the importance of risk taking/ how to respond to feedback/criticism.

Category 3: Classroom Culture as it Pertains to Growth Mindset (Explicit/Implicit)

Practice code	Description	Classroom observation	Interviews	Course documents
6. Handling and correcting mistakes (Anderson, 2005; Barnes & Fives, 2016; Robinson, 2017; Sun, 2018)	How do teachers emphasize the importance of handling and correcting mistakes?	Teacher verbalization about the importance of mistakes learning in ELA.	Teacher or student verbalizations related to how teacher responds to mistakes made in ELA and the importance of mistakes ELA related tasks.	Syllabi or wall postings addressing the importance of struggle.
7. Process vs. Outcomes (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017; Sun, 2018)	How do teachers emphasize the importance of the learning process vs. only focusing on outcomes.	Teacher verbalization of the importance of valuing the process of learning rather than only outcomes.	Teacher or student verbalizations related to the process of learning compared to outcomes.	Syllabi, course documents, wall postings, whiteboard writing emphasizing process vs. outcomes.
8. Explicitly recognizing growth vs. achievement (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Dweck, 2010; Sun, 2018)	How do teachers emphasize growth vs. only recognizing achievement?	Teacher verbalization of the importance of growth as opposed to only recognizing achievement.	Teacher or student verbalization of the importance of growth in ELA vs. focusing on achievement.	Syllabi, course documents, wall postings emphasizing growth vs. achievement.

		Units of analysis		
Practice code	Description	Classroom observation	Interviews	Course documents

Category 4: Giving feedback and assessing- How do teachers praise, give feedback, and grade students?

Practice code	Description	Classroom observation	Interviews	Course documents
9. Verbal praise (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Jonsson et al., 2012; Sun, 2018).	What type of praise do teachers give?	Teacher verbalization of person, outcomes-or process-based praise.	Teacher verbalization of person, outcomes, or process-based praise	N/A
10. Written feedback (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017; Sun, 2018)	What is the nature of written feedback?	N/A	N/A	Graded student assessment or assignment
11. Grading & assessment tracking- Do teachers grade for growth? Are students involved in assessment tracking? (Chen & Tutwiler, 2017; Dweck, 2010; Nagle & Taylor, 2017; Robinson, 2017).	How are students assessed and graded? Do students track their grades?	Teacher verbalizations about grading policy to students. Teacher verbalization about the importance of tracking academic process.	Teacher or student description of grading policy. Student explanation of importance of ownership over their assessment progress and growth.	Grading policy documented in course syllabi. Course documents where students track progress.

Practice code	Description	Units of analysis		
		Classroom observation	Interviews	Course documents
Category 5: Engaging in ELA Tasks				
12. Driver of the ELA Task (Smagorinsky, 2019; Sun, 2018).	Who is doing most of the thinking in the ELA task?	Duration of the task with a holistic rating capturing whether the student, teacher, or both were doing the ELA thinking associated with the task.	Teacher or student descriptions of the student and teacher engagement around ELA tasks in the classroom.	Syllabi and course documents
13. Collaboration in ELA Tasks (Christensen, 2017; Langer, 2001; NCTE, 2022; Stengel et al., 2019).	Does the teacher provide opportunities for students to collaborate? Are students learning from one another?	Students are learning from one another and given opportunities to collaborate with one another	Students express being given opportunities to learn from one another	Syllabi or wall postings of rules for collaboration
14. Approaches to skill instruction (Anderson, 2005; Langer, 2001; Min-Young & Bloome, 2021; Robinson, 2017; Smagorinsky, 2019).	What is the focus of the skill instruction? How does the teacher engage students in skill instruction?	How does the teacher engage students in skill instruction involving ELA skills and tasks?	Teacher and student descriptions the nature of involving students in skill instruction with ELA tasks	Rubrics
15. Connecting Learnings (CCSS, 2022; Gritter, 2012; Langer, 2001; NCTE, 2022)	Are students asked to draw upon their prior experiences in order to connect learning to their previous experience?	Teacher engages students in instruction that asks students to make text-to-self, world, and text connections	Teacher or student description of connecting learning to previous experience	N/A

An interrater reliability method was used as part of the process of analyzing interview transcripts. Having multiple people review transcripts of interviews and code data helped to validate research using qualitative methods (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Coding in qualitative research may be performed when the researcher is looking for themes that may emerge in the data through the development of a coding scheme in order to identify and group similar words and phrases together into one code that helps to establish a theme in the data (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Using more than one coder helps to ensure that there were no systematic errors and also helps to add to the validity and credibility of the research, as more than one person reviewed the data to help code (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

A second interview transcript coder was utilized in the data analysis process. The second coder was another student in the same doctoral program as the principal investigator. In order to account for any bias and assumptions going into the coding process, the second coder was given limited information about the details of the study including information such as the title of the study as well as the research question this study addressed. In addition, they were given a copy of the theoretical framework table with the a priori list of teaching codes in order to code the student interview and teacher interview data. The second coder began coding interview data in February and concluded the coding process in March of 2023; they completed the coding process in a google spreadsheet that was shared with the principal investigator. The principal investigator coded data separately into another spreadsheet and then reviewed the second coder's data analysis spreadsheet to account for any discrepancies in how interview transcripts were coded. There were minor differences between the outcomes of coding between the

principal investigator and the second coder. The second coder classified some of the data into codes that differed from how the principal investigator coded the data; this was only the case in three instances that did not impact the overall conclusions the principal investigator drew from the data. Therefore, there were no major discrepancies between the second coder's and the principal investigator's coding results for the teacher and student interview data.

Summary

A qualitative case study was used to examine teaching practices holistically in high school ELA classrooms in order to determine those general and discipline-specific practices that may perpetuate growth mindset messages to students. An initial survey was administered to teachers in order to allow teachers to self-report their mindset beliefs regarding ELA abilities. Classroom observations of teachers were conducted along with interviews of teachers and a few students of those teachers who were observed. Artifacts such as course documents and wall posters were used as a tertiary source of data to confirm findings from the observations and interviews as well as to fill in the gaps of missing information from the primary and secondary sources of data. Throughout the research process, steps to ensure the validity and reliability of the data, such as a second coder for interview transcripts and member checking after drafts have been written, were utilized. The results from this study are addressed in chapter four.

Chapter Four: Results

This study examined the teaching practices of high school ELA teachers holistically through a growth mindset lens in order to determine which general and discipline-specific teaching practices might help to facilitate the development of students' growth mindsets. In chapter four, the principal investigator summarizes the results of the qualitative sources of data that were collected in order to answer the following research question:

How might English Language Arts teachers in high school classrooms convey certain mindset messages to students related to their English Language Arts ability in their classrooms?

Data collection began in December of 2022 when an initial survey was sent to teachers of the ELA department at Richmond High School (RHS) regarding mindset beliefs related to ELA teaching. The survey also asked about their further participation in the study ($\alpha = 0.762$; see Appendix B). Of the nine ($N = 9$) that participated in the survey, four teachers who agreed to be observed teaching were selected to take part in the study. All teacher participants were female (the researcher is the only male teacher in the ELA department) and represented a diverse sample in terms of grade levels they taught, years of teaching experience, and number of years at the school. The principal investigator used a purposeful sample to select teachers but also utilized the sampling strategy of maximum variation sampling in terms of the overall population the principal investigator drew from (teachers in the ELA department), as participants were selected based on an identified criteria to include and describe multiple perspectives about the case (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

Observations began in January of 2023 and concluded in February of 2023. Teacher interviews took place in January of 2023, and all student interviews took place in February 2023. Classroom artifacts such as student work and classroom displays such as wall postings were collected or analyzed during the timeframe when observations were conducted throughout the course of the study.

The following sections explore how growth mindset messages were either implicitly or explicitly communicated to students from teachers or expressed by the teacher or student participants using the teaching code framework from chapter three (see Table 4). To illustrate how teachers' practices may have communicated growth mindset messages to students, the principal investigator primarily highlights examples from Ms. Adams' and Ms. Jones' classrooms, as most of the time during the study consisted of observing teaching practices in those classrooms, and the students who participated in interviews were from those classrooms. Both teachers communicated growth mindset messages to their students in the context of ELA pedagogical practices in unique ways. In chapter two, the literature review illustrated how the a priori list of teaching codes consists of a synthesis of the findings from studies surrounding growth mindset implementation, previous literature that has examined holistic teaching practices through a growth mindset lens, and literature on ELA pedagogy that may have the potential communicate growth mindset messages to students. The a priori list was used to analyze findings from the observations in order to determine those general and discipline-specific practices to ELA instruction that communicate growth mindset messages to students. As a result, the Teaching English through a Growth Mindset Framework (TEGMF) summarizes the major findings from this qualitative case study (see Table 5). The bolded

word(s) and phrases indicate a teacher action. Each table following Table 5 summarizes

teacher(s) and student actions for each teaching category of the TEGM framework.

Table 5

Teaching ELA through a Growth Mindset Framework (TEGMF)

Teaching code	Growth mindset holistic teaching practice
Category 1: Sorting & classroom organization	
Communicating Expectations	**Holding students to high expectations** with the belief that all students can succeed academically.
Seating arrangement	**Organizing the physical space**: Students are in groups which promotes collaboration. Groups are designed on a strengths-based view of student skill.
Labeling and comparison of students	**Holding a strengths-based view** of the differences between groups of students; meeting students where they are academically.
Category 2: Explicit Teaching of Growth Mindset Concepts (Explicit/Implicit)	
Explicit mindset messaging	**Referring to students as scholars**. **Posters on the walls** of the classroom referring explicitly to having a growth mindset.
Need for risk taking/modeling academic errors	**Explicitly encouraging** students to take academic risks & acknowledgement of student risk taking. **Teacher modeling** how to academic risks & how to approach making academic errors.
Category 3: Classroom Culture as it Pertains to Growth Mindset (Explicit/Implicit)	
Handling and correcting mistakes	Guiding students through mistakes by using **questioning/recalling of information techniques**. Being open to multiple interpretations of a text.
Process vs. outcomes	**Valuing the process** of completing tasks specifically related to ELA by focusing on each part.

Explicitly recognizing growth vs. achievement	Using **growth** as a measure of achievement.

Category 4: Giving feedback and assessing

Verbal praise	**Positive/encouraging feedback**: Teachers praise student and whole-class efforts related to the processes or thinking related to ELA tasks. Feedback is encouraging and constructive.
Written feedback	**Constructive feedback**: Specific feedback that guides students to meet standard but also recognizes student strengths.
Grading and assessment tracking	**Conferencing**: Providing students with opportunities in class to check their own grades and having conversations about their grades with their teacher. Provides some autonomy with how students meet standards.

Category 5: Engaging in ELA Tasks

Driver of the ELA task	**Students** are doing a majority of the **thinking** related to the ELA task.
Collaboration in ELA tasks	Teachers provide students with opportunities to **collaborate** with their peers.
Approaches to skill instruction	Teachers provide **scaffolding** to build student skill and give concentrated times to work on specific skills.
Connecting learnings	Teachers allow students to make **text-to-self, world, and text connections** between what they are currently learning and what they have previously learned.

Category 1: Sorting & Classroom Organization

This category of the teaching framework among units of analyses across data

sources sought to examine how teachers communicated expectations to students, how

teachers grouped and arranged students in classrooms, as well as how students are compared and labeled (see Table 6 for a summary).

Table 6

Category 1: Sorting and Classroom Organization

Teaching code	Teacher practice	Student action/response
Communicating expectations	Teachers held students to high expectations.	Students recognized their potentials and belief in their abilities.
Seating arrangement	Teachers grouped students together so they could collaborate and did so using a strengths-based view of student skill.	Students benefitted from being able to collaborate with one another. Students expressed that Ms. Adams and Ms. Jones believe all students can succeed.
Labeling and comparison of students	Teachers held a strengths-based view of the differences between groups of students.	As teachers met students where they were academically, this set the implicit message that all students could succeed and students recognized their potentials.

Communicating Expectations

Teachers held high expectations for students and communicated these both implicitly and explicitly, but teachers also acknowledged that not every student comes into the year in the same place and is willing to meet students where they are. Ms. Adams begins her senior English class every day by playing wordle with students, a game where students have to guess a five-letter word based on previous hints they are given. When students would struggle by guessing the word, she would consistently communicate the expectation that they could as a group solve the wordle by using statements such as, "we

can do this!" and "are we going to give up after only one guess?" In addition, when students were working on writing graduation speeches to their class of 2023, she communicated the expectation that this was their opportunity to tell their story to their peers and community. However, she acknowledged that some students may have reservations about giving the speech in front of their classmates and communicated that she was willing to meet students where they were and come up with a solution if they needed to find an alternate route to the end goal. Ms. Adams held her students to high expectations, which implicitly communicated to her students that they could all accomplish the same goal, but that some may need to take a different route to achieving that goal, and it was acceptable if not all students got to the same place. Similarly, in Ms. Barnes' class, she gave the class the amount of time they needed to adequately be prepared for a whole class textual discussion rather than expecting them to be ready right when class started or at a predetermined time. She consistently communicated her expectations that students should be working on being prepared to discuss the questions in response to the text but let them know it was acceptable for them to need more time to prepare.

Ms. Jones has a comforting way of communicating expectations to her students. In Ms. Jones 10th/11th grade AP Seminar class, she had students participate in a reconnecting activity when they returned from winter break. She communicated her expectations of students participating by saying, "I encourage you to walk around the room and check in at table group you do not normally talk with." She also communicated to her students in a genuine manner how much she missed being with them by saying "it is really nice to see you all, if I did not get a chance to check in with you, I will make sure

I do this at some point." This helped to emphasize the social and emotional relationship she has with her students while also holding them to high expectations by encouraging them to participate.

Ms. Jones also consistently invites students to ask questions by asking her students to "ask me a question" rather than asking "does anyone have any questions?" This helps to challenge students to think of a question as opposed to only limiting her students to respond with a question when they are confused or may not understand the directions. This helps to normalize question asking as a part of the learning process rather than communicating that questions should only be asked if one does not understand what one is learning or does not understand the directions. This also demonstrates that it is acceptable to ask questions even if one does understand the directions. Ms. Jones communicates having high expectations for her students but, like Ms. Adams and Ms. Barnes, communicates the belief of meeting students where they are and seeing how much growth they make. Below is a part of Mrs. Jones' interview transcript.

Interviewer: Do all students get to the same place?

Ms. Jones: No, I would like to say so, but no. All kids who pass the class are writing with evidence and responding to multiple texts so there is a baseline that they get to. That's where I stand with grading- how far they have pushed themselves. They don't all need to get to the same place.

Interviewer: How do you believe all students can succeed and do well in your class, including students that come into the year with skill deficiencies?

Ms. Jones: I want to honor their growth- if they come in and make a full faith effort, that is success. If they come in as a better reader or writer, that is success.

The grade shouldn't matter as much. Did you challenge yourself? Did you take

leaps in your writing? Did you try difficult texts? Did you grow as a reader or

writer? That is success.

Seating Arrangement

Ms. Baker, Ms. Barnes, and Ms. Jones had students placed in small groups of

around 3-5 students per table group. Ms. Baker spoke about placing higher achieving

students with students who often struggled. She communicated that the goal with the

seating arrangement strategy was to not have students hinder one another by just giving

answers to their peers or being off task, but recognized the potential impact having

students that come into the year as better readers and writers could have on students who

come into the school year with skill-level deficiencies. Ms. Jones further supported the

idea of having students in groups as opposed to being seated in rows so that students

could help support one another through communicating and collaboration. She

recognized the power of students being able to work with one another and the potential

impacts this may have on students' abilities to grow as readers and writers. Both seating

arrangement strategies helped to send the implicit message that students had something to

offer one another and that students could bring in their own knowledge and

interpretations of what they were learning and share that with their peers.

Ms. Adams' classroom was structured like a college lecture hall where seats all

faced one direction and could not be manipulated in any way. However, she shared her

philosophy on seating arrangements, which is to let students choose their seats, which

allows her to build trust with her classes first. She shared that she explicitly

communicates to her students that there is no reason for her not to trust her students to

make poor seating decisions and, thus, allows them to choose their seats. She spoke about how it helps to build rapport with her students as they are given the autonomy to choose their own seats, which helps to send the implicit message that they can take ownership over their learning. Ms. Adams held the belief that all students could contribute to the group by making it a point to ask each student individually about their thoughts in regard to what they were learning. For example, during Wordle, instead of just asking the class if they had any guesses as to what the word was, she would ask each student individually if they had any guesses. She would affirm students guesses with a positive affirmation such as "good job" or "that's a good guess, I had not considered that." This helped to send the message that she believes all students could contribute to the lesson. This encouraged students to continue participating until the Wordle was solved for that day.

