PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS' NARRATIVE SENSE-MAKING OF EQUITY

by

Aubrey Neihaus

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As members of the Dissertation Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by: Aubrey Neihaus, titled: Teachers' Narrative Sense-Making of Equity and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Marcy B. Wood
Dr. Marcy Wood — Date: 12/02/2020

Kristin Gunckel
Dr. Kristin Gunckel — Date: 12/02/2020

Renée T. Clift
Dr. Renee Clift — Date: 12/02/2020

Rebecca H McGraw
Dr. Rebecca McGraw — Date: 12/02/2020

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copies of the dissertation to the Graduate College.

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

Marcy B. Wood
Dr. Marcy Wood — Date: 12/02/2020
Dissertation Committee Chair
Teaching, Learning and Sociocultural Studies

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Abstract

Equity has been a persistent focus of research in education and in particular teacher education. While numerous studies have investigated instructional interventions aimed at supporting teachers' learning about equity, few studies have investigated teachers' learning of equity. In this study, I used narrative inquiry as a lens through which to investigate how prospective elementary teachers make sense of equity. From eight participants' stories, I developed ten categories of types of experiences that are drawn on in these equity narratives. I also documented eleven narrative techniques used in the stories that make equity sense-making visible. I delve into how two of these techniques (explicit re-narration and visual metaphors) make sense-making visible to researchers and teacher educators. These findings have implications for future research on teacher education research in equity as well as teacher education practice.

Chapter 1: Introduction

A persistent challenge in teacher education research has been understanding the best ways to make education more equitable[1]. In the field of education research, there is a long held belief that teachers are important actors in this movement towards a more equitable classroom. Work in culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995), cultural funds of knowledge (Civil, 2007; Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 2005), reality pedagogy (Emdin, 2014), collaborative learning (Cohen & Lotan, 2014), equity literacy (Gorski & Swalwell, 2015) and critical pedagogy (Friere, 1970; Gutstein, 2005) have offered examples of ways in which teachers and their instruction can make classrooms more equitable. Within education research, teachers have been—and continue to be—an important subject of research in this area.

As a result of this attention on teachers, calls for equity in the classroom have often focused on teachers' outward actions and instruction (Gorski, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 2014). This has been particularly true of mathematics education as the field has seen a number of investigations and discussion of teachers' uptake of equitable instructional strategies or philosophies (Aguierre, et al, 2012; Bartell, 2013; Battey, 2013; Berlin & Berry, 2018; Gutstein, 2005; Louie, 2017; Simic-Mueller, Fernandes, & Felton-Koestler, 2015; Turner, Drake, McDuffie, Aguierre, Bartell, & Foote, 2012; Vargas & Gutierrez, 2018; White, Crespo, & Civil, 2016). Further demonstrating the emphasis on the role of teachers' instructional practice in equity reforms, a number of books and articles have been written by researchers to support

[1] Throughout this proposal, I use the terms "equity" and "equitable" to refer to an educational system that supports all students to learn mathematics in a way that is fair and honors the assets students bring to their learning. I have chosen this term as an umbrella term under which many philosophies and approaches would fall (social justice, culturally relevant, and funds of knowledge, for example), and as a way to refer to them collectively. I offer a definition and richer discussion to this term and its relationship to the other terms it subsumes in Chapter 2.

teachers' implementation of equitable mathematics instruction in their classrooms, (e.g., Cohen & Lotan, 2014; Emdin, 2014; Felton, 2010; Gutstein & Peterson, 2013; Simic-Mueller, 2015). A large focus of this literature has been on the implementation of instructional activities, courses, or programs for math teachers that focus on equitable mathematics instruction, and examining whether these interventions successfully move teachers beliefs and/or instruction towards equity.

Unfortunately, this line of research focusing on math teachers and their outward actions for equity has primarily shown only mixed results. Battey's (2013) work demonstrates that reform-oriented mathematics instruction is necessary, but insufficient for the goals of equity. Brantlinger's (2013) work draws attention to the ways in which even a teacher who is invested in teach math for equity will experience challenges. Simic-Mueller, Fernandes, & Felton-Koestler (2015) found that while prospective teachers were open to the idea of teaching mathematics through real world contexts, they remained ambivalent towards the use of social justice oriented contexts, despite interventions. The work of Bartell (2013), as well as Aguirre and colleagues (2012), both demonstrate that for prospective teachers, tensions arose around balancing equity goals with mathematical goals. Bartell found that while the prospective teachers focused more attention on the equity component, the instantiation of these goals in practice proved difficult with the potential result of reifying or give space for students to express existing socially produced misconceptions about inequities.

In addition to this research, math teacher educators recently came together to write and publish the volume, *Cases for mathematics teacher educators: Facilitating conversations about inequities in mathematics classrooms* (White, Crespo, & Civil, 2016). In this text, math teacher educators offer dilemmatic cases of their own instruction of math teachers for equity, and in turn analyze others' cases, to build a collective resource for working to improve math teacher

education for equity. Specifically, the chapters authored by Civil, Rubel, Felton-Koestler, and Bieda all have in common that the teachers they worked with struggled to value and operationalize the social justice with the mathematics. Taken with the research cited above, it is fair to say that while there is certainly a strong interest in supporting math teachers to be more equitable in their instruction, teacher educators and researchers continue to work to understand how best to support teachers in realizing these shifts and goals.

As demonstrated in the above, the majority of the literature on equity in math teacher education to date has been grounded in practice, with researchers often focusing their investigation and reflection on the teacher education classroom and its outcomes. Whether it is a focus on teachers leveraging children's cultural funds of knowledge (Parker, Bartell, & Novak, 2013), or using social justice contexts for teaching mathematics (Simic-Mueller, Fernandes, & Felton-Koestler, 2015), much of the research has investigated how teacher educators can better support teachers to exhibit more equitable behaviors and practices in their instruction. The result is a body of literature that tends to focus on teacher education interventions in the hopes of changing teacher's attitudes, behaviors, and/or instruction. And as stated above, the results have been mixed, with the issue of how to best support teachers in their learning and operationalizing of equity in education remaining an open question.