Labeling and Comparison of Students

Ms. Adams, Ms. Baker, and Ms. Jones all spoke to the differences among the classes that they teach with a strengths-based perspective of their students. Ms. Baker spoke to the differences amongst her 10th grade English sections where some of her sections came into the year below standard when it came to 10th Grade CCSS literacy and writing standards. She made plans to differentiate her instruction in the classes that were above standard to ensure that they were still being challenged, as they tended to get through the material faster. Ms. Adams spoke to the differences among the different grade levels she has taught. She explained that she has spent a lot of time with her seniors because she also had some of them in freshmen English and also has a 12th grade advisory; therefore, she has developed a genuine rapport with them and is quite knowledgeable about their strengths and capacities as well as their areas of growth. Her

junior students are in a different place both in terms of maturity and skill. However, she made it a point to acknowledge class strengths regarding a group writing activity that she assigned to her junior English classes: "They were thoughtful about the quotes and what they produced. They showed pride in craftsmanship. They were excited about what they put together." She also spoke about making comparisons amongst the classes to help motivate a class. For example, she talked about letting them know when she gave them praise to other classes and also challenged them to compete with the other classes regarding a specific task and how this helped her students rise to the challenge. This helped to communicate her belief in their abilities to succeed on the onset of an assignment.

Both Ms. Baker and Ms. Adams spoke about the differences amongst their English classes by acknowledging how, with their co-taught multilingual learner (MLL) English sections (see Chapter 3 for the description of their classrooms), it is important for them to meet students where they are rather than ignore that their first language is not English. They both spoke to the ways in which they seek to incorporate this into their classes by offering alternative routes to meeting the standard, such as allowing their MLL students to speak or write in their native languages and then translate what they wrote into English. They spoke about their MLL classes with the intention of acknowledging that there are systemic barriers within the education system that may prevent them from finding success and how they strive to create equitable and inclusive classroom environments where they acknowledge that they have their own unique capacities that they bring into the class without placing limitations on their abilities as learners.

Ms. Baker and Ms. Jones spoke about the inherent differences between their AP classes and non-AP classes. They both emphasized how some students enroll in AP classes to challenge themselves and that it is important to provide rigor that helps to adequately provide students with an AP experience that prepares them for postsecondary education. Both teachers spoke about the differences amongst students regarding how some students may come into their AP classes with exceptionally high capabilities, and they must find ways to challenge them. Additionally, these exceptionally high achieving students take AP to be college ready, whereas other students may come into the class at a lower reading and writing level, and the goal is to get them to be at least college ready or to progress to the next sequence of AP classes. Ms. Baker spoke about establishing a baseline of rigor depending on where the class is at and measuring their growth towards that baseline. This helps to communicate the implicit message of meeting students where they are and recognizing that not all students will enter an AP class at the same place in terms of reading and writing ability and how, even with those deficiencies, every student can still be successful in that class.

Category 2: Explicit Teaching of Growth Mindset Concepts

In this category of the teaching framework among units of analyses across data sources, the principal investigator examined how teachers approached growth mindset concepts to their students or how they communicated growth mindset messages to students (see Table 7).

Table 7

Category 2: Explicit Teaching of Growth Mindset Concepts (Explicit/Implicit)

Teaching code	Teacher practice	Student action/response	Tertiary data
Explicit mindset Messaging	Ms. Jones refers to students as scholars.	Sets the implicit message that all students can succeed.	Posters on walls that explicitly and implicitly communicate growth mindset messages to students.
Need for risk taking/modeling academic errors	Ms. Adams and Jones encourage academic risk taking. Ms. Adams showed a video of her giving a speech to the school community.	Students were motivated to take risks and were not afraid of making mistakes. Student shares that she is appreciative of the intellectual challenge Ms. Jones' class offers.	N/A

Explicit Mindset Messaging

In Ms. Jones' class, it was evident that she stressed the importance of approaching learning tasks with a growth mindset. She had a poster on the wall of her classroom that read, "If it doesn't challenge you, it doesn't change you." She often referred to the students in her class as scholars, which helps to send the implicit message that she believes they all can succeed both individually and collectively. To further support this idea, she had another wall sign up that read, "We are Titan scholars who: seek to understand, come to class every day, help citizens and lead, open minds, learn from mistakes, always try, reflect" (Titan, mascot name is a pseudonym). One student from Ms. Jones' class, Annette, even pointed this out in her interview as she explained,

Interviewer: Do you believe your teacher thinks all students can succeed?

Annette: I do think that. She is always calling us scholars and she believes in all of us and she has never given up on any student and she is really kind to every student.

The idea of approaching learning tasks with a growth mindset, or using concepts closely related, was impressionable to students, as was evident in Annette's interview:

Interviewer: What do you think it takes to be good at English Language Arts?

Annette: Definitely have to have concentration and grit because sometimes it does take a lot to stay motivated and be successful. Pay attention and do what you are asked to and not fall behind.

Students in Ms. Adams' class also discussed their perceptions about how having a growth mindset helps in ELA class:

"Anyone can be good at anything it is a matter of whether or not they want to be. If someone wants to be good at something as long as they set their mind to it, they can be good at it" (Jeremiah).

"It is all about how determined you are to learn something new every day" (Mjaay).

Need for Risk Taking/Modeling Academic Errors

Ms. Adams consistently emphasized the importance of risk-taking during her daily entry tasks of Wordle. In order to help motivate her students take risks by guessing, she explained how in one of her other periods, the class took a chance to guess the word as a group and were able to persevere and solve the Wordle compared to one of her other senior English classes that was unsuccessful because the students did not take any

chances. In addition, she also challenged her students to take academic risks during their graduation speech unit. She explained how previous students took risks by writing their speeches in unique ways by using diction that stood out; style choices, such as tone; and the lesson some students included in their speech. She explained to her senior English class that the graduation speeches that stood out the most were the ones for which the students took risks by presenting them in front of the class when they were not completely sure how well the speech would sound out loud as well as auditioning to have their speeches read at the commencement ceremony.

Ms. Adams modeled how to approach academic errors by reading through previous graduation speeches she had kept and had the students identify what the previous student did well and how they could have improved. She also gave them different parts of the speech to identify so that they could see where each part was or if a required piece was missing. She also modeled academic risk-taking by sharing a speech that she gave to the school community last year at the senior awards night. She shared how nervous she was to give this speech in front of the entire school community and how she prepared ahead of time by practicing reading her speech and sending it to colleagues to proofread before giving the speech. Ms. Adams clearly modeled how to take risks through her own speech writing.

Ms. Jones followed a similar process when introducing students to one of the components of their performance task for AP Seminar. She shared previous student presentations to the class and the students identified parts of the presentation that the students did well and where they could have improved. Similar to Ms. Adams, she made the process of highlighting strengths and areas of improvement/growth a class activity

which set the implicit message that all students were capable of recognizing the potential

strengths and areas of improvement in the student work. In addition, both teachers

identified the potential areas where they could improve as areas of growth/improvement,

which, again, set the impression that even higher scoring examples had areas to improve.

It was evident that the culture of risk-taking stood out, as Annette explained in her

interview,

> I like this class. It is challenging but it is worth it. It helps me think more
>
> intellectually as a person and I admire that. I like when we present. I used to have
>
> bad social anxiety and this helps me to overcome that.

Ms. Jones also discussed her approach modeling her thought process when she gets stuck

on a writing piece: "[I am] more reflective with my students about strategies I use. [I

communicate how] not to get stuck in negative self-talk. I ask them the questions, and I

try to illustrate to them that they are not that behind."

Category 3: Classroom Culture as it Pertains to Growth Mindset

In this category of the teaching framework among units of analyses across data

sources, the principal investigator examined how teachers established a culture that

perpetuated growth mindset messages both implicitly and explicitly (see Table 8).

Table 8

Category 3: Classroom Culture as it Pertains to Growth Mindset

Teaching code	Teacher practice	Student action/response
Handling and correcting mistakes	Using questioning techniques to help students recall previously learned information.	Students recognize that both Ms. Adams and Ms. Jones provide constructive feedback when a student makes a mistake.
Process vs. outcomes	Valuing the process of learning tasks related to ELA by guiding students through these parts through questioning and guided instruction.	Students recognized the importance of focusing on the process of learning tasks related to ELA.
Explicitly recognizing growth vs. achievement	Teachers state that they used growth as some measure of student success in their classes. Teachers recognize the importance of growth as an indicator of success in ELA.	Students are able to recognize that learning is about growth rather than only the outcomes, i.e., their letter grade in a class or their grade point averages.

Handling and Correcting Mistakes

In both Ms. Jones' and Ms. Adams' classroom, when students answered a question incorrectly or did not answer them in a way the teacher was looking for, both of the teachers would use guiding questions to lead students to the correct answer or to the answer the teacher was looking for. They would say things such as, "remember when we went over this," or "remember last class period when we discussed this." Most of the times, this helped to lead students to answers that made more sense in regard to the question that was being asked. A student in Ms. Jones' class commented on how she handles mistakes:

She does not view it as a mistake but more so as a learning experience and offers us the opportunity to think of the right answer. She will help us learn the right answer so we are well informed but not embarrassed (Annette).

Ms. Adams talked about how she explicitly views mistakes made in the classroom:

It is more so about the student's interpretation of what we are learning or reading and how they justify their answers. Most of the time, there really are not any right or wrong answers. I will usually say things such as 'I have not thought about it in that way, I like the way you're thinking or does anyone have any thought on what x student said?' In writing, if it isn't something I thought of and it is well done, I will accept it as long as it is relevant and on topic.

Students also shared their experiences with how Ms. Adams handles mistakes made in the classroom: "It is definitely constructive and positive. She makes sure you understand what you are doing and tries to correct you in a constructive way" (Jeremiah). "She makes sure we don't feel bad about making mistakes but makes sure she understands what you got wrong" (Mjaay). Zero stated,

I think she would correct your mistake, but if you still did a good job, she would accept the work because she respects others interpretations, but she also would make sure you knew how to do it the way she was asking. I wrote an essay where I did not follow the prompt exactly, but I still wrote a good essay and she accepted my work and said its okay.

One other response included, "In general, she will correct you and then explains to us or tries to empathize/understand why we would come to that conclusion" (Jay).

Process vs. Outcomes

In Ms. Jones' class, she would focus on the process of learning over outcomes by emphasizing the importance of having students revise and edit their work before turning in completed final drafts of their writing. She gave directions on a PowerPoint slide and also presented verbally. Each day, the class time was spent examining something else in their writing, such as citations and evidence, tone and style, and grammar and conventions. This helped to reinforce the idea that writing is a process and when one takes the time to revise and edit, this can help them grow and become a better writer. Additionally, the principal investigator witnessed a conversation between her and a student on one of their writing days which helped to reinforce writing as a process:

Student: "I'm not sure how to tie this evidence into my writing."

Ms. Jones: "Right now just focus on categorizing your evidence and then we can figure out how to embed it into your writing."

This brief conversation between Ms. Jones and her student helps to illustrate how she helped the student process the information as well as how she problem solved with the student. She helped guide the student to this conclusion and gave an opportunity to think of potential solutions.

In addition, when students were preparing to work on presentations, she would show them a variety of examples of other students' presentations from previous years. Instead of having the class view it in silence or in its entirety, she would pause at specific points and ask the class to point out specific details about the work as well as highlight strengths and areas of growth. This helped to send the message to students that the process to get to final product is valuable, and students should be mindful of how they are

going to construct their presentations and practice before completing the assignment. Ms.

Jones also explained her rationale for how to present challenging tasks to her students and

how she attempts to normalize struggling with learning by presenting to them, "You are

going to struggle with this here. Let's struggle with this. It is not about having a right

answer."

In Ms. Adams' class, when students were looking at different examples of student

speeches, she took parts of the speech and asked students how the speech could be

improved. For example, she would ask questions such as, "How does this sound?" and

"What if we write this?" as well as "Have we considered this?", which helped guide

students to thinking about how to make the writing stronger and ultimately value writing

as a process. When students were working on an assignment where they had to provide a

synthesis of what they read from multiple articles, Ms. Adams also helped remind

students of the articles they should have read or where in the articles it would be helpful

to pull information from. If students needed help, she would often ask, "Who are you

writing about?" and "How much do you have so far?" When students were confused, Ms.

Adams would help process the information with students by saying things such as,

"Don't you think this is….," or "Consider this" and "What about that?" She would also

help to brainstorm diction by thinking of synonyms to use in their speeches, e.g., "shows

callousness." This helped to support their vocabulary usage and comprehension of the

articles they were reading as well as how to turn what they have read into a writing piece.

Explicitly Recognizing Growth

Many teachers that took part in this study discussed using growth as some indictor

of success in their English classes. Ms. Jones spoke about how she takes into

consideration the larger societal issues that are prevalent within a school community where RHS is located and how she views student growth in this context:

> Do I always take them as far as they can go? No, it may be beyond me like external factors beyond classroom, like outside or system failures. How have we as a community or school system damaged our students to not want to learn? Even if we spend a whole year repairing harm so they can engage next time, maybe that is where we are at so they can engage next time. We can learn content and repair harm. You can repair trust with them. They will start to put themselves out there and try to engage. Slower process with some than others. They are all capable of growing, I do not know if I always have all of tools to be able to help them. Some of the kids it is on them. I do not know how much I do that actually helps them to get there.

> Ms. Adams also discussed how she likes to recognize student growth in her classroom:

> If I am proud of a student who has made growth I want to honor and value all students, but sometimes I may say, "You did a really good job on this, do you want to share this with the class?"

Ms. Adams recognizes the growth of students and shares that with the rest of the class by having them share their achievements, and it is a matter of pride and showing scholarship in their ELA work.

> Ms. Adams also discussed how she takes into consideration how students in their senior year of high school have made growth since their freshman year:

I get them at 17/18 years old and a lot of the skills are there, and we can work to

make them better or focus more on those skills. They come to me, and they got

their superpower. They're spider man and they can shoot their web, but they

cannot control their power, when or how far they shoot it. Those are the things we

work on. Honing those skills.

Ms. Adams acknowledged that students have grown since freshman year; they have

capacities of knowledge and skill that they are working with, and their senior year is

about honing the skills for which they have demonstrated proficiency.

On the initial survey that was sent to the ELA department, many teachers agreed

that students can demonstrate growth over the course of the school year. They were

asked, "in your opinion, to what extent can students grow over the course of a school year

and/or over the course of high school, in their ELA abilities?" Teachers shared the

following:

Students have the potential to make a ton of growth, depending on their level of

effort and the efficacy of the teacher. Students have the ability to grow in their

reading level exponentially, based on how often they read and what they are

exposed to; same with writing. It takes a lot of exposure, practice, and feedback

(Survey Participant 1).

Other responses included, "Students can grow very much, depending on factors

such as teacher support, school efficiency, their home situation, their drive, etc." (Survey

Ms. Barnes). "If they are willing to engage, then students can grow immensely over the

course of high school" (Survey Ms. Baker). "I don't think there are limits to how much a

student can grow in ELA abilities. Limits instead come from their investment, effort, and

my ability and time, or lack thereof, to properly support them" (Survey Ms. Jones). "It's hard to quantify that. I would say that students can grow their ELA abilities by 50% but they need to have some buy-in to begin with" (Survey Ms. Adams). "I believe that every student can make progress, as long as they have a growth mindset" (Survey Participant 8). Survey Participant 3 shared,

I believe that students can reach unlimited growth potential over the course of a school year and throughout high school - even throughout adulthood. As long as one is open to reading and writing, there is unmatched potential for growth. Anyone who is willing to engage in the academic tasks will grow.

Survey Participant 4 shared the following:

Students have unlimited potential to grow in their ELA abilities. There are simply a number of factors that influence their ability to do so. Such as, what background knowledge they have coming into class, what factors outside of school (trauma, poverty) are impacting their ability to focus on school, how much individualized support they need to master content and how much time the teacher has to provide that individualized support, level of student engagement in provided curriculum, and others.

Following this survey item, teachers explained how they conceptualized growth relating to academic success in ELA when they responded to the following survey item, "How would you define student success in English Language Arts?" The following are a list of statements that teachers had to say in regard to this item:

"Of course being able to see growth in reading level, comprehension, and writing skills is great, but ELA is also something that requires persistence and effort, and

I think growth in those areas is also an indicator of success" (Survey Participant

1).

"Growth in their level of ability and confidence to read, write, and think

critically" (Survey Ms. Barnes).

"Students who improve in ELA standards" (Survey Ms. Baker).

"I define student success as when a student learns a new concept or idea that they

had previously struggled with" (Survey Participant 8).

This survey data illustrate how multiple teachers define success in ELA as showing

growth or improvement over time in regard to skills related to ELA abilities.

Category 4: Giving Feedback and Assessment

In this category of the teaching framework among units of analyses across data

sources, the principal investigator analyzed the nature of feedback in classrooms, i.e.,

how teachers gave verbal praise and feedback, how teachers provide written feedback, as

well as teachers' philosophies towards assessment procedures and how this gets

implemented in their classrooms through a growth mindset lens (see Table 9).