In contrast, less attention has been paid to how math teachers learn about equity and equitable mathematics instruction. For example, while Simic-Muller, Fernandes, and Felton (2015) investigated prospective teachers' attitudes towards teaching mathematics for social justice, their investigation was focused only on those attitudes, and not necessarily on the participants' broader learning that contributes to their attitudes towards teaching math for social justice. How did these prospective teachers make sense of their learning about teaching math for

social justice? Did they have other experiences or learnings that they brought to bear on that sense-making? How did they reconcile teaching math for social justice with their broader understanding of equity and equity in education specifically?

A notable exception to this focus on outcomes is the work of Turner, Drake, McDuffie, Aguierre, Bartell, and Foote, (2012). Turner and colleagues worked to develop a hypothetical learning trajectory for prospective teachers' development of knowledge, dispositions, and practices related to integrating equity in instruction. The findings demonstrate that prospective teachers are capable of learning about equitable mathematics instruction and show promise for implementing that knowledge in planning and instruction. This study and its findings demonstrate that the field would be well-served by increased attention on how teachers—and especially prospective teachers—make sense of equity. A focus on outward actions has shown only mixed results—it is time for the field to turn its attention towards the internal work that prospective teachers do as they learn about equity. A better understanding of this process would better position the field of math teacher educators to better leverage resources and opportunities that may have been overlooked in the past.

While Turner and colleagues (2012) took the approach of developing a learning trajectory for prospective teachers, it is my position that an important first step to investigate teachers' learning of equity is to give space to their stories of how they make sense of equity. Specifically, I propose using narrative inquiry to better understand how prospective teachers make sense of equity using their experiences. This is a departure from the existing research in that it does not involve an intervention and is not measuring a specific change in beliefs, attitude, knowledge, or behaviors. Rather, it is seeking to better understand how prospective teachers who self-identify as invested in equitable instruction in mathematics came to understand equity as they do. In this

work, I will take on the following question: *How do prospective elementary teachers narrate their experiences related to equity and equity in teaching?*

Chapter 2: Relevant Literature

Equity has been a persistent focus of research in education and continues to be to this day. In this chapter, I will trace the research in education, and teacher education specifically, that have brought us to the present. This review is not exhaustive, as the work is expansive and spans multiple fields (e.g., multicultural education, critical race theory). Instead I provide an overview of the theories and work in this area. I will then review some more recent literature on in teacher education in equity, highlighting both major contributions as well as pointing out the paucity of work framing teachers as learners of equity. I will review the few studies that do frame teachers as learners of equity, and then I will argue for narrative inquiry as a promising way to frame teacher learning of equity. I develop narrative inquiry in order to offer its use (in the research in later chapters) as remedy for this gap in current literature.

Major Theoretical Frames in Equity-Focused Education Research

Over the decades-long work around equity in education, a number of theories and philosophies have been developed with various emphases in their work for equity in education. Paulo Freire's seminal work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, (1970) established the notion of teaching for social justice and to foster critical consciousness. Freire saw education as a tool for liberating oppressed populations and emphasized how education, literacy, and power were interconnected. His work remains influential to this day.

"Multicultural education" came to prominence in the 1980s, prompted by an increase in diversity among students in the public school system (Banks, 1997; Ladson-Billings, 2004). It was widely recognized that to that point, teachers were not prepared to support the learning of diverse students (Banks & Banks, 2009). While multicultural education theorists may have

initially hoped for a more critical implementation of their ideas in the movement towards more equitable education, there has been significant criticism of the ways in which multicultural education has often flattened and/or tokenized non-dominant cultures (Gorski, 2016).

Building on the notion of the United States as a multicultural and pluralistic society, students' cultures became an important focus of theory developed around equitable education in the 1990s. Culturally relevant pedagogy was theorized by Ladson-Billings (1995), drawing attention to the need for teachers to not only support students from non-dominant groups, but validate their identity, and foster critique of inequitable institutions. Around the same time, cultural funds of knowledge was developed by Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez (2005) and focused similarly on teachers' valuing and leveraging of the community resources of students from non-dominant backgrounds. While these two theories came out of different work and have slightly different aims, both culturally relevant pedagogy and cultural funds of knowledge underscored the need for teachers to be able to identify and leverage the cultural identities and resources of their students. Unfortunately, the implementation of these philosophy has been taken up in ways that minimize the critical components and thereby undermine their effectiveness for equity (Ladson-Billings, 2014), not unlike what has happened with multicultural education.

Equity as Defined in this Work

Before I dive into the research on equity in teacher education specifically, it is worth pausing to discuss what I mean by equity. Above, I provided a number of theoretical frames that are distinct from one another, though I see their goals as overlapping. Much like Wiedeman's (2002) review of the literature on teacher preparation, social justice, and equity, the work I reference comes from multiple discourses and fields. The commonality among all of this work is

to better support students from non-dominant groups and identities in education. The framework that most closely aligns with my efforts is Gutiérrez's (2012) work theorizing equitable mathematics instruction. While Gutiérrez speaks specifically about mathematics teaching, her work can be applied more broadly to consider the ways in which the system of education must provide access, achievement, validation of identity, and power to its students.