Table 9

Category 4: Giving Feedback and Assessing

Teaching code	Teacher practice	Student action/response	Tertiary data
Verbal praise	Teachers verbally praised whole class and individual efforts. Teachers provided constructive verbal feedback to students.	Students in Ms. Adams' class appreciated receiving verbal feedback from their peers during their graduation speech unit.	N/A
Written feedback	Ms. Adams and Ms. Jones provided feedback that recognized student strengths and was constructive in terms of how students could grow/improve related to the standard.	Students in Ms. Adams' and Jones' find their feedback encouraging and helpful.	Student work was accessed via Microsoft Teams where both Ms. Adams and Ms. Jones shared samples of student feedback with written comments provided by the teacher.
Grading and assessment tracking	Ms. Baker provides time during class for students to check their grades and conferences with students about their progress. Ms. Barnes and Ms. Adams provide alternate routes for students to meet standards.	Students experienced agency and autonomy by displaying ownership over their learning.	N/A

Verbal Praise

Feedback was provided verbally by Ms. Jones in multiple ways. When she was proud of student work or contribution to class discussion, she would say, "Yay, good

job!" Students also received positive encouragement to participate in class activities such as when students were asked to go around the room and talk to other students in the class about their writing, "I encourage you to talk to people not only at your table group but others whom you may not normally communicate with." If multiple students were struggling with the same concept, she would sometimes pause the whole class and provide feedback to everyone. For example, when students were working on their own individual research reports on a topic they chose and were reading over each other's papers and providing feedback to one another, she paused the class for a moment and said, "If I don't understand this part of their writing, how should I respond on the feedback form?" She then waited for a student to answer and provided a positive, encouraging response once a student provided the answer. She also helped students solve this problem by explaining some of the steps and processes they should take when reading each other's papers.

When students were working on a task where they had to identify three pieces of evidence to incorporate into their writing, she walked around the room and continued to remind students what they needed to look for, "Hey scholars, remember, three pieces of evidence." Additionally, when students were confused on how to cite in text when there were two or more authors, she wrote "et al." on the whiteboard and clarified verbally how to write this in their papers.

In another activity involving Ms. Jones' class, students had to take global issues their groups identified and come up with potential solutions. Ms. Jones remained present during this activity by consistently circulating around the classroom when student groups were working. The principal investigator was able to capture some moments of her

providing verbal feedback to the potential solutions: "I saw what they said, what did you all say?" Here, Ms. Jones helped one group talk through some of the proposed solutions by asking clarifying and probing questions, "Money? Where is the money coming from?" A student responded, "The government," and Ms. Jones replied, "What government?" In addition, the principal investigator captured other conversations where she helped students work through their potential identified solutions, "How are we doing over here? Are there any commonalities?" "Start with the resolution and determine what your group is going to argue by stating so this is our argument. Think about the alternate solutions or answers to your questions." These classroom conversations illustrate how Ms. Jones provides clear and concise feedback that helps students think about how to arrive at conclusions. Ms. Jones reflected on pedagogical techniques for verbal feedback:

> I honor what was said. If it is off topic, I do try to connect their comment to the discussion and then I rephrase my question. If it is off, I try and identify maybe where it came from. Students just shout out answers, I have them use resources to go back and answer questions (Ms. Jones).

Ms. Adams' verbal feedback protocols were similar to those of Ms. Jones. When the class as a whole completed a task or solved an issue, Ms. Adams would provide feedback to the whole class by saying things such as, "I knew you all could do it! And "I am proud of you all for accomplishing this," such as when the word students would have to guess for the Wordle of the day was exceptionally challenging. There were multiple classroom conversations the principal investigator was able to capture where Ms. Adams provided verbal one-on-one feedback to students. One of those conversations happened when students were working on writing their graduation speeches. Ms. Adams made it a

point to walk around the room and check in with each student individually to assess their progress and determine where they were individually and where the class was as a whole. During this process, a student called Ms. Adams over and asked for feedback on her writing. Ms. Adams read over the speech and provided the student with direct feedback. As she read through the speech line by line, she stopped at various points and offered suggestions while honoring what the student wrote originally: "I like this part where you mention this…maybe consider rephrasing this part in order to make it sound like this. Does that help you?" The student responded, "Yes, I will try that," and Ms. Adams replied, "You got this!"

When students were tasked with presenting their speeches to the class, at the end of each speech, Ms. Adams provided constructive and thoughtful feedback to each student by referring to something specific that students wrote or a technique they used and recognized the strengths behind students' writing. In addition, students also had to provide each other with feedback Ms. Adams would validate their takeaway as special and made sure students felt validated in their personal takeaways from the speech. Students had the opportunity to gain feedback from both Ms. Adams as well as their peers. One student in Ms. Adams' class discussed how she appreciated receiving feedback from her peers:

> When I did my speech and got feedback, I felt proud, but I got some feedback from classmates, I felt appreciated. Sometimes when you write an essay you only get feedback from the teacher and not your classmates so getting feedback from my peers is really validating (Zero).

This student's explanation of receiving validation from her peers through the process of verbal feedback emphasizes the importance of providing students with opportunities to provide feedback to their peers.

Both Ms. Baker and Ms. Jones emphasized using verbal feedback as a way for them to check in with students as people rather than only viewing them as students. Ms. Baker shared, "Individually I have a conversation about, 'What are your goals in life?' and I talk about how reading and writing will help support those goals. I will sometimes explain how reading and writing may help with that profession." Ms. Jones offered,

> I try and have conversations with individual students about how they are doing. Seeing them as a person rather than a student who needs to do work. I start with 'how are you doing,' first. Then, I ask, 'how I can help?' I grew as an educator, by shifting how I approach conversations.

Written Feedback

The principal investigator examined student work as artifacts when examining how teachers provided written feedback to their students. Ms. Jones provided feedback that was clear and constructive. For example, when students in Ms. Jones' AP Seminar class had to look for search engines that were credible, she acknowledged what students had done well but also provided constructive feedback to improve in this skill, stating things like, "Good summary, but the works cited should lead me to the source you read (not the sources it cited)," "Ok--if you find something not credible, don't use it. Move along. You're correct in your assessment, an opinion from a freelance author on an e-magazine with open calls is not the best source," "Not a full citation or summary. Helpguide.org might be ok info--but what does a lateral search tell you? Who are they

citing?" "I would avoid self-help sites like this," "Great citation. But this looks like a student-published site (not bad, but not the most reliable or vetted). Read what others say about the source," "I would avoid self-help sites like this," and ".gov is often good, but this is one senator's page. He is known as a more extreme political view, so you would want to get other political views if you used this. It is a political lens." These examples demonstrate how Ms. Jones often points to their strengths but also provides a piece of constructive, written feedback so the student can grow.

Students in Ms. Jones class reflected on how they perceive her feedback as helpful and constructive:

"She goes through your writing and responds with feedback and we have a conversation about what we needed to improve" (Ezra).

"She says okay, and we can redo it. On paper she would not have a lot of explanation. She verbalizes what we should do to understand something better" (Naomi).

Ms. Jones also offers a time for students to come in after school periodically throughout the week to ask questions or provide a space for students to complete work. For example, with one struggling student who is a senior in her advisory class and with whom she has worked over the last 4 years, she offers her classroom space throughout the week to further support this student's learning. The student had the option of attending extended learning which takes place after school twice a week in the school's library as a larger gathering of students, which the student had some reservations about. Therefore, Ms. Jones offered her classroom space to this student. This ultimately helps to send the message that some learning tasks may require extra time outside of class and that some

assignments will require more effort and time than others. It also provides students with opportunities to redo work after receiving feedback.

Ms. Adams provides feedback that is thoughtful and constructive to her students. The principal investigator analyzed student work and chose some specific pieces of written feedback that stood out in regard to student writing: "This is a great beginning!," "Okay. I like it. It does need a little more substance, but I like where you started. Keep up the momentum. Include an example or experience and we will be good to go!" "Wow. A unique and creative approach to the assignment. I like it." "I like the way you describe the assumptions people make about your name," and "It's a good start. It seems to tell several stories so we might want to weave a common thread through the different stories to make it a more cohesive piece of writing." A student in Ms. Adams' class reflected on receiving feedback from her:

> My personal experience is if I didn't get the writing down 100%, she will correct me and tell me I can do better and I can redo it. So, it is up to me to redo the work and take her advice. It is always nice to hear from someone who teaches the class to get that professional feedback (Casper).

Grading and Assessment Tracking

Ms. Baker spoke about how in her 10th grade English classes, she periodically gives students opportunities to look up their grade to identify what they still need to complete, and she explains where they should focus their efforts. She holds brief one-on-one conferences with students so that it is clear how they can improve their grades. Ms. Baker also discussed how she uses growth as an indicator for success in her AP Senior Literature class:

In AP Lit. class, the large amount of grading is about growth. For students, I
establish a baseline, and then try to assess for growth based off that. I take into
account the students that start low that they may not be able to get to that
standard, I take into consideration if they are putting in effort, etc. Some students
grow from a 1 to a 2, that's success for students. Getting a 2 means you're college
ready. 2 is you're ready for college English. 3 is you have tested out of freshman
college English (Ms. Baker).

This illustrates how she recognizes that not everyone comes into her AP class with the
same set of skills but recognizes that, for some students, it is an opportunity to be college
ready, and she adjusts her assessment standards based on this notion.

Ms. Adams provided autonomy and agency when it came to the route students
took to complete assessments. For example, when the class was given the task of writing
a sonnet, one student had some reservations. Ms. Adams spoke with the student, as she
was familiar that the student liked to write poetry. The student expressed these
frustrations with being confused on how to turn her poetry into a sonnet. Ms. Adams met
the student where she was by explaining to her that she could write a poem in the way she
wanted, and after the poem was written, she would help her figure out how to turn the
poem into a sonnet. Rather than tell the student she needed to write a sonnet from the
onset of the assignment, she met the student where she was, was knowledgeable about
her capacities, and built off of those by allowing her to complete the assignment using the
path the student was familiar with. From there, Ms. Adams was willing to work with the
student individually to meet the individual assignment criteria.

When Ms. Barnes had her 9th grade English students participate in a class discussion around the book *House on Mango Street*, she outlined a list of ways in which students could receive points and how they may lose points. She provided multiple ways in which students could receive points which helped to provide students with agency for how they demonstrated proficiency in regard to the assignment. In addition, students were given a list of questions to which they had to respond in writing before the discussion began. They were then asked to share their responses to at least two questions during the discussion. By giving students the choice from a list of questions rather than requiring them to respond to all questions, this helped students build off of their own interpretations of what they took away from the book. Ms. Barnes also provided an option for students to come up with their own question to bring to the discussion if students thought of something that the teacher had not. Also, during the discussion, if the class had moved on from one question, she allowed students to go back to that same question. Ms. Barnes provides her students with autonomy and agency in her classroom when it comes to assessment, which helps students to take ownership over their own learning.

Ms. Jones spoke to the inherent issue within our education system related to grading and assessment within ELA as a discipline. She explained how the writing process is not always linear, and to always expect all students to be able to write in the same amount of time as others is not realistic. Therefore, she tries to be flexible with her due dates as long as students can show proficiency before the end of a semester. Here are her thoughts:

ELA is a process so systematically our grading system and marking periods

inhibit our abilities to teach our discipline to the fullest extent. The skill they need

to take away is the process not the product. Sometimes it is helpful to have

students make their own false deadlines which helps to identify their process of

writing (Ms. Jones).

Category 5: Engaging in ELA Tasks

In this category of the teaching framework among units of analyses across data

sources, the principal investigator analyzed how ELA teachers may communicate growth

mindset messages to their students when engaging in discipline-specific practices related

to ELA (see Table 10).

Table 10

Category 5: Engaging in ELA Tasks

Teaching code	Teacher practice	Student action/response
Driver of the ELA task	Teachers provided students with the opportunity to be the driver of thinking related to ELA, e.g., Ms. Adams' class during wordle entry tasks.	Students were doing a majority of the thinking related to ELA tasks, e.g., students were responsible for solving the wordle task. Students spoke to being given more autonomy and agency when it comes to ELA classes.
Collaboration in ELA tasks	All four teachers provided opportunities for students to collaborate in tasks related to ELA. Ms. Adams established a collective community environment by circulating around her room during her instruction.	Students were provided with multiple opportunities to collaborate and learn from and with their peers.
Approaches to skill instruction	Teachers scaffold skills related to ELA by creating activities that help to build student skill. Ms. Jones spent class periods focusing on one part of the writing process. Ms. Adams took time to focus on writing one part of a speech.	Students grow in skills related to ELA by giving concentrated times in class to practice and work on improving skills.
Connecting learnings	Teachers provide opportunities to connect what they are currently learning to what they have previously learned. Ms. Barnes makes discussions permeable by allowing students to use their own personal experience as evidence. Ms. Adams allows students to share their stories through student written speeches.	Students make text-to-self, world, and text connections.

Driver of the ELA Task

When Ms. Adams' class would engage in their daily wordle entry tasks, it was evident that the students were doing a majority of the thinking related to this task. Ms. Adams would display the starting word and then the class as a whole was responsible for guessing the correct term. Ms. Adams made it a point to ensure students were able to guess the correct term without getting involved and completing the word for the class. Similarly, when students were tasked with writing a speech for graduation to their 2023 class, she explained to her senior English class that they were being given the opportunity to describe their high school journeys in their own words. They had to include some specifics such as a hook, a personal struggle, and a call to action to their audience; however, the topic for writing was open, which meant students were given the opportunity and autonomy to express themselves in their own ways. Moreover, during their danger of a single-story unit, Ms. Adams took inventories of students' interests by asking them about their own personal experiences about assumptions and biases in order to build a curriculum based on student interest. Students wrote about this on a slip of paper and put their submission into a box. Ms. Adams went through each student response in order to determine the best way to incorporate student voice in the curriculum for that unit.

Students from both classes reflected on being able to have more autonomy and agency when it came to English class:

"Choose more interesting topics that go on throughout the world instead of making us read an old book that we don't care about" (Jeremiah).

There should be openness to the prompt so students can express their creativity.

Sometimes students read an article or text and they may not be able to write about

those texts. Find more things for students to write that they are passionate about

so they can write about them in English (Zero).

Change the books we are required to read. I feel like if they went through and

picked newer books, they could get across to a lot more people versus a book that

was written 50 years ago. I can't retain the info. If I can't relate or don't enjoy the

book. We read the book and then there is a point to be made and they just haven't

switched that up in a while (Casper).

Changing the types of books- TKAMB and Shakespeare. Requirements for essays

– I should be able to get point across in a lower number of words instead of

always having to meet word count requirements. Having more discussion-based

activities, having us being able to converse more with peers to discuss issues.

Only in Ms. Adams' class do we engage in discussed-based activities (Jay).

Ms. Jones spoke to the issue of a lack of diversity within the texts that students

are tasked with reading in the general high school ELA curriculum and how she attempts

to bring in multiple voices from those who are generally excluded from school curricula.

She explained this this helps to provide a voice to the underrepresented and helps

students to feel more seen. She makes it a point to also share an image of the author as

well so students can physically see the diversity.

Collaboration in ELA Tasks

All four teachers that were observed by the principal investigator provided

opportunities for students to collaborate with one another. Ms. Barnes gave her 9th grade

English students the opportunity to engage in a discussion activity around novel *The House on Mango Street*, where they got to choose which questions they would share their answers for during the discussion. Students placed the chairs in a circle and engaged in discussion by sharing answers and listening to others share. They were given some sentence stems with their question packet which helped them to be able to verbally construct how they could be involved in the discussion (e.g., when they wanted to share something that connected to someone else's idea or when they wanted to agree/disagree with another student). There was a clear community that had been preestablished prior to this lesson as every student had something to share, actively listened to others share, and when students were more reluctant to share on their own, they were receptive to Ms. Barnes' strategies for bringing them into the conversation. Ms. Barnes helped to affirm student ideas and pushed students to think more critically about certain points. Below is an example of the question posed and student dialogue:

"Do you think Esperanza is picking up positive or negative things about the world?"

Student A: "I think negative things are happening to her but she's taking away positive things."

Ms. Barnes: "Can you stay a happy person if you continually experience negative things?"

Another student B: "It depends on your mindset."

Ms. Barnes: My 12th graders were saying, "positive vibes only."

Student C: "Being told to just stay positive can put more pressure to only think positive."

Another student D: "Sometimes negative experiences can help students overcome

adversities and helps them to see more of the positive."

In addition to this, Ms. Barnes also contributed with some of how she related to the book,

which did not take away from students' opportunities to share, but rather, further

illustrated how this was a community effort.

In Ms. Baker's 10th grade English class, students engaged in a collaborative

gallery walk in response to a video on how misinformation can spread through social

media. Ms. Baker's 10th grade English students were working on a unit where they would

have to write an argumentative essay on the advantages and disadvantages of social

media. During the video, students took notes on various aspects of the video on sticky

notes in response to what they saw and heard in the video. Following the video, they were

to place the sticky notes in different points of the classroom. When students were done

placing their sticky notes at four different stations in the classroom, they then had to take

notes and answer questions in regard to what they read about students' sticky notes.

Students were engaging in collaboration by having to respond to what their peers came

up with in response to the video and by being able to physically walk around the room,

look at each sticky note, and reflect on what their peers took away from the video.