Gutiérrez describes a framework for equity in math education that is comprised of two axes: a dominant axis and a critical axis. Each axis has two dimensions: access and achievement on the dominant axis, and identity and power on the critical axis. To demonstrate how this framework overlaps with the frameworks discussed in the next section, I compare Gutiérrez's framework to Ladson-Billing's (1995) framework of culturally relevant pedagogy. In this comparison, the access and achievement dimensions of Gutiérrez correspond with the focus on student achievement in culturally relevant pedagogy. Both Gutiérrez and Ladson-Billings recognize the importance of providing marginalized students with the tools to be successful within the dominant culture.

And like Ladson-Billings, Gutiérrez places significant emphasis on the critical components of equitable instruction, through the dimensions of identity and power. With identity, Gutiérrez offers a metaphor of windows and mirrors:

> [S]tudents need to have opportunities to see themselves in the curriculum (mirror), as well as have a view onto a broader world (window). For example, using mathematics to analyze social justice issues might offer a mirror to students who have been marginalized by society, while it provides a window to students who benefit from the status quo. (pg. 20)

This windows and mirrors metaphor provides both researchers and practitioners with a way of considering curriculum and contexts and how different groups of students might engage with those contexts. Rather than merely advocating for more social justice mathematics contexts inserted to the dominant culture, Gutiérrez suggests that teachers balance the ways in which the curriculum provides mirrors or windows to students—including those in the dominant group.

If identity were the only critical component of Gutiérrez's theoretical framing, she would be open to critiques—either those from Ladson-Billings (2014) described above in the misapplication of culturally relevant pedagogy, or those of Martin (2015), specifically that equity policies metered by mutual benefit to the dominant culture merely serve to reinforce the status quo. But Gutiérrez's fourth dimension—power—is the necessary critical keystone. Here, Gutiérrez takes up the multiple levels at which power can be considered in education, from how much space a student is given in the classroom (Hand, 2012), to how students critique the world around them (Friere, 1970; Gutstein, 2005). In so doing, Gutiérrez maintains the importance of students' critical consciousness and that students from non-dominant backgrounds should be centered and served in equity work.

Gutiérrez's (2012) balance between the dimensions that work within the dominant culture (access and achievement) and those dimensions that are critical of the dominant culture (identity and power) make it a powerful definition of equity for the purposes of this research. This attention to both dominant and critical axes of her theory is evident in her statement, "It is not enough to learn how to play the game; students must also be able to change it," (pg. 21). The two axes and four dimensions allow me to investigate ways in which equity is taken up within the status quo, as well as against it.

In the remainder of this work, I will use the term "equity" as an umbrella terms for the various theories, frameworks, and philosophies that push for a more equitable education for students from non-dominant groups.

Equity Research and Practice in Teacher Education

As I established in Chapter 1, teachers are widely seen as one of the most important agents for equitable education. It stands to reason, then, that the frameworks for equity in education would intersect with teacher education practice and research. For example, Ladson-Billings (1995) presciently noted that a significant challenge to the realization of her theory of culturally relevant pedagogy would be educating teachers to be culturally relevant in their pedagogy.

The literature on equity in teacher education practice and research tends to fall into two categories: calls and frameworks for equity in teacher education and research on equity in teacher education. The second category can be subdivided into research done at the teacher preparation program level, and research done at the level of instructional intervention or course. These categories are not always mutually exclusive, as theories and frameworks are largely born out of practice by teacher educators and support the adapting of theories to encompass teacher education application. The research then takes up these (and other) theories to investigate the extent to which the field of teacher education is achieving its equity-oriented goals.

In the sections that follow, I will review each of the categories in turn. I will also spend some time discussing research on instructional interventions that have shown promise. Lastly, I will discuss how change is often used as a proxy for learning in this body of research.

Calls and Frameworks for Equity in Teacher Education

The papers in this category largely advocated for the application of an existing framework to the field of teacher education. Gay and Howard (2000) was a call to action regarding improved preparation of teachers for multicultural education. Gay and Howard argue that the training teachers receive in multi-cultural education should be "mandatory, explicit, and thorough in all teacher education programs." (pg. 7) They divide the knowledge teachers need into two major domains: a) knowledge of self and others, and b) developing multicultural pedagogical knowledge and skills. For the first, they discuss the need for teachers to develop critical consciousness, and techniques for developing ethnic and cultural self-awareness (drawn from the work of Howard, 1999; and Bell, Washington, Weinstein, & Love, 1997). Development of multicultural pedagogical knowledge and skills, they detail as: 1) multicultural communication, 2) multicultural foundations of education, 3) multicultural pedagogical skills, and 4) multicultural assessment.

Cochran-Smith (2003) built on this call by presenting a framework for considering the multiple ways that teacher education can attempt to be multicultural, but also may succeed or fail. Cochran-Smith asks eight key questions of the multicultural teacher education program, as well as the external forces that are brought to bear on the program. This framework is useful for considering the multiple meanings, manifestations, and perhaps also outcomes of multicultural teacher education.

Worth noting is that one of Cochran-Smith's questions in the framework is on teacher learning. "How do teachers learn to teach diverse populations, and what, in particular, are the pedagogies of teacher preparation (e.g., coursework assignments, readings, field experiences) that make this learning possible?" (pg. 13). This quote is relevant to the current work and will be revisited later in this chapter.

Along with multicultural education, social justice was a framework applied to teacher education. Nieto (2000) argued the importance of teacher preparation programs taking a stand on social justice and providing prospective teachers a program infused with social justice such that it is ubiquitous.

Work by Villegas (2007) assessed prospective teachers' disposition with regard to social justice. In this paper, Villegas argues for the use of a dispositional framework in teacher education, as they are inherently tied to beliefs and actions. She describes the practice of using dispositional assessments, as it is done at her institution at Montclair State, to give an example of how dispositions may be used as assessment in a teacher preparation program.