Ms. Jones engaged her students in collaborative activities that helped to build

community. For example, when students were returning from winter break, they had

cards with conversation starters where they had to go around the room, engage in

conversation with their peers, and mark off specific conversation topics they had with

students on a bingo card. This gave them the opportunity to check back in with their

peers as well as talk to students they may not have had the opportunity to previously

connect with. The classroom environment was vibrant with energy as students were enthusiastic about sharing their answers with each other in response to the different prompts. Another example of this was when students were given an opportunity to talk about a book they had recently read: "Good morning scholars! Today you are going to be discussing with a partner the most recent book you have read and what kinds of books you enjoy reading in general."

When it came to tasks specifically related to ELA, Ms. Jones provided students with multiple ways to engage with their peers. For example, they had a task to complete where each group member of a group of four was responsible for writing something specific on a piece of poster paper in response to their own writing. They had to choose one of the issues a student at that group was writing about and write it in the center of the poster. Then, using different colored markers to communicate ideas, each student had to write a potential solution to that issue on the poster paper in a different corner. Students were allowed to come up with a solution they individually felt would help solve or combat the issue, then the group as a whole would decide on the best two. It was evident upon observation among this activity and others that community and collaboration is highly valued in this classroom. In addition to this activity, students collaborated with one another when they were tasked with reading each other's writing and responding with feedback. Conversations regarding student writing was going on with ideas of content to write about along with conversation about style and conventions. Ms. Jones expressed how she views collaboration in ELA as an important, transferrable skill beyond the discipline to other disciplines as well as outside of a school setting as to her rationale for making collaboration apart of her classroom routines.

Ms. Adams' students engaged in collaboration almost every class period that was observed. When students would work on the daily Wordle problem, she would call on each student and ask them whether or not they had something to guess for the wordle. She made a genuine effort to bring every student into the activity, which helped to always make it a collaborative effort to solving the wordle. She even made it a point to emphasize how, "It isn't a competition, this is a collective effort. When we do this together rather than individually, this is what we gain from this experience." Moreover, when students were working on their graduation speech unit, Ms. Adams read through previous speeches written by former students. She made it a class effort to identify the specific points students needed to address their own writing. She would ask, "What are we looking for in the speech? What is the hook? What was a memorable quote or part of the speech for you?" When students were writing their own speeches, she had students share their speech with another classmate and give feedback as well as receive feedback from a peer. When students were done presenting their speeches, it was a community effort to establish clear aspects from the speech, such as where students excelled in their speeches and where they could improve. Furthermore, Ms. Adams made it a point to establish a community in her classroom. For example, she continuously circulates around the room as she provides instruction. When she calls on a student, she will walk toward them, which helps to bring students into the conversation, and she will even sit down in a student chair next to students as she is teaching, which helps to reiterate how collaboration and establishing a community is important in ELA. It is evident by how many students participated in providing feedback to one another with the graduation speeches how much of a community had been established prior to this unit. Additionally,

a student in Ms. Adams' class shared how they appreciate being given opportunities to collaborate with peers in ELA: "I love English class, it is my favorite subject. I can be myself with the class discussions and engaging in debate. I love being able to argue my viewpoint" (Jeremiah).

Approaches to Skill Instruction

Ms. Jones' class provides students with multiple ways to improve in skills directly related to ELA. One of her entry task activities involves giving students logic puzzles to solve collaboratively with one another. She explains to students that this helps with critical thinking skills, which they can also apply to their writing.

When it came to focusing on writing, Ms. Jones dedicated specific class periods to focusing on different parts of the writing process. For example, she gave verbal directions but also had posted on a slide, "Evidence day! Individually- on a yellow card, write 1 piece of the best evidence that supports your team's solution OR explains a different perspective. You can summarize, paraphrase or quote directly. Make sure to cite your evidence. Repeat this process to with 3-5 pieces of evidence."

When it came to specifically focusing on reading, Ms. Jones made it a point to emphasize how important it was for them as writers to be continuously reading:

> This semester, we are going to focus on reading more! Each of you are going to check out a book at the library and we are going to do silent reading at the beginning of each class period to help build our reading stamina.

She stated this as students were going into a unit where they would have to read long texts and then respond to these texts in writing. Ms. Jones discussed her thoughts in regard to show she approaches skill instruction in ELA:

Skills are multidimensional or multifaceted. In regard to reading, I bring in outside pieces like NPR articles, exposing them to more outside texts, or bring in other texts. I provide opportunities for reading without strings attached. I do not grade their silent reading time. I try and find a bridge between reading for leisure and having it attached to a grade.

When students were preparing to write their own graduation speeches for their unit, Ms. Adams helped students prepare for this skill by reading them speeches from previous students, showing them a video of a speech she gave to the school community, as well as showing other famous speeches that had been delivered, including commencement addresses by famous figures such as Steve Jobs and Denzel Washington. This helped to provide students with written, visual, and auditory examples of how speeches were written, what elements should be in a speech, how speeches are similar and different from other writing genres they have been asked to do in the past (e.g., expository and argumentative essays), and how one goes about presenting a speech.

Students across Ms. Adams' and Ms. Jones' classes shared their thoughts on the skills they found most pertinent to ELA:

"Honestly, what you can do to be good is being attentive. If you are paying attention, you can always have questions to build off of what skills you have. Attention is the key component" (Jeremiah).

"I think having an open mind because most of the information is coming up with your own thoughts" (Naomi).

I think it takes be very attentive to the way things are written like tone and the audience the text is trying to reach and what the teacher is looking for and trying to make sure my work fits the prompt and rubric. (Zero)

"Being able to communicate properly in the sense of being able to get your point across without being confusing. Which is a struggle because English can be confusing. Written and verbal communication" (Casper).

In general, you have to be present to learn what's expected when the teacher is teaching the curriculum. If you are not there, you may not know what to do and then it becomes harder. Attendance is important in English because you can't really do research because you have to interact with the teacher to understand more. (Jay)

Furthermore, it is evident that students have determined that attentiveness, communication, and overall class attendance are important skills for ELA class. Ms. Adams spoke to the importance of curiosity within the discipline of ELA: "Curiosity; it's such a challenge because so many disciplines are this is right and this is wrong, but my philosophy is that there is not a wrong answer. It's a lot about interpretation."

In the initial survey that went out to the ELA department on the onset of the study, ELA teachers described the skills they see most pertinent to ELA when asked about what success looks like in ELA:

I believe student success in English Language Arts is a combination of understanding a given text on both surface and complex levels, an ability to write a variety of texts for different audiences and purposes, confidence in one's own abilities to communicate through writing, speaking, or visually with others,

comfort with reading a potentially challenging text or writing on a potentially

challenging topic, and a desire and openness to learn and experience more.

(Survey Participant 3)

"To be a lifelong reader, to think critically, to communicate effectively" (Survey

Participant 4).

"A student can use a variety of strategies to understand what they read and put it

in the context of the larger world, and they can write and speak to express their

ideas clearly, i.e. miscommunication is minimal" (Survey Ms. Jones).

"By the ability to communicate effectively. Both verbally and in writing. To be

able to communicate a thought with little confusion" (Survey Ms. Adams).

"The ability to effectively communicate using substantial elaboration techniques

that are appropriate for the genre and purpose" (Survey Participant 9).

Connecting Learnings

Ms. Barnes provided the opportunity for students to connect what they read in

House on Mango Street to previous texts and their own lives by allowing them to use

evidence for their responses to the discussion questions from their own personal

experiences. She validated students' lived experiences and helped increase participation

in the discussion activity as students who may have struggled to comprehend parts of the

text were able to draw from their own experiences by making text-to-self, text, and world

connections. During the discussion activity, students were able to share parts of how they

related to the text with the rest of the class, which was both insightful and helped others

to see how they could relate to a character's struggle in the text. Honoring and validating

students' personal experiences helped students who may have struggled to contribute to

be a part of the discussion and also helped to make what they were reading about relevant to their own lives.

When introducing the graduation speech unit to her senior English class, Ms. Adams began the unit by attempting to connect the unit to previous experiences students may have had with commencement ceremonies by asking, "What is the purpose of a graduation speech? What elements should a graduation speech address? How many of us have attended graduation ceremonies before? What is the purpose of these ceremonies? What did these all have in common?" This line of questioning helped to stimulate the knowledge students were bringing with them into this unit by asking content/background information about commencement ceremonies. In addition, when students were then given the opportunity to begin writing their speeches, Ms. Adams discussed how each student could, if they could not think of other things to write, speak to how the pandemic impacted their high school experience, as this group would have been in 9th grade in 2020 when school buildings closed. The speech unit was all about their stories, their struggles, and how their lived experiences helped to shape and define their high school journeys. This helps to make what students were learning relevant to their own experiences and empowered them to take ownership over their learning by reflecting on how their high school journey has shaped them as a person.

Summary

This study investigated how high school ELA teachers may perpetuate growth mindset messages to their students by examining their teaching practices holistically. The principal investigator examined general teaching practices and instructional techniques as well as those that are discipline-specific to ELA. An initial survey was sent to ELA

teachers at Richmond High School in the greater Tacoma area of Washington State where students responded to items regarding their mindset beliefs regarding ELA abilities. Ultimately, four teachers were purposefully sampled to be observed. The principal investigator used a framework to examine their practices across five different categories: (a) sorting and classroom organization, (b) explicit teaching of growth mindset concepts, (c) classroom culture as it pertains to growth mindset (implicit/explicit), (d) giving feedback and assessment, and (e) Engaging in ELA tasks. Four sources of data were collected to examine this issue: (a) a survey, (b) observations, (c) interviews with teachers and students, and (d) classroom artifacts. The TEGMF (see table 5) summarizes the results of the study.

Category 1 of the teaching framework through a growth mindset lens shows how teachers communicated their expectations by holding students to high expectations while also meeting them where they are academically. It also illustrates teachers' seating strategies and how teachers held a strengths-based view of student skill.

Category 2 of the teaching framework explains how teachers used explicit mindset messaging when Ms. Jones referred to her students as scholars and had posters on her walls that perpetuated explicit mindset messages to students. It also describes how teachers modeled academic risk taking and modeled how to approach academic errors by sharing their personal examples as well as other student examples of academic risk taking and modeling how to approach academic errors.

Category 3 of the teaching framework explains the pedagogical strategies teachers employed with their students in order to guide them through mistakes and how they handled mistakes made in their classrooms. The framework also explains how teachers

valued the process of learning and used growth in the classroom as a measure of achievement.

Category 4 of the teaching framework explains how teachers provided positive, constructive verbal praise in their classrooms in order to praise individual and whole-class efforts. The framework outlines how teachers provided specific written feedback that highlighted student strengths but also explained how students could grow. Finally, category 4 reports how Ms. Baker used assessment tracking by conferencing with students about their grades which allowed them to take ownership over their education.

Category 5 of the teaching framework explains how growth mindset messages were perpetuated specifically related to ELA skills. Students were doing a majority of the thinking related to ELA tasks, teachers provided multiple opportunities for students to collaborate with their peers, teachers provided scaffolding to build student skills related to ELA, and teachers allowed students to connect their learning to other areas which allowed them to make text-to-text, world, and self-connections.

Chapter Five: Discussion

This study aimed to understand how high school ELA teachers may perpetuate growth mindset messages to their students by examining teaching practices holistically and determining general teaching practices and practices that are discipline specific to ELA that may help to build students' growth mindsets. Many educators struggle with techniques and strategies to help motivate students to learn, which may lead to apathy and underperformance in education. As little qualitative research has previously been conducted to investigate how growth mindset messages are perpetuated in classrooms, the principal investigator sought to investigate this through case study research.

An initial survey was sent to teachers within the English Language Arts (ELA) department at Richmond High School (RHS) in December of 2022 asking teachers to respond to items regarding their mindset beliefs regarding ELA skill and ability. This survey also helped the principal investigator to be able to purposefully sample teachers who were willing to participate in the study, which entailed being observed teaching as well as being interviewed. All teachers were female and had between 5 years to 10 or more years of teaching experience. All teachers taught a variety of grade levels and different class types (e.g., AP classes versus on grade level English classes). Interviews of teachers were conducted in January of 2023. Observations were conducted from January to February 2023. Eight students participated in the interview process from two different classrooms, including a 10th and 11th grade AP English class and a Senior English class. Student participants for the interview process consisted of five female students and three male students.

The intended to address the research question regarding how high school ELA teachers may perpetuate growth mindset messages to their students through general teaching practices as well those teaching practices that are discipline specific to ELA by examining teaching practices holistically. Through the analysis of the qualitative survey data, observation field notes, interview transcripts, and artifact analysis, the principal investigator determined practices that may perpetuate mindset messages to students. The data were examined across the five teaching categories: (a) sorting and classroom organization, (b) explicit teaching of growth mindset concepts, (c) classroom culture as it pertains to growth mindset (implicit/explicit), (d) giving feedback and assessing, and (e) Engaging in ELA tasks. Four sources of data were collected to examine this issue: (a) a survey, (b) observations, (c) interviews with teachers and students, and (d) classroom artifacts.

In chapter five, the principal investigator addresses the research question by highlighting the major findings across the five themes from the theoretical framework table outlined in chapter three. The principal investigator also explains the implications for both theory and practice and provides some insights gained from observing their colleagues. Limitations and future research are discussed along with some final takeaways and conclusions.

Category 1: Sorting and Classroom Organization

Dweck (2010) and Robinson (2017) assert that holding consistent and high expectations for all students helps to send the implicit message that all students can succeed. Barnes and Fives (2016) and Sun (2018) found that classes in which students were held to high expectations with the belief that all students could succeed and meet

standards in math and ELA helped to implicitly communicate growth mindset messages to students. In addition, they also observed classrooms where students were more engaged and performed academically better compared to classrooms where teachers held inconsistent expectations in regard to student ability. Across all four classrooms, teachers communicated high expectations for their students with the belief that all could succeed academically. They held high expectations while also meeting students where they were, both academically and in regard to skill proficiency, by accepting alternate routes to meeting standards in ELA. This implicitly sent the message to students that they were capable of succeeding even if they came into the year performing below grade level. This also implicitly communicated the message to students that all students can read and write successfully in ELA even if they feel like they have not had much success in ELA class before.

Sun (2018) found that structuring classrooms in a way that promotes collaboration amongst students helps students to process what they were learning with their peers and to learn from and with their classmates. The teachers that were able to arrange desks into small groups, Ms. Baker, Ms. Barnes, and Ms. Jones, provided opportunities for students to collaborate with their peers. Ms. Baker and Ms. Jones spoke about their seating strategy from a strengths-based approach towards student skill by placing certain students with others in hopes that they would benefit from being able to collaborate with other students specifically. By placing students in groups this helps to send the message that it is important to consider multiple perspectives when it comes to learning in ELA and promotes that the idea of success in ELA is multifaceted; meaning, there are multiple

ways to demonstrate success in ELA. This ultimately helps students recognize their potentials and consider their individual strengths and assets.

Moreover, Barnes and Fives (2016) and Sun (2018) asserted that when teachers view student capabilities from an asset-based view, meaning they consider their strengths rather than focusing only on deficits, this was implicitly communicated through their instruction to students. Students were able to recognize their potentials and recognize their teachers believed in their capabilities as a learner. Teachers used asset-based views of student capabilities when comparing individual students as well as whole classes to one another. Ms. Adams verbally would challenge her English classes to outperform other classes to help students believe in their abilities to perform to their fullest extent, which ultimately helps to send the message that students are capable of succeeding when it comes to tasks related to ELA. Ms. Baker spoke about how she considers students' strengths in her AP classes by establishing a baseline of rigor in regard to AP benchmarks and standards, depending on the skills of students coming into the year, and holds them toward high expectations while striving to meet students where they are in regard to skill. Instead of focusing on skill deficiencies, she recognizes their strengths and determines their potential for growth through that baseline of rigor which helps to push students to grow but also implicitly sends the message that they can be successful. The way in which teachers communicated expectations and labeled and compared students helped to communicate growth mindset messages within the context of ELA classrooms, as students were held to high expectations with the belief that all could succeed while also recognizing the differences in regard to skills related to ELA and challenging students to demonstrate growth.

Category 2: Explicit Teaching of Growth Mindset Concepts

   The belief in student success is one thing, but being able to effectively communicate this through language to one's students is another. Ms. Jones both explicitly and implicitly communicated growth mindset messages to her students. Ms. Jones continuously referred to her students as "scholars," which is heavily supported in the literature as a way to help communicate growth mindset messages to students by viewing them as capable of achieving success overall or within a specific discipline (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017; Sun, 2018). She also continuously asked her students to ask her a question rather than ask if anyone had any questions which normalized the idea of asking questions regardless of whether one does not understand something or is confused; instead, question asking was a natural part of the learning process. Promoting student curiosity and inquisitiveness ultimately helps to promote a growth mindset, as students will value learning beyond getting answers right or wrong but instead for the sake of acquiring knowledge and skill, which can help them be successful and promote a life-long learning mindset. Ms. Jones had posters displayed on her classroom walls that helped to perpetuate growth mindset messages implicitly and explicitly to students. Dweck (2010) and Robinson (2017) both asserted that placing posters or charts on the wall that communicate growth mindset messages is a key strategy to help students develop a growth mindset. Barnes and Fives (2016) and Sun (2018) have also found this to be true.

   Additionally, Ms. Adams continuously encouraged her students to take academic risks while completing wordle tasks. Both Dweck (2010) and Robinson (2017) stated that one way to do this is for teachers to model or provide examples of how they have taken

academic risks. Ms. Adams did this during her graduation speech unit by showing her students a video of a speech she gave to the school community. When she was with her students, she communicated how nervous and apprehensive she was before giving the speech, which helps to communicate that even teachers experience these feelings when it comes to public speaking. She talked students through how she overcame her fears and communicated not getting stuck in negative self-talk; something that Ms. Jones also communicated doing with students. This ultimately helps students recognize the value of taking academic risks as part of the learning process and understand that even if they do fail or make a mistake, there is much to be learned from. Dweck (2010) and Robinson (2017) assert that promoting positive self-talk as a way to combat negative self-talk helps students develop a growth mindset. This is an important strategy that other teachers in any discipline, but specifically in ELA, may utilize as a way to help students overcome their fears of taking risks. It also leads into a great conversation about how to approach making academic errors.

Ms. Jones and Ms. Adams also both shared previous student work with their classes and identified strengths and areas for improvement within the student work. This approach modeled how students can confront making academic errors and also helps to illustrate that even the examples of student work that were higher scoring examples have room to grow. This helps to promote the ideal of a life-long learning mindset which is pivotal in developing a growth mindset, as one will view the learning process as never ending (Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017). Both teachers made the process of reviewing previous student work a class effort rather than just telling students what each paper did well and where each paper could improve. This again, sends the message to students that,

as scholars, they are capable of recognizing the potential strengths and areas of growth in other student work.

Category 3: Classroom Culture as it Pertains to Growth Mindset

Ms. Jones and Ms. Adams both guided students through the learning process by allowing students to make mistakes and then walking them through a problem. They both used questioning techniques, which helped students recall information from previous class periods to remind them of what they had previously learned. They both valued and honored student input, regardless of whether or not a student gave an answer they were looking for, but rather recognized the academic risk that student took by contributing to classroom conversations. Ms. Adams also spoke about accepting student interpretations of a text or a learning task that she may not have previously thought about as well as honoring students' original ideas. Scholars such as Christensen (2017), Langer (2001), and Smagorinsky (2019) have all asserted that it is important for teachers in ELA to accept multiple interpretations of a text regardless of the teachers' own biases or personal feelings regarding the interpretation of a text. This ultimately helps students recognize their potentials to come up with their own interpretations, which further supports the idea of success in ELA being multifaceted and helps students develop a growth mindset.

Both Ms. Adams and Ms. Jones cultivated classroom environments where the process of learning was valued rather than only the outcomes of learning. They both designed lessons where students would focus on one part or piece toward a larger end goal, which helped guide students through the process of learning and helped students recognize ELA skills as part of a larger process. Ms. Jones provided specific days to focus on one part to a larger piece of writing, such as writing and embedding evidence

into the bodies of student essays. Ms. Adams further supported the process of learning by having students focus on parts of their graduation speeches as opposed to only focusing on the larger end goal of the entire speech being completed. Rather than the teachers assigning a writing assignment and expecting students to be done with the assignment at a specific time, they guided students through the task and created lessons that were specific to each part of that larger task. Dweck (2010) and Robinson (2017) both asserted that students who demonstrate a growth mindset value the process of learning. Barnes and Fives (2016) and Sun (2018) found that in classrooms in which teachers emphasized the process of learning over outcomes, students were more engaged and performed better academically and viewed learning through a growth mindset. This is an important takeaway for teachers who are helping develop students' growth mindsets, and Ms. Adams and Ms. Jones both modeled ways in which ELA teachers could do this with their students.

The four teachers that took part in the observations as well as some of the teachers that completed the initial survey indicated that they use growth as some measure of success in their English classes. This helps to send the message that success in ELA can be viewed as a continuum rather than learning starting and ending with every school year; instead, learning is about the development of student skills throughout the course of their entire educational journeys and beyond. Ms. Adams discussed that when she is particularly proud of the growth a student has made, she likes to share this out loud to the rest of the class, which explicitly communicates growth mindset messages to students and communicates to students that making growth is valuable in ELA class. Explicitly

recognizing growth and making growth as part of some measure to success in ELA is

pivotal for students in developing a growth mindset (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Sun, 2018).

Dweck (2010) and Robinson (2017) stated that creating benchmarks for students

and using the growth students make towards those benchmarks is one way to help

students develop growth mindsets. Ms. Jones and Ms. Baker specifically talked about

creating benchmarks for students to meet in their ELA classes, which helps to measure

their growth within a school year. When growth is considered as part of a measure of

success, it can also be empowering for a student to recognize the growth they have made

as opposed to viewing ELA from either a "right versus wrong" perspective or "meeting

standard versus not meeting standard." It also helps students take ownership and

demonstrate agency over their learning (Chao et al., 2017; Nagle & Taylor, 2017), which

helps to promote a growth mindset for students.

Category 4: Giving Feedback and Assessing

Both Ms. Adams and Ms. Jones praised student efforts and whole class efforts

rather than praising students who academically had As in the class or got every question

right on an assessment. This further supports the idea of viewing learning related to ELA

as a process rather than a discipline where outcomes are valued, which helps to

communicate growth mindset messages to students (Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017; Sun,

2018). Both teachers also provided praise towards whole class efforts, and when students

were stumped when working through learning tasks, they helped students by asking

guiding questions rather than pointing towards something directly in the directions or by

explicitly telling them the correct answer to a problem. Their verbal feedback was

constructive and helpful towards student learning and did not praise students based on

characteristics that may promote fixed views of learning; instead, they praised students based on a growth mindset view of learning by recognizing efforts and growth. Which demonstrates how the teachers in this study focused more so on growth mindset from a view of effort rather than growth mindset in regard to

Both Ms. Adams and Ms. Jones also provided constructive feedback to whole classes and guided students through challenges and obstacles rather than allow them to give up, not try, and tell them the answer. This is an important takeaway other teachers could implement in their classrooms: when teachers give students the answers or do not help guide students through obstacles, it sets the message that they can give up when learning is challenging, and the only thing that matters is whether or not they are right or wrong. Both Dweck (2010) and Robinson (2017) claimed that students who view obstacles and challenges as exciting and a part of the learning process view learning through a growth mindset perspective. Barnes and Fives (2016) and Sun (2018) found that teachers that emphasized obstacles and challenges as part of the learning process found that students were more likely to hold growth mindset views towards their learning as opposed to when only right or wrong answers were valued in the classroom.

To add on, by Ms. Adams allowing all students to provide verbal feedback to one another after presenting graduation speeches, she implicitly communicated that no matter where students were at in the class, they could provide valuable feedback. This aided in the promotion of a growth mindset, as it acknowledged that no matter where students were at in the class, they were capable of providing valuable feedback. It also provided students with the opportunity to receive feedback in multiple ways by receiving feedback from both their teachers and their peers.

The principal investigator examined student work as an artifact and found that both Ms. Adams and Ms. Jones provided feedback to students that was constructive and clear. The feedback that was provided to students provided them with an indicator of where they were in terms of meeting standard for that specific assignment but also recognized their strengths for that assignment. This is important for other teachers to take into consideration. It is important to provide clear and specific feedback to students so that they are knowledgeable about where they are at when it comes to a specific standard and so they are encouraged to keep writing and reading in ELA. When students only receive feedback that explains what they did wrong when there are clear strengths, this discourages students from wanting to try (Sun, 2018).

Additionally, when feedback that is provided is not specifically related to skill, it also does not provide any indicator of where students are at in terms of meeting standard. Dweck (2010) and Robinson (2017) stated that both written and verbal feedback are important for students in developing growth mindset as it helps with their conceptions of what it means to be successful when it comes to learning and specific subjects. Barnes and Fives (2016) and Sun (2018) also found that classrooms in which consistent and clear feedback was given to students that explained their progress towards meeting standard but also recognized their strengths resulted in students being more academically engaged and growing academically.

Moreover, Ms. Baker described how she helps students take ownership over their learning by providing time in her ELA classes for students to look up their own grades and examine their strengths and areas of growth. She has conversations with students about their grades where she conferences with each student in regard to how they are

performing in the class. Dweck (2010), Chen and Tutwiler (2017), Nagle and Taylor (2017), and Robinson (2017) all asserted that having students take ownership over their learning by tracking their progress is a valuable practice that can help students develop a growth mindset. Nagle and Taylor (2017) and Robinson (2017) specifically discussed having teachers help students create charts where they can visually examine their academic progress and growth. Ms. Baker's strategies, along with what is suggested by scholars in the literature, are valuable practices that other teachers could follow in order for students to take ownership over their learning and, ultimately, develop growth mindsets.

Additionally, Ms. Adams provided students with autonomy with how they met standard. The conversation that the principal investigator witnessed between her and the student who was unsure of how to write a sonnet was an excellent example of a teacher providing the student with autonomy and agency over their learning. Ms. Adams was well aware of this student's strengths with their interest in poetry and allowed her to take an alternative route when she doubted her abilities to complete the assignment. She acknowledged the student's strengths and met the student where she was and explained to her how she could still meet the standard. Ms. Adams was willing to work with her in order to accomplish this task. Ms. Adams' pedagogical strategy of working with this student on alternative way to meet the assignment criteria illustrates approaching the idea of success in ELA as being multidimensional. She also helped to promote the idea of resilience when facing obstacles and challenges. Both Dweck (2010) and Robinson (2017) spoke to the importance of viewing challenges and obstacles as a part of learning, which helps to promote a growth mindset. Barnes and Fives (2016) and Sun (2018) found

that classrooms in which teachers helped promote the skill of resiliency when facing obstacles found that students were more likely to view learning through a growth mindset perspective and were more academically engaged with their learning.

In addition, Ms. Barnes' strategy of allowing students to choose any two questions from a larger list of questions to discuss in their whole-class textual discussion promotes the idea of providing multiple ways for students to demonstrate proficiency when it came to that assignment. This practice promotes student ownership and agency over their learning, as students got to choose which questions they wanted to respond to and share in the discussion. Providing opportunities for students to take ownership over their learning and providing them with agency are key strategies in helping students develop growth mindset (Chen & Tutwiler, 2017; Dweck, 2010; Nagle & Taylor, 2017; Robinson, 2017). Rather than make all students respond to the same questions and require them to be prepared to discuss any question, she allowed students to choose. This implicitly communicated the message that interpretations of the same text could be different and also promotes the idea of success in ELA being viewed as multidimensional. Students may also be less likely to participate if they know they have to respond to something they may not have valued as an important takeaway from the book as opposed to being able to share what is important to them. This practice assists in communicating a growth mindset message to students, as they will recognize that they are capable of having their own unique takeaways from the text. It also promotes and encourages future participation in the class, as they see that their individual voice as a student is valued in that classroom.

Category 5: Engaging in ELA Tasks

Ms. Adams made a consistent effort to ensure that students in her classroom were doing a majority of thinking when it came to completing tasks related to ELA. Sun (2018) found that classes in which students were doing a majority of the thinking related to learning tasks communicated the idea that success can be multidimensional. Ms. Adams never allowed her students to give up when the Wordle task for that day was a particularly challenging term. This helped the students to value obstacles and challenges as an integral part to the learning process and helped to promote resiliency when facing obstacles and challenges in the classroom. In addition, when students were tasked with writing a graduation speech to their 2023 class, she provided ownership and agency by explicitly communicating to her students that it was their opportunity to tell their stories and illustrate the challenges they faced during their high school journeys. This sent the implicit message that everyone had something worthy of contributing, which ultimately helps to promote a growth mindset, as students will recognize their contributions as valuable to their larger classroom community.

All teachers who were observed provided some opportunity for students to engage in collaboration with their peers. Barnes and Fives (2016) and Sun (2018) found that classrooms in which collaboration is valued amongst students experienced students who were more engaged and performed better academically. Stengel et al. (2019) stated that collaboration in ELA is pivotal to helping students be successful in ELA. Additionally, in order for successful classroom discussions to occur, a teacher must first establish a culture where collaboration is valued. It was clear that in all four classrooms that were observed, teachers had created classroom spaces where rich discussion could take place

around topics pertaining to ELA. Ms. Adams' graduation speech unit required students to be vulnerable not only with their teacher, but also with their peers. This is something that can be challenging for high school students to achieve. It was evident by student participation and dialogue from observed class sessions that there was a strong sense of community. Many of the pedagogical practices that Ms. Adams demonstrated that helped to promote a growth mindset were paramount toward cultivating a culture that helped students to be vulnerable and engage in collaboration. It also allowed students to be able to give critical feedback to their peers after they had presented their speeches to the class. Christensen (2017) explained that it is pivotal for ELA teachers to create classroom cultures where students feel safe to share their writing with other students. Ms. Adams cultivated that safe space for students to be able to do this, which ultimately helped to promote a growth mindset, as students felt comfortable taking academic risks (Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017). Ms. Adams also made the process of providing verbal feedback to each student a community effort and recognized the value of each student's unique interpretation of the speech.

Similarly, Ms. Barnes also had cultivated a classroom environment where students felt academically safe to be vulnerable and participate in their class discussion regarding the novel *House on Mango Street*. Gritter (2012) explained the value students receive when textual discussions are permeable, meaning teachers provide opportunities for students to bring in some element of their own lives into the discussion. Not only did Ms. Barnes allow students to choose which questions they wanted to share as well as revisit a question that had already been discussed, but she also allowed students to use text evidence and evidence from their own life experiences to bring to the discussion.

Chen and Tutwiler (2017) asserted that providing students with autonomy helps to promote growth mindset beliefs. Ms. Barnes recognized the value of students' life experiences as being just as valuable as what students had read in the text. This helped to implicitly send the message to students that their life experiences are valuable and helped them relate to the text.

According to Min-Young and Bloome (2021), when teachers communicate thinking practices for students through the use of language, this helps students develop skills pertinent to success in ELA. Ms. Jones and Ms. Adams both provided ways for their students to do this. Rather than have students view examples of previous student work silently, this was completed as a community effort, and both teachers gave them tools to be able to process what students were thinking as they read and/or watched samples of student work. They asked them guiding questions as the class was viewing and/or reading a sample of student work that helped them process what they were reading and guided them to be able to demonstrate the same skills in their own work. They also devoted specific class periods to focus on one skill in regard to a larger process or overall goal related to ELA, which helps students to value the process of learning and, ultimately, view learning through a growth mindset perspective.

Ms. Jones also made a concerted effort to improve students' literacy skills by devoting a specific part of class time for students to be able to read a text of their choice. She recognized that her AP students needed more time to read and read texts of their choice in order to help build their literacy skills for an upcoming unit for which they were going to have to read longer research articles. Ms. Jones recognized the value of having students enjoy reading by allowing them to also read texts of their choice, which can help

students improve their literacy skills. She took an approach to improving their literacy skills by giving them uninterrupted time to read.

Moreover, Gritter (2012), Langer (2001), and Smagorinsky (2019) explain that allowing students to draw upon their prior learning experiences by connecting what they are currently learning to something previous learned, helps students learn new material. In addition, it also implicitly communicates the message that what students have previously learned is valuable and that each student is coming into the year with prior knowledge to draw upon. Ms. Barnes allowed students to make text-to-self connections by incorporating that as a part of her discussion protocols by allowing students to use their own life experiences to explain how they related to a character's struggle in the novel they were reading. This ultimately empowers students by recognizing the value of their prior learning experiences as valuable information that they are bringing with them to the class, which helps them to take ownership and agency over their learning.

Similarly, at the beginning of Ms. Adams' graduation speech unit, she asked students to recall information about what they already knew about commencement ceremonies and speeches at these ceremonies. This practice stimulated what students previously knew coming into this unit and helped students recognize that they have had valuable learning experiences prior to this unit that they could draw from coming into the unit. In addition, she also allowed students to make connections to their own lives by being able to tell their stories through their graduation speeches. This pedagogical technique assists in students' abilities to recognize that they have something valuable to contribute to the unit and allows them to take agency and ownership over their learning, which ultimately helps to communicate the idea of having a growth mindset as many

scholars have concluded (Barnes & Fives, 2016; Chen & Tutwiler, 2017; Dweck, 2010; Nagle & Taylor, 2017; Sun, 2018).

Implications for Practice

Current and future teachers can use the TEGM framework (see Table 5 from Chapter 4) to understand how specific pedagogical practices may communicate growth mindset messages to students within the context of ELA at the high school level. This framework can be used as a starting point to composing curricula that can help to embed growth mindset practices into ELA instruction. This framework is not intended to be a prescriptive or evaluative framework, but rather, a tool for teachers and researchers to use to understand how one can view ELA instruction through a growth mindset. It can also help to illustrate how one may communicate growth mindset messages to their students while being mindful of how particular implementations of an instructional practice could communicate growth mindset messages. This framework could also be used as a way to investigate other practices that may communicate growth mindset messages. Additionally, one could use the framework as an observation tool for viewing instruction in ELA through a growth mindset lens. Ultimately, it is the hope that teachers are able to view this framework as a way to recognize how they can help struggling learners by being given examples of instructional practices that may help students see their potentials and view their abilities with a growth mindset.