In addition to the practical aspects of assessment, Villegas argues that dispositional assessments are not necessarily ideological. This is a response to critics who state that the use of teacher dispositions in social justice as ideological and politically motivated, and ultimately taking away from the learning of other, more important, teacher education content.

A study by Cochran-Smith, Shakman, Jong, Terrell, Barnatt, and McQuillan, (2009) was similar to Villegas work in that it also served to argue for the place for teaching for social justice in teacher education, and to lay out an empirical study to support this position. Using longitudinal qualitative case studies, the research team collected data across prospective teachers' coursework and into their first year of teaching. They analyzed the data for what the teachers understood by "teaching for social justice" and how that translated into teacher practice. They found that while the teachers in the study had some understandings of teaching for social justice, those understandings were incomplete. Specifically, the data lacked instances of individual teachers making structural critiques of schooling or advocating for their student(s).

This study is also an argument against the binary nature of "good teaching" and "social justice" teaching raised by opponents, as it demonstrates that teachers' understanding of teaching for social justice includes high quality teaching (e.g., Cochran-Smith, Barnatt, & Lahann, 2009). It also argues against the idea that teaching for social justice is "just good teaching" in that it should also include developing notions of what social justice is and supporting those students who are not historically served.

Adding to the work on teaching for social justice, Dyches and Boyd (2017) take up Shulman's (1986, 1987) notion of pedagogical content knowledge, critique it, and apply it to the domain of teaching for social justice. The result is a framework of social justice pedagogical and content knowledge (SJPACK) with three domains: social justice knowledge, social justice pedagogical knowledge, and social justice content knowledge. Dyches and Boyd propose that the SJPACK framework be applied to research on teacher education, as well as social justice oriented teacher education programs.

A third framework I would like to highlight here is that of equity literacy. Gorski and Swallwell (2015) laid out the need for equity literacy and established this as in contrast to the ways multicultural education had been reduced to "artwork and celebrations" in a sort of fetishization of culture. Equity literacy, Gorski and Swallwell argue, is a way to maintain the critical components of this work. Gorski (2016) followed up by describing four abilities of teachers who are equity literate: 1) the ability to recognize even the subtlest forms of inequity, 2) the ability to respond in the immediate term to inequity, 3) the ability to redress inequity in the long term, and 4) the ability to sustain equity efforts.

It must be mentioned that these frameworks for equity in education are not separate from one another or static. For example, equity literacy was developed by Gorski and Swalwell as a

response to the flattening and essentializing of culture within multicultural education. Similarly, culturally relevant pedagogy needed a remix (Ladson-Billing, 2014) because it, too, had been implemented in ways that were unrecognizable to its author. However, the history of these frameworks and the ways in which they are taken up and adapted and reclaimed are not the focus of this review, so I have endeavored to present these frameworks in ways that allow for generalizing across the research in which they are applied.

In looking across these calls and frameworks, it's fair to generalize that the need for equity to be a component in education of teachers is well-recognized in the field (Cochran-Smith, 2003; Cochran-Smith, Shakman, Jong, Terrell, Barnatt, & McQuillan, 2009; Gay & Howard, 2000; Nieto, 2000; Villegas, 2007). It is also fair to state that in general, the frameworks focus on what teachers should be doing in an equity-focused classroom, whether it be through certain abilities (Gorski, 2016), operationalizing of SJPACK (Dyches & Boyd, 2017), or to teach in culturally relevant ways (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Research on Equity in Teacher Education

In this section, I will review the relevant literature on equity in teacher education. It is fair to summarize the findings in this body of literature as mixed. I have divided the research into two groups: those that take up investigations of equity in teacher education program and those that look at equity interventions in teacher education. I will dedicate a subsection to each.

Research on Equity in Teacher Education Programs. In this section, I share three papers that discuss equity as an important topic in teacher education, as well as some work done to support equity in teacher education.

MacDonald (2005) compared two teacher education programs (Mills College and San Jose State University) that both communicated a commitment to social justice. MacDonald compared these two cases using frames of social justice (Young 1990) and socio-cultural theory to analyze prospective teachers' opportunities to learn social justice. Since this study focused on opportunities to learn, it looked at the teacher education programs, rather than the teachers themselves. For example, the study investigated potential implications of having an integrated social justice curriculum, versus a dedicated course, and how that affected implementation. In addition, they saw that teachers were able to "develop" social justice concepts, but not necessarily practical application and skills. The study showed that integration of social justice into teacher education programs can be more difficult or less frequent along some dimensions of social justice.

Gorski (2009) looked at the sanctioned curriculum of multicultural teacher education courses by investigating the 45 syllabi from multicultural education courses across the United States. While Gorski acknowledged that the syllabus is not necessarily what is taught in the course, he argued that it does represent what is sanctioned by the institutions. He analyzed the syllabi and found that most courses were designed to prepare teachers with pragmatic skills and personal awareness, but not to prepare them in all the key principles of multicultural education (in particular, the more critical elements). Through his analysis, Gorski also developed a typology of five different approaches of teacher education programs to multicultural education.

Gay and Kirkland (2003) argue that developing personal and professional critical consciousness should be a mandatory component of teacher education. In their paper, they documented the ways that (often white, women) prospective teachers avoid developing cultural critical consciousness and self-reflection. Gay and Kirkland lay out several obstacles to the

development of critical consciousness in prospective teachers, including programmatic factors (e.g. a lack of high quality opportunities for guided practice in self-reflection), or deliberate avoidance maneuvers used by individual prospective teachers. Gay and Kirkland also offer ideas for overcoming the resistance that prospective teachers demonstrate.