Those who wish to implement the TEGM framework should consider their context when implementing the framework and the context in which this framework was developed. For example, since none of the classrooms in this study included students with disabilities, practitioners who wish to implement the TEGM framework should

consult with special education teachers on best practices for how to accommodate individual student need and to adhere to IEPs. Those who wish to implement this framework in other contexts which may include more homogenous student bodies when it comes to ethnicity, race, and culture, should also take those factors into consideration while implementing this framework.

An important implication is how to provide students with even more autonomy and agency as a way to communicate growth mindset messages. For example, in the student interviews, many students spoke about having more choice when it comes to reading certain texts, and they ultimately concluded that they were unable to relate to most of the texts they have read during their high school experience. Similarly, some of the teachers also expressed a lack of diversity in character representation as well as the authors of texts that they are tasked with teaching to their ELA classes. An implication of what this research has highlighted is that there is a need for more diversity in text selection when it comes to the books that students are being required to read in ELA as well as more student choice. Ms. Jones' strategy of having students find a book of their choice to read is a potential short-term solution to this issue, as it does provide students with choice and class time specifically devoted to reading a book of their choice. In addition, Ms. Barnes' way of allowing students to bring in their own life experiences when it comes to participating in text discussions is also another short-term way to combat this issue. However, policymakers and school district administrators should recognize the lack of diversity in text selection in lower-income community schools as well as recognize the benefit students would experience by being able to see themselves more represented in the texts they are reading.

As an ELA teacher, I have found this experience enriching to my current practice. I have not had many opportunities to observe my colleagues teaching, and I took away many valuable strategies that I hope to incorporate into my practice. A couple of strategies that have stood out the most are allowing students to bring in more elements of their lives into their own work. It is easy for one to only value students using text-evidence as a way to make an argument or explain what they have learned, but the value of allowing students to bring in elements of their own lives is paramount in allowing students to take ownership over their learning. I was able to witness the value students gained from being able to draw upon their life experiences, and I recognize the value in this practice and will be incorporating this with my students in my ELA classes. In addition, Ms. Jones' technique of inviting students to ask her questions rather than asking students if they have any questions is another technique I will incorporate into my practice, as it helps to normalize questions even if one is not confused and promotes intellectual curiosity.

Limitations

This study observed teachers and gained insights from both teachers and students within one high school in a public school district in the greater Tacoma area of WA State. It should be taken into consideration that teachers' perspectives towards ELA and growth mindset may differ in another region, district, or school. These perspectives may even differ when it comes to level of education (e.g., elementary, middle, and high school). Therefore, generalizations cannot be drawn from this study; however, this study does provide many valuable insights that other teachers and researchers can draw from.

Only eight students in total were interviewed, and only students from two out of four classrooms were interviewed, which is a limitation of this study. The principal investigator did not gain the perspectives of students from all four classrooms to understand how students in every classroom perceived their teachers' instruction as it relates to learning in ELA through a growth mindset lens. Readers of this study should take this into consideration.

Students who were selected to be interviewed, were students who had completed a parent consent form (if they were under the age of 18) and student assent form. Generally speaking, the students who took the initiative to complete both a parent consent form and student assent form were students who were engaged in class discussions and were passing the class. This was not the case of every student who was selected to be interviewed (that they were passing the class), but for most students this was the case. However, much information could have been gathered from students who were not passing or were not generally engaged. The fact that students were not engaged or passing, could have been due to thoughts regarding a fixed mindset about their academic abilities in regard to ELA. However, due to ethical constraints any student who did not complete a consent and an assent form were not chosen to be interviewed. Readers of this study should keep this in mind that student interview data could be different had the principal investigator interviewed students who may have been more reluctant to participate in class activities and those who were not passing the class.

No data was collected that showed whether or not students self-reported beliefs of having a growth or fixed mindset in the classroom. The undertaking of this study was inspired by the principal investigator's own subjective interpretation of experiences with

students who have demonstrated fixed mindset beliefs. Therefore, readers of this study should be aware that it is unclear whether or not students held fixed or growth mindset beliefs in terms of a Likert/quantitative scale, but the researcher rather, used qualitative techniques to determine whether or not students perpetuated growth mindset beliefs in regard to the pedagogy of their teacher.

Due to the teachers who expressed interest in full participation in this study and the composition of their classes, no classrooms included students with disabilities and those who were on IEPs. This is a limitation as the researcher was not able to see how students on IEPs may have responded to the teaching practices of the ELA teachers. Much valuable information could have been gathered from the experiences of students with disabilities. Although it was not the intention of the researcher to exclude students with disabilities from this study, readers of this study should be aware that the classrooms where teacher practice was examined did not include students with disabilities.

The demographics of the teachers who were sampled from this study were homogenous as they all were white female teachers. This is a limitation because the principal investigator was not able to gain a variety of perspectives when it came to how one may communicate growth mindset messages to students through the context of ELA instruction and learning.

Future Research

The framework that was developed as result of the teaching practices that were examined, did not investigate how students with disabilities may have responded to growth mindset ELA teaching practices. Future research around growth mindset should consider including students with disabilities and who are on IEPs to further our

understanding of how students with disabilities may respond to or be impacted by growth mindset teaching practices, both in ELA and in other content areas. Many ELA classrooms include students who are on IEPs, and it is important that future research include their voices in the scholarly discourse surrounding growth mindset practices.

There are many potential barriers that may exist within school systems that may inhibit students from developing growth mindsets. These barriers may include whether educators within the school system hold fixed mindset beliefs about student academic ability as well as whether or not there are barriers toward inclusion which may perpetuate fixed mindset messages to students. In addition, barriers such as standardized testing which place value on whether or not students meet or do not meet standard on one standardized assessment contradicts the growth mindset practice of valuing the process of learning rather than only the outcomes of learning. Even though this research utilized a case study design and was interested in examining the microstructure of one system by examining four different classrooms, future research should consider whether or not viewing growth mindset from a macro perspective is worthwhile as much could be learned by looking at how systemic barriers, e.g., the exclusion of certain demographics unintentionally from spaces within the system, as well as other barriers such as standardized assessment being a graduation requirement in WA state schools, may contribute to students' inabilities to demonstrate growth mindset beliefs.

Future research should consider conducting research involving SEL and SEL practices, such as growth mindset, by drawing from more heterogenous student bodies. Scholars Chao et al. (2017) and Herrenkohl et al. (2020) both suggested that there is a lack of research which examines how SEL constructs such as growth mindset are

implemented in school contexts among racial and ethnic heterogenous student bodies as well as the potential impacts interventions that involve SEL constructs may have on student participants. Even though this study took place in a school with a demographically and culturally diverse student body, more research is needed that takes places among more heterogenous student samples to further the understanding of how these practices may be helpful or potentially harmful to students with diverse cultural and social values.

In addition, future research should investigate the cultural responsiveness of SEL and SEL constructs such as growth mindset, especially among demographically and culturally diverse student bodies. Herrenkohl et al. (2020) asserted that most SEL curricula/programs include practices that come from a white dominant culture and that strategies that include teaching behaviors for social interaction and how to process and manage emotions are, arguably, extensions from a white dominant culture. Moreover, Sun et al. (2021) found a contradictory pattern of cross-cultural differences related to how students may conceptualize intelligence and its relationship to academic achievement. Growth mindset is an individual construct but can also look communal in practice. However, much is still unknown about how students from a diverse range of cultures may perceive concepts such as growth mindset. Future researchers should look into creating frameworks that may explain how growth mindset can be used as a tool for empowerment while also being culturally responsive. In other words, researchers should investigate how growth mindset may be a tool for empowering students to be able to recognize their potential academically while also helping to recognize and sustain their cultural values.

Furthermore, future research should investigate teachers' holistic teaching practices in other ELA classrooms in other contexts. More research is needed to further investigate how growth mindset messages may be perpetuated to students within the context of ELA and how students may perceive these practices. In addition, future research should also examine holistic teaching practices in different contexts, i.e., with different grade levels, different socioeconomic areas in relation to the school community, as well as different content areas to investigate how growth mindset messages are perpetuated in other content areas and how they may be both different and similar to one another.

Conclusion

A complex issue that many educators face is struggling to find strategies to help students overcome their defeated or fixed mindsets (Dweck, 2010). One domain within CASEL's framework for SEL (CASEL, 2012) includes self-management and another self-awareness, which can both pertain to the implementation or practice of helping students develop a growth mindset (CASEL, 2012; Dweck, 2010; Lieber et al., 2017). Demonstrating the qualities of a growth mindset can help students overcome obstacles in the classroom, face academic challenges with confidence, and have the resiliency to overcome failures and learn from their mistakes by normalizing mistakes as an integral part of the learning process (Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017). The power of a growth mindset is believing that intelligence can be adapted over time rather than inherited, like a genetic trait (Dweck, 2010). People are not born "math or science people" or "English and social studies people," but rather, are born with the ability to develop their intelligence in any given discipline (Dweck, 2010). Having a growth mindset is about the

power of knowing that a student can accomplish his, her, or their own goals as long as they put forth the effort and practice (Dweck, 2010; Robinson, 2017). A lot of the current research takes place in math classrooms (Blackwell et al., 2007; Bostwick et al., 2017; Chao et al., 2017; Yeager et al., 2016) and uses quantitative research methods (Blackwell et al., 2007; Bostwick et al., 2017; Chao et al., 2017; Yeager et al., 2016). Four teachers' practices were observed in order to investigate how teachers may perpetuate growth mindset messages to students within the context of high school ELA classrooms. As a result, the Teaching ELA through a Growth Mindset Framework (TEGMF) has been developed, which helps to illustrate those general and discipline-specific teaching practices that may perpetuate growth mindset messages to students (see Table 5 in Chapter 4). Future researchers and teachers can use the TEGM framework to understand how growth mindset messages may be perpetuated within the context of HS ELA classrooms. Future research should draw from more heterogenous student samples to further the understanding of how students from culturally diverse backgrounds respond to SEL constructs such as growth mindset. Moreover, more research is needed that uses qualitative research methods, as growth mindset is difficult to measure using numeric values and often requires observations of students' behavior or evaluation of their written work. Furthermore, more research is needed that examines teaching from a holistic view in terms of how teachers can implicitly and explicitly portray a growth or fixed mindset. This research is needed from both a general perspective of teaching and learning and also one that is content specific to a variety of content areas such as social studies, ELA, science, and even physical education.

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Appendix A

Mindset Beliefs Teacher Survey Items

Ten- item survey assessing teachers' self-reported mindset beliefs

Mindset Belief Survey Items: 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

1. There are limits to how much people can improve their writing and literacy skills

2. You have a certain amount of intelligence when it comes to English Language Arts ability, and you cannot really do much to change it

3. In English Language Arts class there will always be some students that simply won't "get it"

4. Some students have a knack for English Language Arts and some just do not

5. Some students are not going to make a lot of progress this year, no matter what I do

6. In my class(es), students who start the year low performing tend to stay relatively low performing.

Qualitative/Open-Ended Survey Items

Please respond to each item below regarding your beliefs in student's ELA abilities.

7. In your opinion, to what extend can students grow over the course of school year and/or over the course of high school, in their ELA abilities?

8. How would you define student success in ELA?

Further Participation

9. Would you be willing to allow me to observe you teach? Yes/No

10. Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview about your beliefs regarding mindset and ELA abilities? Yes/No

Appendix B

Mindset Beliefs Teacher Survey Results

Mindset Beliefs Teacher Survey Results Likert-Scale Items 1-6

	n	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation
Mindset Beliefs	9	3.11	4.67	3.98	0.961

*Item responses were reverse coded so that a higher score corresponded to having more of a growth mindset. Mindset scores were calculated by averaging the responses to the six items.

Item 7: *In your opinion, to what extent can students grow over the course of a school year and/or over the course of high school, in their ELA abilities?*

1. I believe that students can reach unlimited growth potential over the course of a school year and throughout high school - even throughout adulthood. As long as one is open to reading and writing, there is unmatched potential for growth. Anyone who is willing to engage in the academic tasks will grow.	2. It's hard to quantify that. I would say that students can grow their ELA abilities by 50% but they need to have some buy-in to begin with.
3. Students have unlimited potential to grow in their ELA abilities. There are simply a number of factors that influence their ability to do so. Such as, what background knowledge they have coming into class, what factors outside of school (trauma, poverty) are impacting their ability to focus on school, how much individualized support they need to master content and how much time the teacher has to provide that individualized support, level of student engagement in provided curriculum, and others	4. I believe that most kids can recover up to two years of content.
5. I don't think there are limits to how much a student can grow in ELA abilities. Limits instead come from their investment, effort, and my ability and time, or lacke thereof, to properly support them.	6. I believe that every student can make progress, as long as they have a growth mindset.
7. Students have the potential to make a ton of growth, depending on their level of effort and the efficacy of the teacher. Students have the ability to grow in their reading level exponentially, based on how often they read and what they are exposed to; same with writing. It takes a lot of exposure, practice, and feedback.	8. If they are willing to engage, then students can grow immensely over the course of high school

| 9. Students can grow very much, depending on factors such as teacher support, school efficiency, their home situation, their drive, etc. | |

Item 8: *How would you define student success in English Language Arts?*

1. Growth in their level of ability and confidence to read, write, and think critically	2. Students who improve in ELA standards.
3. The ability to effectively communicate using substantial elaboration techniques that are appropriate for the genre and purpose.	4. To be a lifelong reader, to think critically, to communicate effectively
5. Of course being able to see growth in reading level, comprehension, and writing skills is great, but ELA is also something that requires persistence and effort, and I think growth in those areas is also an indicator of success.	6. By the ability to communicate effectively. Both verbally and in writing. To be able to communicate a thought with little confusion.
7. I believe student success in English Language Arts is a combination of: understanding a given text on both surface and complex levels, an ability to write a variety of texts for different audiences and purposes, confidence in one's own abilities to communicate through writing, speaking, or visually with others, comfort with reading a potentially challenging text or writing on a potentially challenging topic, and a desire and openness to learn and experience more	8. I define student success as when a student learns a new concept or idea that they had previously struggled with.
9. A student can use a variety of strategies to understand what they read and put it in the context of the larger world, and they can write and speak to express their ideas clearly, i.e. miscommunication is minimal.	

Appendix C

Interview Questions for Teachers

1. **Tell me about the classes that you teach**. A) Do you notice differences between the classes?

B) What are your students like?

2. **If I walk into your class, how would I see students arranged?** A) How do you arrange the students?

B) When do you decide to change the seating (note observed changes)

C) Is collaboration between students encouraged or do you encourage students to think and work more independently? Why?

3. **What do you think it takes to be good at English Language Arts?** A) How do you support students in your class?

B) OR- What types of things do you do in your class to help students become good writers and readers?

C) How do you select tasks that help students develop their ability to read? To write?

D) How would you describe the skills of a high achieving student in your class? What about a low achieving student? How important of a role does their previous success in English play a role in their success in your class?

4. **All teachers have struggling students. Tell me about your struggling students.** A) What strategies do you use with these students?

B) What about for advanced students?

C) For the students who do well, do you believe this is a result of them improving over time or inherent skill?

5. What are some strategies that you use to motivate students?

6. How are students typically graded in your class?

7. What are some areas where you would like more support in your ELA instruction?

8. Do you have any other thoughts on how to better improve ELA education?

9. Do you give all students the same work?

10. Do all students get to the same place?

11. What happens when a student makes a mistake in your class?

12. Why do students fail in ELA?

13. How do you believe all students can succeed and do well in your class, including students that come into the year with skill deficiencies?

Appendix D

Interview Transcripts for Teachers

Teacher 1: Ms. Adams (Pseudonym)

1/5/23

1. **Tell me about the classes that you teach**. A) Do you notice differences between the classes?

Three sections of 11th grade English and 3 sections of Bridge (seniors). Clear differences between grade levels. Senior day clear differences between the sections.

First period high intellectual capacity – don't volunteer but will share if called on

Surprising that they are able to use critical thinking skills and to challenge each other. The way that they process the information- both internal and externally.

When they are having a discussion and when they are engaging in discourse- they are bringing in others into the conversation or building off of others' ideas.

11th grade English Genghis Khan or Hitler – they are directing and leading their own discussion so teachers that allow this to happen organically in the room.

2nd period 50% are MLL learners which is a struggle because I am not bilingual. Lacking rhythm to effectively co teacher. Better than putting things on paper than speaking their truth. Last senior class- chill.

Juniors entirely different story- their academic progress was destroyed by the pandemic and online learning.

Most defiant produce the best work. I don't want anyone to know I am smart.

6th period- MLL and behavior issues.

Poster with quotes about self-reliance. I was blown away by what they produced. Half of them brought the computer to teacher and asked about quote.

They were thoughtful about the quotes and what they produced. Pride in craftsmanship. They were excited about what they put together.