While this paper is about prospective teachers' development of cultural critical consciousness and self-reflection, its audience is teacher educators and how to teach for development of critical consciousness and self-reflection. It is not about how these phenomena happen in prospective teachers or the ways the development occurs but about the instructional experiences that Gay and Kirkland have found to be promising. This is not to discount this advice--Gay and Kirkland are speaking from their own extensive and considerable experience doing this work. It is noteworthy, however, that this is framed from an instructional perspective.

In fact, all three of the studies mentioned in this section speak about programs of teacher education and how they instruct prospective teachers in equity. In this way, the literature on equity it teacher education programs has been focused on instruction of equity, despite references to development or learning in titles or framing of studies.

Building on this emphasis on instruction—and reflection on instruction—are resources for teacher educators like the book titled, *Cultivating Social Justice Teachers*. Edited by Gorski, Zenkov, Osei-Kofi, and Sapp (2013), this text offers chapters of reflection from teacher educators on various challenges teacher educators face in teaching equity content, and how they help student to "overcome cognitive bottlenecks and learn critical social justice concepts." (pg. 6) Similar to the previous section and the literature in this section, this resource is written by teacher educators for teacher educators, reflecting on their experiences teaching equity in teacher education programs. The focus of instruction is consistent.

Research on Equity Interventions in Teacher Education. In this section, I review research focused on equity interventions for teacher education.

Ajayi (2017) conducted practitioner research with prospective teachers to investigate whether, having been through equity-oriented coursework, they felt prepared to teach for social justice and to what extent they implemented the teaching. Ajayi found that

> while coursework may have prepared the participants to interrogate the assumptions of the universality of knowledge, participants generally taught the mainstream knowledge prescribed by the school system. Moreover, while coursework may have prepared the participants to draw on certain aspects of their students' cultural backgrounds, it did not seem to have prepared some participants to apply the principles of social justice to relate instruction to the complexity and specificity of the rural community. (pg. 64)

The prospective teachers could identify that inequities existed within their classrooms and schools, but struggled to apply social justice teaching to their classroom, or to sustain lasting change in their school contexts. In some cases, this was not because they lacked the resources, but was due to the fact that they did not feel comfortable implementing them as the school policy did not expressly endorse the practices or interventions.

Similarly, Davila's (2011) work with prospective teachers' enactment of teaching social justice demonstrates that even highly motivated teachers can struggle with implementation and fall short of their goal of teaching social justice. In Davila's study, two prospective teachers chose to lead a discussion of President Barrack Obama's campaign speeches, known colloquially as "the race speech." Davila's (2011) analysis showed that choosing a social justice text and providing a safe space for discussion is insufficient for promoting equity. Unfortunately, in both

cases the prospective teachers' facilitation moves rarely countered students' discussion that reinforced racism, or worse—tacitly approved them by being silent on those issues. Davila's study clearly shows that good intentions are insufficient for teaching for social justice.

Moore (2008) investigated prospective science teacher's agency and identity related to social justice education. She found that the majority of prospective teachers in her study identified as agents of change at the classroom level because that is where they felt the most control—or agency. However, similarly to the teachers in Ajayi's (2017) study, they confessed uncertainty regarding whether they were truly prepared to be agents of change for social justice in science education, since they lacked experience in the classroom and were therefore only projecting into the future how prepared they will be.

The work of Parker, Bartell, and Novak (2015) offers another example of mixed results. Over the period of a semester-length course, prospective math teachers appeared to expand their cultural awareness and disposition for cultural responsiveness that would support them in knowing and supporting their future students. Prospective teachers did not, however, develop some of the more advanced understandings related to power and privilege in society, and the study did not extend into observing their teaching practice. This echoes the findings of Cochran-Smith, Shakman, Jong, Terrell, Barnatt, and McQuillan, (2009) in an earlier section, where prospective teachers developed notions of social justice that were not complete.

In looking across Ajayi (2017), Davilla (2011), Moore (2008), and Parker, Bartell, and Novak (2015), as all involving prospective teachers, it might be tempting to claim that the incomplete implementation of teaching for equity is explained by the more general challenge of the transfer from theory (in coursework) to practice (teaching in schools) among prospective teachers. However, we see similar results with research focused on practicing teachers. Aragona-

Young and Sawyer (2018) sought to identify how practicing teachers define culture and what multicultural teaching practices they endorse. Their findings indicated that teachers defined culture using generic terms and overall did not show strong endorsement of recommended (i.e. higher-level) multicultural practices (pg. 480). These findings are unsurprising, given all that has been discussed to this point. However, I cite this recent research to underscore that the challenge of operationalizing equity in education is consistent throughout the teaching profession, not just a challenge for teacher preparation programs.

Simic-Muller, Fernandes, and Felton-Koestler (2015) found that prospective teachers were open to the idea of teaching mathematics through real world contexts, but were ambivalent towards the use of "controversial" (i.e. social justice oriented) contexts. Additionally, prospective teachers in their study were often unable to provide concrete or non-trivial examples of what these real-world contexts would look like in a mathematics classroom. In other words, they struggled to operationalize their social justice interests into mathematical contexts for the purposes of equitable mathematics instruction. This is consistent with the challenges faced by teachers in the Ajayi (2017), Aragon-Young and Sawyer (2018), and Parker, Bartell, and Novak (2015) studies.

Promising Results in Research on Teacher Education for Equity. While the research mentioned above offers only mixed results, the absence of a silver bullet does not render this work futile. I offer in this section three examples that offer promise.

Athanases and Larrebee (2003) investigated how teachers (both prospective and practicing) learn to advocate for lesbian- and gay-identified (LG) youth. The investigation centered around an instructional intervention related to LG youth, including a video, a guest speaker, discussion, and writings. Researchers found that knowledge of LG youth was needed

and welcomed by teachers, and that the development of a stance for advocacy for LG youth was possible.