Maybe letting them know other classes struggled and when she spoke highly of them or gave them praise, they rose to the challenge.

It does not work with other classes because it's not authentic.

Time of day effecting their learning

5th and 6th period- see them later in the day and if they are more engaged.

2. **If I walk into your class, how would I see students arranged?** A) How do you arrange the students?

By random, no method for choosing seating. Students are spaced far apart because they do not like to talk to each other. Teaching older students.

Classes that are going well, I let them choose seats. 11th grade hard to find balance.

B) **When do you decide to change the seating** (note observed changes)

I do not change seating – coming up on end of semester so I will change seats by random.

C) **Is collaboration between students encouraged or do you encourage students to think and work more independently? Why?**

Depends – I want students to think for themselves but I feel like one of the great deficiencies that they have as a result of online and the pandemic is the skill of collaboration. Some students do not know each other's names.

Physical limitations of the room.

Grouped seating 4-6 students per table group helps to facilitate organic conversation.

Every class takes a little direction.

3. **What do you think it takes to be good at English Language Arts?** A) How do you support students in your class?

Curiosity; it's such a challenge because so many disciplines are this is right and this is wrong, but my philosophy is that there is not a wrong answer. It's a lot about interpretation.

"Innate curiosity" "confidence." Curiosity and the whys.

Is curiosity is something they can develop overtime? "No because the internet has ruined their ability to be curious- instant gratification." Instant gratification has taken some of that away.

B) **OR- What types of things do you do in your class to help students become good writers and readers?**

We practice reading, we do silent reading. We will read stories out loud sometimes. Limited by Bridge to College curriculum (state mandated requirement). Writing part- we write or we do group writes.

Timed write as an individual- in that group we each contribute a thought.

Make a group claim about the notes they write.

Then they were going to edit the claims to make them stronger.

We build the claim sentence together rather than just showing them the right answer-students are doing the thinking in the class.

D) **How would you describe the skills of a high achieving student in your class? What about a low achieving student? How important of a role does their previous success in English play a role in their success in your class?**

High achieving – 11th grader- clear, concise writing. She's reading excerpts from Self-Reliance and she is giving me 2-3 sentences that break it down perfectly. It shows her understanding of what's there. Natural ability to some extent.

Low achieving- absolutely no regard for conventions. Insightful things but got lost through his inability to communicate in writing.

Student- "I am not going to do the work, I am going to draw a picture." Not bothering to turn the paper over and look at the back side. Happy, content with doing the bare minimum.

Lower expectations because of online and hybrid learning.

90% of my students say they have never had an English class like mine before (seniors).

A huge role in the beginning of the year. "I hate English." As we build relationships and go through the curriculum, they see the meaning, and relationships help.

Letting them know when they come into class, they are writing their story. This is how start. Everyone gets a fresh start.

Previous English classes affects their confidence. We work on this at the beginning of the year. Teacher gives me an idea of where they are coming from.

4. **What strategies do you use for your A)**advanced students?

I want to honor and value all students, but sometimes, you did a really good job on this, do you want to share this with the class?

I want students to grade each other. I want to give that kind of feedback to my students. I want students to have the opportunity for them to give it to each other.

Something I want to try this year.

Seniors, first, for sure.

With juniors, that experience, experiment will change that level of trust and make them more accountable.

B) **For the students who do well, do you believe this is a result of them improving over time or inherent skill?**

I get them at 17/18 years old and a lot of these things are there and we can work to make them better or focus them more. They come to me and they got their superpower. They're spider man- they shoot their web, they cannot control when or how, how far they shoot it. Those are the things we work on. Honing those skills. (17 mins).

5. **What are some strategies that you use to motivate students?**

Bribery. I hate that. To a certain degree bribery. Some seniors I've had for four years. There is almost a familial relationship.

I believe they can be better. I know I can do this. It is that encouragement. Encouragement goes a long way.

Social and emotional relationship is a big deal- some of those things are innate. When you connect with them genuinely, they want to do better and I want to do better for them.

Their relationships with both the teacher and their peers both play a role in helping motivating students to want to learn.

They do not want to be embarrassed for talking in English. I won't laugh at you like you laugh at me when I talk in Spanish.

6. **How are students typically graded in your class?**

Summative and formative assignments. I'd like to give points for participation. Some days I do keep track of who is talking and who is doing what. Reading, writing, speaking-speaking gets measured with graduation unit.

11th grade team try to always give them choice. You can write a journal entry, write a letter, rewrite the end of the story.

12th grade- the way in which you choose to assess.

What the question is, how the answer is presented.

7. **What are some areas where you would like more support in your ELA instruction?**

Department meetings are a waste of time. It does not feel like there is support there. Maybe we can use those times as a place to help support each other. More support from colleagues and support from district. How do we propose new novels? Propose a new class? I want to see a lot of change in our ELA program. Reading some of the same texts that we were reading in 1994 as we are today in 2023.

Not everyone can make Shakespeare interesting. Give them something they can relate to. Maybe they can relate to the themes. Support in diversifying our curriculum.

8. **Do you have any other thoughts on how to better improve ELA education?**

Go back to a thematic based.

It is not novel based or literature based.

Have more engaging literature classes and classes they are based on students' interest.

11. What happens when a student makes a mistake in your class?

"huh, I actually haven't thought about it in that way, I like the way you're thinking."

"Does anyone have any thoughts on what Ethan said?" No wrong answer.

In writing, if it isn't something I thought of if it is well done, I will accept it as long as it is relevant and on topic.

Connecting to previous learning.

12. **Why do students fail in ELA?**

Attendance plays a part. Not doing the work. Not trying is the only way you can try.

They see the value of being in a warm and safe place rather than the value of education and how it can potentially get you out of that situation.

Harshly punish to not good kids. Send incredibly mixed message to both teachers and students. We want you to be successful but it looks like this. Students who were selected to be in students voice group.

Students that want to be in student voice group.

"you're not going to change the culture, until you change the players."

13. **How do you believe all students can succeed and do well in your class, including students that come into the year with skill deficiencies?**

Smaller class sizes would be helpful.

Equity- let's all start at the same. One school in our district gets nice, fancy computers but we do not.

Novel sets at Lakes but not here.

Access to resources.

Smaller class sizes and more equity within the system. External forces play a large role in their success that I do not have control over.

The expectation is that the CPHS students are going to be bad.

How does the community view you? The perception is very well known by the students.

You just go to Lakes and HP.

Even at the district level, they do not like us.

Number of students that transfer to CPHS from Lakes or HP.

Teacher 2: Ms. Jones (Pseudonym)

1/5/23

1. **Tell me about the classes that you teach**. A) Do you notice differences between the classes?

My AP Seminar is mostly 10th and 11th grade- they are students who want to challenge themselves and they have chosen this class. Some are in AVID so they chose this AP class.

Some come in because they like English but there may be a mismatch because it is not a traditional English class.

Some struggle with the group nature of class.

Working with freshmen for 8 years in ELA/SS.

9th grade ELA students are reluctant to read and haven't read something they like in awhile. It is hard to get them to branch out of what they read.

Challenge with getting students to participate in general.

Students seem fine talking to each other but are more resistant in engaging with work-trouble with value or it feels challenging, and they are afraid with familiar.

More social conversations rather than academic conversations.

More willing to engage in conversations with content rather than writing.

Opposite ends of the spectrum. Sums up what I have noticed with them. More resistance in seminar with focusing.

2. **If I walk into your class, how would I see students arranged?** A) How do you arrange the students?

I always like to have students in small groups- so they can always help each other out. Also, allows me to check in with students individually. Students help out with each other. I have tried different groupings- like four, six, three.

I do have students who are anxious about sitting with others.

We had to move classrooms one day.

B) When do you decide to change the seating (note observed changes)

Usually there is a logical break- subject, content unit, winter break, or quarter/semester. Symbolic fresh start.

We are trying something new instead of changing seats because of behavior.

Seminar students can move their tables themselves.

Freshman need more ownership and the small group allows that.

Having the physical space to support that.

C) Is collaboration between students encouraged or do you encourage students to think and work more independently? Why?

It depends on the content and where we are at with it. Formative work- I will allow them to work independently and something that is more summative or individual, I will ask them to work independently.

Hey why don't the two of you work together.

More effective with older students to collaborate. The hardest part is that if they decide they are not going to work with a student they just won't.

Middle school behavior in 9th grade.

3. **What do you think it takes to be good at English Language Arts?** A) How do you support students in your class?

"being good at" that changes with the scenario. There are so many aspects with English language arts.

Skills are multidimensional or multifaceted.

90% are good at communicating with peers- helping them see how it is transferrable skill and how they apply this in a different scenario.

Differences in genres or forms that we are communicating in.

Similarities between modalities. They can take strengths from one area to another.

Being able to communicate effectively- we all do this, in what way do we do this.

ELA is a subset of that Jagged Profile. Good reader but not as good at reading.

Your ability to push yourself. I know how to read or write. Or think about it in a different way. Putting a challenge in front of them that they haven't seen.

B) **OR- What types of things do you do in your class to help students become good writers and readers?**

Lot's of opportunity- open-ended ideas.

Swung back and forth between heavily focused writing and less structured writing.

We were teaching the formulaic but it also prevented some kids from doing it because they were afraid they would be wrong.

ELA is about expressing your thinking or thinking about what they have read.

Lots of opportunities to read and variety of reading.

Talking about what we are reading.

Short story unit- trouble engaging male students. Male students are performing lower in ELA. Texts with male authors.

Preferences with female authors. Fairly even balance. And visually showing them who the authors are.

Great story about the sniper and that's what a lot of them read.

Diversity within the texts- recognizing this unfortunate trend or perception and then showing them the pictures of the authors.

Summative around the choice text with the short stories.

C) **How do you select tasks that help students develop their ability to read? To write?**

A lot of it is driven by PLC conversation- what the focus we want to work on. Based on different skills- drama, argument, poetry.

What does proficiency in writing look like that for that unit.

Reading piece is what are they noticing from the authors craft- how do they apply those or use those in their own writing. Struggled in Seminar because it is about exploring ideas. Mismatch between type of text and type of writing they are doing. Seminar- genre of writing. Allegories to get them engaged.

They push themselves more in personal writing. But this leaves them with skill deficiencies.

Synthesize their own ideas- what does it mean to create their own ideas.

What do I want them to be able to do and what is the reading or writing that models that.

D) How would you describe the skills of a high achieving student in your class? What about a low achieving student? How important of a role does their previous success in English play a role in their success in your class?

High achieving- elaborating on ideas. Start with an organized idea and then elaborate and connect to other ideas.

Assessment is overlaying reading with writing.

When they have selected evidence, I can see how they have selected the most salient points.

Proficient students- some of the reading we have done together. Explanation in their own words. The really proficient students are connecting their reading or learnings to things outside the classroom walls.

Text-text, text-world, text-self, to other disciplines.

Sometimes not as intentionally as I should. That would be good to build out and expand that idea. I try to do this with discussion questions.

I bring in outside pieces like NPR articles, exposing them to more outside texts, or bring in other texts.

Social studies- I may know there is a trend or work happening.

Choice reading- if they are reading more, exposing them to other texts helps them with that.

Most relevant thing I do is trying to get them to recognize everything they see is a text.

Low achieving student- Often need a starting point- sentence starters or a frame. Non-participation because they do not know how or where to start. The tools to communicate that idea. They communicate in conversation but not in writing.

A lot of support comes from one on one conversations with them. I break it down into smaller and smaller questions.

They say something to me and then I tell them to write it down. I talk about it with them and process it with them.

I would love to do that more en masse. Use voice typing- just talk and then talk and then write. The language or the frame first and then they fill that in.

One student was supposed to write a summary of the video we were supposed to write today. Great questions beyond the film.

Asking him to make connections- even though it did not have all vocabulary, his expression was clear, insightful. Different ways to get them to get to end goal.

Previous success in English- I would like to believe that they can be successful no matter where they are at and it is just a matter of growth.

However, there is always the push of trying to get freshman to do certain skills. I do not want to not give them grade level texts.

What is the right amount of challenge to give them. It is not always grade level texts. A choice in text helps. I hesitated about doing that for a long time in fear of higher achieving students choosing easy texts rather than challenging themselves.

All students can grow in that maybe they write less or less than others but they are writing.

Grading gets in the way of that- what do we mean when we assign a grade to a student. I don't want to assign an A that isn't there. That gets in the way of having students grow as readers and writers. How clearly can they communicate- they are successful if they can communicate.

5. **What are some strategies that you use to motivate students?**

Try and have conversations with individual students about how they are doing. Seeing them as a person rather than a student who needs to do work.

I start with how are you doing first. If I do not start with individual personal conversations, how can I help.

I grew as an educator, by shifting how I approach conversations.

My go to is engaging in relationships first.

Why we should be doing work at all.

6. **How are students typically graded in your class?**

I break it down by standard. I do not in Seminar because it is harder to break them into more discreet standards. Assignments with check list.

Did you meet the criteria on the checklist.

Any student attempting the work in full faith can receive a passing grade

Any student engaging in the work can earn credit.

I struggle with helping students taking it to the next piece. The grading and pushing the writing gets in the way.

I always give them more feedback- I will give them more questions to get them thinking. I show them what their grade will look like without the additional questions.

Always want students to have something they can change in their papers.

How do I acknowledge the positive in there. A lot of overlap in feedback and grading. Checklist and grading in there.

Summative are weighted more, but if they can do some sort of processing to get to that point I allow the passing grade.

Project, workshop oriented classes with individualized feedback and then a whole group place to share. Not always a place for that in social studies. In English, I release students to read. In SS, I do not make it dependent on whether or not students read something or did not. I place more value on their time with writing than in SS (48 mins).

"You are going to struggle with this here." Let's struggle with this. It is not about having a right answer.

Here is this information, how do we use this, how do we engage with this.

There is more room with SS. "you can do hard things, why would you waste your time doing things you already know. You shouldn't know this all yet, you are learning it." To learn content versus learning a skill. I do not think they know how they learn content. Learning lyrics to a song versus coming up with lyrics on your own and performing the music. They do not know how to struggle with it. They need the content to be able to push past the service unit.

Here are these ideas that will be a foundation to what you will do next. We could do thematic units.

7. **What are some areas where you would like more support in your ELA instruction?**

Strategies to improve student reading comprehension. Writing is concrete and visible. It is often how we are also measuring students' reading as well.

Helping students when they are also struggling with it. Determining what is the most effective. Graphic organizers but not what makes them a better reader.

What does better reading instruction look like rather than a guide that they can apply to other disciplines.

Reverse outlining- asking the questions or create the questions. Both the time and value for that.

Helping students when they cannot do those higher-level reading responses. Whole text reading strategies.

8. **Do you have any other thoughts on how to better improve ELA education?**

I would love for us to not be test focused. The push for everything to be able to prepare them for the SBA we lean too heavily on just passing the test. I want them to learn these skills that will give more meaning to everyday lives, seeing reading and writing outside of school building like personal enjoyment or artistic expression.

Reading without strings attached. Not grade their silent reading time. A bridge between reading for leisure and having it attached to a grade.

9. **Do you give all students the same work?**

Modify what it is for each student – I can give choice in text but we are all going to do this thing. It would be kind of cool

This is where I need to grow in my ELA skill- and instruction is individualized.

But there is also value in reading as a group as a community and collective whole.

A balance between individualized experience and community.

10. **Do all students get to the same place?**

No, I would like to say so, but no. All kids who pass the class are writing with evidence and responding to multiple texts so there is a baseline that they get to.

That's where I stand with grading- how far they have pushed themselves. They don't all need to get to the same place.

ELA is a process so systematically our grading system and marking periods inhibit our abilities to teach our discipline to the fullest extent.

I don't want a grade or wait process.

The skill they need to take away is the process not the product. Made their own false deadlines- identify their process of writing.

More reflective with my students about strategies I use. Not get stuck in negative self-talk. I ask them the questions, and I try to illustrate to them that they are not that behind. I show them that they are not that far behind.

11. **What happens when a student makes a mistake in your class?**

Verbal answer- I honor what was said. If it is off topic, I do try to connect their comment to the discussion and then I rephrase my question. If it is off, I try and identify maybe

where it came from. Students just shout out answers, I have them use resources to go back and answer questions.

It depends on the student, some cannot handle redirection so I will say that is correct when it comes to this.

Feedback is individualized- based on strengths or areas of growth.

Have to take into consideration public perception.

Comment codes or checks next to comment codes.

Writing and expressing their own ideas, I might ask a question. I honor what is there "I love this but I do need to see this."

No editing feedback until content is strong first.

We have to find it, we can look together to find something.

"Say more."

12. **Why do students fail in ELA?**

They are afraid to engage or unwilling to engage. It is hard to get an "A" but it is hard to fail. Are you able to write something for me with evidence and explain your thinking. If they come they are the student with their head down. If they do not write anything they will not pass the class for me.

13. **How do you believe all students can succeed and do well in your class, including students that come into the year with skill deficiencies?**

I want to honor their growth- if they come in and make a full faith effort, that is success. If they come in as a better reader or writer, that is success. The grade shouldn't matter as much. Did you challenge yourself, did you take leaps in your writing, did you try difficult texts. Grew as a reader or writer, that is success.

Do I always take them as far as they can go? No, it may be beyond me like external factors beyond classroom, like outside or system failures.

How have we as a community or school system damaged our students to not want to learn. Even if we spend a whole year repairing harm so they can engage next time, maybe that is where we are at so they can engage next time.

We can learn content and repair harm. You can repair trust with them. They will start to put themselves out there and try to engage. Slower process with some than others. They are all capable of growing, I do not know if I always have all of tools to be able to help

them. Some of the kids it is on them. Idk how much I do that actually helps them to get there.

Teacher 3: Ms. Baker (Pseudonym)

1/11/23

1. **Tell me about the classes that you teach**. A) Do you notice differences between the classes?

-Two of my English 10 course are co-taught MLL- we spend more time with language and move through the curriculum slower. It takes more time when for many English is not their first language. MLL students it takes time too motivate them. It is exhausting to be translating across 8 hours of classes.

1st period class is extremely quiet because they come in too tired. It may take up to a half an hour to start functioning. They trickle in first period.

First period sometimes only has 60% of the instruction time because it takes so long for them to get moving when they are so tired.

Third period across lunch do not have issues this year.

One of my sophomore classes 80% is at or above standard where 1st period only 30-40% is at or above standard.

MLL classes it is 50% across the board. 30 period class goes faster.

Make a plan to extend their learning because they will go faster than my other classes.

2. **If I walk into your class, how would I see students arranged?** A) How do you arrange the students?

Making sure I do not put students together that do not hinder each other. Students that may keep each other off task.

That can give you a lot of wiggle room if you do not have too many distractions or can give you very little if have a lot of students distracting.

I try to group by ability- mix the high and low students together.

I try to set it up so that the high kids are good at helping guide students to answers rather than just give them the answers or having low kids copy.

MLL courses – it depends on individual knowledge of the kids. Some MLL will work together others will be off task.

C) Is collaboration between students encouraged or do you encourage students to think and work more independently? Why?

Most assignments for me start with collaboration and then move toward more independent work.

Work through difficult analysis together and then move toward individual. So that every student has to work through it individually and produce something.

It allows for the lower kids to benefit from hearing the higher kids and they can use what they heard for their end product. There is no opt out.

The higher kids benefit from being able to process

3. **What do you think it takes to be good at English Language Arts?** B) OR- What types of things do you do in your class to help students become good writers and readers?

Independent reading which allows kids to choose the texts that they want to read that has words. They can use graphic novels but they can't read like a drawing book. When students find things they can read that they enjoy they may go on to read on their own.

Students were 80% more likely to have done more reading than they had the 2 or 3 years prior. 100% more reading.

One year I printed off short stories so students that were overwhelmed could pick from that.

We could also do some articles so that they have a nonfiction choice if they want.

Writing- we do a lot of targeted practice for essay writing. Entry and exit tasks. We do not do a lot of writing for fun because it's all SBA prep.

5. **What are some strategies that you use to motivate students?**

Individually I have a conversation about what are your goals in life and I talk about how reading and writing will help support those goals. I will sometimes explain how reading and writing may help with that profession.

Write a resume to get hired or a cover letter.

I try one on one why engagement will help support their long term goals.

As a whole class, I try to connect each unit to help support their life goals.

Ethos, pathos, logos unit was about argument and help them to understand if you want to go to your boss to ask for a raise- here is how you could structure your argument.

How essay skills will help them impact their real life.

6. **How are students typically graded in your class?**

Depends on the class, English 10 it is theoretically held to the 10th grade standards. With MLL students, we do assess for growth and effort. Not realistic for a student who just came to the US to be able to meet the 10th grade standard.

In AP Lit. class, the large amount of grading is about growth. For students, I establish a baseline, and then try to assess for growth based off that.

I take into account the students that start low that they may not be able to get to that standard, I take into consideration if they are putting in effort, etc.

Some students from a 1 to a 2, that's success for students. Getting a 2 means you're college ready. 2 is you're ready for college English. 3 is you have tested out of college freshman English.

All of my students are ready for college level reading and writing class.

College board AP writing style is constricted to responding to a prompt rather than the value of quality writing.

Appendix E

Interview Questions for Students

Introductions: Thank you. Everything you say will be confidential. What type of pseudonym would you like to use for your identification?

Characteristics of Being Good at English Language Arts

1. What do you think it takes to be good at English Language Arts?

2. **Tell me about a student in your ELA class that you think is "good at ELA."** A) What does this student do to make him/her good at ELA?

B) Can students improve their grade or success in the class over the course of the school year or do you think success and earning high grades is dependent on how well they did before this class?

Teacher Practices/Beliefs

3. Do you think anyone can be good at English?

4. Some people believe that ability is fixed, and others think you can improve overtime. What do you think your teacher believes? Why do you say that?

5. Is hard work and effort rewarded in this class?

6. Do you believe your teacher thinks you can succeed?

7. Do you believe your teacher thinks all students can succeed?

8. Do you think your teacher treats everyone the same?

9. How does your teacher respond when you make a mistake in ELA class?

View of ELA

10. Do you like or dislike ELA? Why? A) Think of a time that you liked/disliked ELA and describe it.

11. Is there anything you would change about ELA and the way it is taught (to make you like it more or make the subject better)?

Appendix F

Interview Transcripts for Students

Student 1: Annette

2/7/23

Characteristics of Being Good at English Language Arts

1. What do you think it takes to be good at English Language Arts?

Definitely have to have concentration and grit because sometimes it does take a lot to stay motivated and be successful. Pay attention and do what you are asked to and not fall behind.

Teacher Practices/Beliefs

3. **Do you think anyone can be good at English?**

I do think so, you need to have the want to be good at something. It is not too hard that no one couldn't do it. You just have to want it and to try your best.

7. **Do you believe your teacher thinks all students can succeed?**

I do think that. she is always calling us scholars and she believes in all of us and she has never given up on any student and she is really kind to every student.

9. **How does your teacher respond when you make a mistake in ELA class?**

She does not view it as a mistake but more so as a learning experience and offers us the opportunity to think of the right answer. She will help us learn the right answer so we are well informed but not embarrassed.

View of ELA

10. **Do you like or dislike ELA? Why? A) Think of a time that you liked/disliked ELA and describe it.**

I like this class. It is challenging but it is worth it. It helps me think more intellectually as a person and I admire that. I like when we present. I used to have bad social anxiety and this helps me to overcome that.

11. Is there anything you would change about ELA and the way it is taught (to make you like it more or make the subject better)?

I think if we focused more on the writing process, it would be a lot easier for students to understand. Sometimes directions are vague so being more specific would help.

Student 2: Ezra

2/7/23

Characteristics of Being Good at English Language Arts

1. What do you think it takes to be good at English Language Arts?

Probably knowing how to spell. I struggle with that so I struggle at English. Grammar, I also struggle with that. Focusing is a good one and not being able to get distracted easily.

Teacher Practices/Beliefs

3. Do you think anyone can be good at English?

Yes, as long as they try to focus and pay attention in it, anyone can be good at English.

7. Do you believe your teacher thinks all students can succeed?

Yes, she tries her best to help us with all the questions we have and tries to also ask us questions about the class.

9. How does your teacher respond when you make a mistake in ELA class?

Last year she would go through and respond little essays when we were reading so she would write feedback and have a conversation with what we needed to improve.

View of ELA

10. Do you like or dislike ELA? Why? A) Think of a time that you liked/disliked ELA and describe it.

I don't mind it but I have a harder time with it because I am bad with spelling and using grammar so it is more challenging for me. I don't mind it, I just hate struggling with spelling and grammar.

11. Is there anything you would change about ELA and the way it is taught (to make you like it more or make the subject better)?

No, it is more or less having to do with me, because when I try to learn what I need to learn like spelling and grammar, I get distracted easily.

Student 3: Naomi (Pseudonym)

2/7/23

Characteristics of Being Good at English Language Arts

1. **What do you think it takes to be good at English Language Arts?**

I think having an open mind because most of the information is coming up with your own thoughts.

Teacher Practices/Beliefs

3. **Do you think anyone can be good at English?**

Yes. It is more about speaking about who you are and what you come up with and not what others say. Like summarizing is your opinion of a text.

7. **Do you believe your teacher thinks all students can succeed?**

Yes. She helps us a lot. She tries her best to make us understand even if we don't. Even if we tell her we can't do it, she still pushes us to try.

9. **How does your teacher respond when you make a mistake in ELA class?**

She says okay, and we can redo it. On paper she would not have a lot of explanation. She verbalizes what we should do to understand something better.

View of ELA

10. **Do you like or dislike ELA? Why? A) Think of a time that you liked/disliked ELA and describe it.**

Kind of both, I like English because it pushes me to write better. But then again I do not really know how to summarize.

11. **Is there anything you would change about ELA and the way it is taught (to make you like it more or make the subject better)?**

-Maybe do some fun activities because sometimes it can be boring. Like with geometry there are activities we do on paper. Something fun with texts we are reading that allows students to move around the room.

Student 4: Jeremiah (Pseudonym)

2/9/23

Characteristics of Being Good at English Language Arts

1. **What do you think it takes to be good at English Language Arts?**

Honestly, what you can do to be good is being attentive. If you are paying attention, you can always have questions to build off of what skills you have. Attention is the key component.

Teacher Practices/Beliefs

3. **Do you think anyone can be good at English?**

Yes- anyone can be good at anything it is a matter of whether or not they want to be. If someone wants to be good at something as long as they set their mind to it, they can be good at it.

5. **Is hard work and effort rewarded in this class?**

Yes- when we have a class discussion that reflects in your work. When we talk and do a good job we get a good grade. The discussions also help with writing work.

7. **Do you believe your teacher thinks all students can succeed?**

Yes- she believes all students can succeed. Just with me, I don't always turn in my work on time, she isn't quick to write me off because I may not turn in something on time. She is understanding of my situation.

9. **How does your teacher respond when you make a mistake in ELA class?**

It is definitely constructive and positive. She makes sure you understand what you are doing and tries to correct you in a constructive way.

View of ELA

10. **Do you like or dislike ELA? Why? A) Think of a time that you liked/disliked ELA and describe it.**

I love English class it is my favorite subject. I can be myself with the class discussions and having an argument. I love being able to argument my viewpoint.

11. Is there anything you would change about ELA and the way it is taught (to make you like it more or make the subject better)?

Choose more interesting topics that go on throughout the world instead of making us read an old book that we don't care about.

Student 5: Mjaay (Pseudonym)

2/9/23

Characteristics of Being Good at English Language Arts

1. **What do you think it takes to be good at English Language Arts?**

I don't know really it is just all about how determined you are to learn something new every day.

Teacher Practices/Beliefs

3. **Do you think anyone can be good at English?**

Yes – English class is pretty easy it just sometimes people have a thing with procrastinating because of the work but it is pretty easy if you put your mind to it.

5. **Is hard work and effort rewarded in this class?**

Yes, it is when you are working hard the teacher makes sure that she lets you know how hard you are working and it feels good to have someone acknowledge that.

7. **Do you believe your teacher thinks all students can succeed?**

Yes, she is a very positive person.

9. **How does your teacher respond when you make a mistake in ELA class?**

She makes sure we don't feel bad about making mistakes but makes sure she understands what you got wrong.

View of ELA

10. **Do you like or dislike ELA? Why? A) Think of a time that you liked/disliked ELA and describe it.**

In the beginning no, but I have grown to like it over the past few months because the teacher has made me comfortable.

11. Is there anything you would change about ELA and the way it is taught (to make you like it more or make the subject better)?

No, I like the way our teacher teaches it because it keeps me interested.

Student 6: Zero (Pseudonym)

2/9/23

Characteristics of Being Good at English Language Arts

1. What do you think it takes to be good at English Language Arts?

I think it takes be very attentive to the way things are written like tone and the audience the text is trying to reach and what the teacher is looking for and trying to make sure my work fits the prompt and rubric.

Teacher Practices/Beliefs

3. Do you think anyone can be good at English?

I think some people can struggle here and there, I struggled 9th grade because I was in Pre-AP Literature and I struggled. It depends on the teacher and the students and how they perceive the work. Not everyone can be as good as others. In different formats it can be easier for students.

5. Is hard work and effort rewarded in this class?

I think so. Sort of, when I did my speech and got feedback, I felt proud, but I got some feedback from classmates, I felt appreciated. Sometimes when you write an essay you only get feedback from the teacher and not your classmates so getting feedback from my peers is really validating.

7. Do you believe your teacher thinks all students can succeed?

Yes, with the right resources, help, and support around you, you can succeed.

9. How does your teacher respond when you make a mistake in ELA class?

I think she would correct your mistake, but if you still did a good job, she would accept the work because she respects others' interpretations, but she also would make sure you knew how to do it the way she was asking. I wrote an essay where I did not follow the prompt exactly, but I still wrote a good essay and she accepted my work and said its okay.

View of ELA

10. **Do you like or dislike ELA? Why? A) Think of a time that you liked/disliked ELA and describe it.**

Personally, my four years throughout English I hated it and did not find it fun to attend class. I like Ms. Smith and the way she teaches, and I like the environment she creates. It feels chill and welcoming, and I feel comfortable even though I don't talk to too many people. I don't dread this class.

11. **Is there anything you would change about ELA and the way it is taught (to make you like it more or make the subject better)?**

There should be openness to the prompt so students can express their creativity. Sometimes students read an article or text and they may not be able to write about those texts. Find more things for students to write that they are passionate about so they can write about them in English.

Student 7: Casper (Pseudonym)

2/9/23

Characteristics of Being Good at English Language Arts

1. **What do you think it takes to be good at English Language Arts?**

Being able to communicate properly in the sense of being able to get your point across without being confusing. Which is a struggle because English can be confusing. Written and verbal communication.

Teacher Practices/Beliefs

3. **Do you think anyone can be good at English?**

I feel like if you take the proper time to learn and acquire the language it could become something anyone can do, you just have to put in the time and effort to do so.

5. **Is hard work and effort rewarded in this class?**

It is rewarded in different ways and depends on the person. If you are not someone who likes English and you get through it and you pass that's fine, but if you enjoy English class and you do well, it is more rewarding.

7. **Do you believe your teacher thinks all students can succeed?**

Absolutely. I can something for me personally because of the speeches because I have been struggling and every class, she has come up to me and we have tried to figure that out. For me, I think she would always support me and help me pass.

9. **How does your teacher respond when you make a mistake in ELA class?**

My personal experience is if I didn't get the writing down 100%, she will correct me tell me I can do better and I can redo it. So, it is up to me to redo the work and take her advice. It is always nice to hear from someone who teaches the class to get that professional feedback.

View of ELA

10. **Do you like or dislike ELA? Why? A) Think of a time that you liked/disliked ELA and describe it.**

Me personally, I like English class but in a different. I like writing and I like reading. With writing, I like writing a story versus about something. When I go through and write on my own, I like writing.

11. **Is there anything you would change about ELA and the way it is taught (to make you like it more or make the subject better)?**

Change the books we are required to read. I feel like if they went through and picked newer books, they could get across to a lot more people versus a book that was written 50 years ago. I can't retain the info. If I can't relate or don't enjoy the book. We read the book and then there is a point to be made and they just haven't switched that up in awhile.

Student 8: Jay (Pseudonym)

2/13/23

Characteristics of Being Good at English Language Arts

1. **What do you think it takes to be good at English Language Arts?**

In general, you have to be present to learn what's expected when the teacher is teaching the curriculum. If you are not there, you may not know what to do and then it becomes harder. Attendance is important in English because you can't really do research because you have to interact with the teacher to understand more.

Teacher Practices/Beliefs

3. **Do you think anyone can be good at English?**

If you are in class and listening to Ms. Smith, you can be, but it also depends on experience. The more time you spend in class over school, it should become easier as opposed to someone who didn't attend class much before this year.

5. **Is hard work and effort rewarded in this class?**

I don't see the point in doing the curriculum. Hard work and effort is rewarded. Acknowledgement both verbal and written. Feedback that is written is digital in Teams.

7. **Do you believe your teacher thinks all students can succeed?**

Yes

9. **How does your teacher respond when you make a mistake in ELA class?**

In general, she will correct you and then explains to us or tries to empathize/understand why we would come to that conclusion.

View of ELA

10. **Do you like or dislike ELA? Why? A) Think of a time that you liked/disliked ELA and describe it.**

I don't like the curriculum, but I like the teacher. We have fun and we have fun learning the material. It could be better if we change the books we could read. Reading some of the same types of books, is boring and changing the books could make it more interesting- TKAMB and Shakespeare.

11. **Is there anything you would change about ELA and the way it is taught (to make you like it more or make the subject better)?**

Changing the types of books- TKAMB and Shakespeare. Requirements for essays – I should be able to get point across in a lower number of words instead of always having to meet word count requirements. Having more discussion-based activities, having us being able to converse more with peers to discuss issues. Only in Ms. Smith's class do we engage in discussed based activities.