Boyd and Noblit (2015) used a two stage autobiography assignment with prospective teachers that they then analyzed for growth in understanding inequity and critical consciousness. I incorporate this study here because the instructional activity was very personal to students and essentially asked that they consider their own lives and how they are situated within inequities in the larger society. "[T]the use of course materials applied directly and personally to humanize social justice and the open-ended ways that students critically responded, that we posit here as a new approach that led to outcomes less prevalent in similar work." (pg. 456) Boyd and Noblit attribute the encouraging growth in prospective teachers' ability to identify inequities in their own lives as due to the personalization and humanization of the social justice topics through the activity. This is a strong example of one way to support change in prospective teachers' understanding of inequity.

Similarly, Bartell's (2013) work found that prospective teachers were able to begin developing their ability to teach math for social justice through course readings and writing/revision of lesson plans. However, analysis revealed that tensions arose around balancing social justice goals with mathematical goals. The prospective teachers focused substantial attention on the social justice component, but interviews revealed that the instantiation of these goals in practice proved difficult. This work is similar to Aguirre and colleagues (2012) in that it demonstrates that prospective teachers are capable of learning about how to teach more equitably, and even beginning to plan for operationalizing instruction that is more equitable.

While promising, Bartell concludes her paper by describing challenges that echo those of Davila (2011):

> Insufficiently unpacking the myriad factors that contribute to achievement gap patterns, or the potential relationship that these factors may or may not have with factors that contribute to prison population demographics, may have served to reify or give space for students to express existing socially produced misconceptions … rather than reinterpreting, resisting, or rewriting them. (pg. 158)

Reifying the existing status quo is a concern for Bartell and she suggests that research should consider other grain sized interventions to support teacher's development of this ability to unpack the inequity.

Taken together, I offer these three studies as evidence that the work of educating teachers for more equitable instruction is not a futile effort. Rather than giving up on research on teacher education for equity, I would like to suggest that our mixed results and persistent challenges instead suggest that the field has arrived at a moment that calls for a different approach in our research efforts. To date, our frameworks, interventions, and research have almost exclusively focused on teacher education and how to instruct teachers in equity. Implicit in this literature is a notion that change (in teachers' knowledge, dispositions, beliefs, instruction, etc.) is a proxy for their learning. In the next section, I will discuss this further and offer an alternative approach.

Change as a Proxy for Learning in Teacher Education for Equity

A common theme across the literature reviewed thus far is a focus on change. In each case, the study sought to analyze the extent to which the teachers in the study changed with regard to a specific instantiation of equity in education. These expected changes took a form specific to the interventions and/or theoretical frameworks, but were anticipation of a change nonetheless. Whether the change expected was in beliefs (Simic-Muller, Fernandes, & Felton-

Koestler, 2015), the operationalizing of teaching math for social justice (Bartell, 2013), the knowledge and advocacy of LG youth (Athanases & Larrebee, 2003), in cultural responsiveness in teaching (Parker, Bartell, & Novak, 2015), or in growth of critical consciousness (Boy & Noblit, 2015), each study had a component that was intended to support the change and a related anticipation of change attributable to that instructional component.

Despite this focus on change in the extant research, there has been little discussion specifically about the teacher participants' learning about equity in education. Much of the research begins instead from an instructional perspective—how to better teach equity to teachers. The research has been learning-adjacent, for example looking at teachers' "understanding" of social justice (Cochran-Smith, Shakman, Jong, Terrell, Barnatt, & McQuillan, 2009) but not specifically investigating the learning of equity. Instead, a change in understanding, beliefs, dispositions, advocacy, and/or instruction has served as a proxy for learning in these studies.

The absence of learning as a frame for inquiry is worth noting and considering how it affects the research as a whole. In her review of the literature of multi-cultural teacher education, Lowenstein (2009) critiques the field as having a deficit view of White teacher candidates and suggests reconceptualizing prospective teachers as learners. Since, as evidenced by the above, that the majority of our research in equity instruction with teachers has thus far produced mixed results, it is worth considering how a research lens that foregrounds teachers' learning of equity could be helpful in moving the field forward.

This need for a better understanding of teachers as learner of equity is something that the field of teacher education seems to be noting, even when not stated explicitly. For example, Simic-Mueller, Fernandes, and Felton-Koestler (2015) suggest that future research investigate how to carefully sequence prospective teachers' equity learning experiences. This call

demonstrates that there is a need for research on teachers' learning about equity. Further, this recommendation is supported by McAlister and Irvine's (2000) review of the literature of process-oriented designs for developing cultural competency in teachers[2]. McAlister and Irvine confirmed that teachers' learning about equity should be viewed as a process.

This notion of teachers' learning of equity as a process is echoed in the work of Aguirre, Turner, Bartell, Kalinec-Craig, Foote, McDuffie, and Drake (2012). In their work, Aguierre and colleagues investigated how prospective teachers connected their instruction to students' funds of knowledge and mathematical thinking. What they found was that the framework had more intermediate stages than originally posited. The researchers anticipated that the prospective teachers' connections would fall into two types—emergent connections and meaningful connections. However, the study revealed a third, intermediary stage between emergent and meaningful that the researchers termed transitional. Nearly half the study participants made connections that were either transitional or meaningful. Aguirre and colleagues conclude that this demonstrates the existence of a learning trajectory and that thoughtful scaffolding can support prospective teachers in developing an instructional practice that connects children's mathematical thinking to funds of knowledge.

These findings are similar to Bartell's (2013) work in that the prospective teachers in that study who were interested in teaching for equity still grappled with how to achieve this goal alongside, and in conjunction with, mathematical goals. Both studies support McAlister and Irvine's (2000) notion that teachers' learning of equity should be viewed as a process.

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[2] While I recognize that the notion of cultural competency as a framework for equity is limited, nevertheless, it is instructive to frame teachers' learning of equity as a process.

A great deal of the research in teacher education that is focused on equity has investigated how well teachers are able to assimilate equity into their beliefs and/or instruction. By and large, the studies focus an equity-focused instructional intervention that is meant to support teachers in changing their beliefs and/or instruction. What is largely missing from the literature are investigations that seek to better understand how teachers make sense of their equity learning, independent of specific interventions with this stated purpose. As a result, the collective literature has a theme of investigating teachers' equity learning specific to these interventions, and in terms of these interventions. This is undoubtedly worthwhile work and I do believe it has been taken up with the earnest desire to address the desperate need to support teachers to be more equitable in their instruction.

However, as a field we would do well to step back from our perceptions or assumptions of how teachers learn equity and ask them to tell us how they've made sense of equity. For example, do we know what life experiences and informal assets teachers bring to the formal learning experiences in the teacher education classrooms? Do we know how these assets interact with the planned activities of the intended equity lesson? Do we know whether and how current events and the geo-political context influence their sense-making?

Teachers as Learners of Equity. In outlining a framework for multicultural teacher education, Cochran-Smith (2003) posed eight key questions for programs, to use in evaluating how well their program served the goals of multicultural education. The fourth question Cochran-Smith poses is the teacher learning question:

> The *teacher learning question* has to do with general assumptions about how, when, and where adults learn to teach. The teacher learning question asks: How do teachers learn to teach diverse populations, and what, in particular, as the pedagogies of teacher

> preparation (e.g., coursework assignments, readings, field experiences) that make this learning possible? (pg. 13)

Nearly two decades ago, Cochran-Smith asked teacher education to consider how teachers learn about teaching students from non-dominant backgrounds, and what contributes to this learning. By and large, this question has either been ignored or re-framed into an instructional question of "What should we teach so that the learning outcomes occur?"

As teacher education researchers, we would do well to heed Cochran-Smith's fourth key question and consider teachers as learners in our work towards equity in education. Rather than asking what instructional intervention will produce the intended change in disposition, knowledge, belief, or instruction, we might better ask how teachers are making sense of equity.

In my investigation of the literature, I was only able to identify one study that has undertaken a learning theory lens in its investigation of teachers' learning of equity. Philip's (2011) paper on ideology in pieces uses the learning theory of conceptual change with ideology to investigate one practicing teacher's ideological sensemaking of social justice in their classroom. By looking closely at an individual's transformation of ideology over time, Philip pushes back on the characterizations of an individual as resisting, for example, and offers a more complex process description. In this work, Philip argues for the ideology in pieces frame as a way to marry the more critical approaches with a teacher-as-learner approach.

While Philip's work begins this works of investigating teachers as learners of equity, it is only one example of this type of research. To answer Cochran-Smith's question of how teacher learn equity, we need to look more closely and thoroughly at teachers' sense-making of equity.

In the next section, I will make an argument for narrative as a way to make teachers' sense-making of equity more visible for researchers.

Theoretical Frame

For this study, I employed two theoretical frameworks: narrative and experience. These two frames are related and often invoke one another, even if only informally. I will describe each below, highlighting the central tenants of each theory, how they are useful for understanding sense-making, as well as how they complement one another to offer a useful way to consider teachers' sense-making of equity.

Narrative

Narrative has been used as a framework in a number of different modes across multiple disciplines and research traditions. At its core, narrative work elicits stories from research participants (Creswell, 2014). Sometimes these stories cover a research participant's life and are referred to as "life stories" (e.g. McAdams, 1988); in other instances, the stories reference a particular context or body of knowledge, such as teachers' professional knowledge (e.g. Carter, 1993; Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000). Elsewhere, a narrative frame is employed critically to capture and share stories specifically because they are not part of the dominant discourse in the literature (e.g. Casey, 1993/2017; McGraw & Neihaus, 2018), or because they are part of a counter narrative to dominant stories (e.g. Berry, Ellis, & Hughes, 2014). In other narrative frameworks, stories are analyzed by the researcher to develop cases (e.g. Drake, 2006), or are combined and re-storied by the researchers (Clandinin & Connolly, 2000).

Despite these multiple approaches and forms, the commonality across narrative frameworks is that they begin with the assumption that "people live 'storied' lives and that

telling and retelling one's story helps one understand and create a sense of self." (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; pg.155) Given its focus on sense-making and understanding, narrative is particularly relevant to education research. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) explain it this way:

> The main claim for the use of narrative in educational research is that humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and socially, lead storied lives. The study of narrative, therefore, is the study of the ways humans experience the world. (pg. 2)

Humans lead storied lives and create stories to make sense of their experiences. This is precisely why a narrative frame is a promising tool for the current moment in research on teachers' sense-making of equity. Stated more specifically, the ways in which teachers come to understand equity, both in the world and in relation to education, is what needs to be better understood in the research literature and a narrative frame is a promising frame for investigating this. (More on experience and how it is invoked here in a moment.)

Marshall and Rossman (2016) describe the usefulness of narrative inquiry this way: "Narrative inquiry values the signed, the symbolled, and the expression of feelings in language and other symbol systems, validating how the narrator *constructs meaning*." (pg. 158; emphasis mine) Narrative inquiry, then, is studying how meaning is constructed through stories. Further, it is the study of how meaning is constructed in stories by investigating the aspects of story the aspects of story that are uniquely narrative in nature. Specifically, the way a storyteller creates meaning from the myriad raw materials provided by life—the ways in which these raw materials are organized into narrative structures—that is what makes the meaning visible.

This narrative meaning-making is evident because stories are inherently interpretive. Carter (1993) describes it this way:

> [S]tories are especially useful devices for dealing with situation, conflict or obstacle, motive, and causality. In creating stories, we are able, therefore, to impose order and coherence on the stream of experience and work out the meaning of incidents and events in the real world. (pg. 7)

Carter points out that stories are a helpful tool to managing the myriad raw materials of life. In constructing narratives from their lives, humans also make sense of both of the aspects of their lives and the world in general. As humans, we build narratives to help us understand the world as we live in it. And in making sense of the world, we are building narratives that form knowledge of the world. As Carter put it, story is a "mode of knowing." (pg. 5)

It bears emphasizing that personal narratives are much more than a list of things that the storyteller lived through and recounts. Further, it's more than a list of the elements of those experiences, (e.g., characters, actions, images, outcomes, etc.). Rather, it is these elements as well as how they are framed and arranged in relation to one another that creates meaning. The narrative techniques employed by the storyteller crafts the thesis of the story, creating the meaning of these elements for the listener.[3]

Carter (1993) makes this point by stating that a story "is a theory of something. What we tell and how we tell it is a revelation of what we believe." (pg. 9) As an individual constructs a story, they make choices (whether consciously or unconsciously). These choices involve how to structure the story, what elements to privilege, how each element is framed, where the emphasis should lie, what tone to use in telling the story, what aspects to omit or downplay, etc. All of

[3] For an excellent example of how two storytellers can leverage the same set of experiences to tell contrasting stories, consider the musical *The Last Five Years* (Brown, 2001).

these choices made by the storyteller, regarding how the story is told, all convey meaning. In this way, how the story is told) is how meaning is created from the experience.

How a story is told is referred to in literary theory as narrative technique. Narrative research has borrowed and adopted this notion from literary theory (Reisman, 2008), and as such, literary technique and narrative technique can be thought of similarly. Though literature is much more stylistic, personal narratives are still full of narrative technique. A few examples of techniques frequently employed in storytelling are use of setting, back story, hyperbole, imagery, assigning causality, metaphor, satire, and characterization. Each of these literary techniques are regularly employed in personal narrative, to great effect in creating and conveying meaning.

Stories are Established by the Storyteller. While this point may seem self-evident and even trivial, it is worth noting that in this study the storyteller (teacher) decides what the story is. This is a departure from other methods in previous equity-focused teacher literature, where researchers sought to investigate specific interventions (e.g. a course), or specific outcomes (e.g. a change in knowledge or beliefs or instruction). In framing the research by these interventions and metrics, the researcher is only able to see and investigate teachers' learning of equity in that very specific and well-defined moment and domain of knowledge or operationalization of knowledge. Any leaning or sense-making that happened outside those spaces is lost to the study, and the research literature at large.

In contrast, narrative inherently begins with what the research participant (teacher) decides to include in their story. The research participants each decide which experiences to include in their narrative, and which to preclude—and in so doing, indicate to the researcher what interventions rose to the level of salience to their sense-making, or did not.

Further, the openness of narrative itself allows for the research participants to demonstrate evidence of many different theories of learning. For example, one storyteller may decide to tell their story about the knowledge they gained about equity in a class, and how this acquisition of knowledge is how they have made sense of equity. A second storyteller may share a personal story about a friend who had their own experience of inequity and how the friendship and communal experience caused them to reflect and think of equity differently. The first story is one about the storyteller gaining knowledge and would be well-served by a theoretical frame that includes changes in knowledge. The second story, however, is personal and informal. It would be well served by a theoretical frame that engages people and relationships and emotions. If we concede that the act of storytelling is an act of sense-making, how can these two divergent stories be served by the same analysis? Narrative analysis is wide enough to accommodate both.

To summarize: narrative is a well-established theoretical frame in qualitative research. It has been used in many different modalities, but always assumes that storytelling is a way that humans make sense of themselves and the world. In crafting a personal narrative, a storyteller makes choices as they tell the story—these choices are known as narrative techniques. These narrative techniques create the meaning within the story, for and by the storyteller. Therefore, through analysis of narrative techniques, researchers can investigate an individuals' sense-making through their storytelling.

Experience

In the previous section, experience was referenced at multiple points by narrative theory; I have delayed defining this term until now. This is in part because some of the narrative theorists invoke experience without a specific definition or frame (e.g. Carter, 1993). Others explicate their definition and theory of narrative in longer theoretical works (e.g. Connelly and

Clandinin, 2000). Regardless of the theoretical rigor with which it is invoked, experience is closely linked with narrative.

In common usage, experience is conceived of as something that an individual lives through, observes, encounters, or under-goes (Experience, n.d). Connelly and Clandinin (2000) tie their theory of narrative inquiry to John Dewey's notion of experience (1938). This conception of experience is helpful in considering how experience intersects with education—or in the present case, sense-making. In his work, Dewey laid out a philosophy of education that mediated the argument between traditional and progressive schools of educational theory. While the main goal in that work was to offer a reasoned explanation and defense of his educational philosophy, he also offered a theory of learning that centered on students' experiences. It is this theory of experience that I take up here and apply to this work.

Dewey distinguishes between those experiences that are educative and those that are not, with educative experiences being those most useful for learning. Educative experiences have two important characteristics: that they are interactive, and continuous (pg. 14). By interactive, Dewey is describing the intention of an experience (for example, the learning goals as set out by a teacher in an activity), the internal conditions of the learner, and the interaction between these two (pg. 12). An educative experience, then, is one where the learner's mind and sense-making interact with the objectives or intentions of the experience. The interaction between the learner and the educational intent of the experience are an important part of what makes an experience educative.

For an experience to be continuous, Dewey argues that it must be connected to prior and future experiences on what he terms "the experiential continuum." (pg. 5) In this way, each educative experience connects to past experiences, building on prior knowledge and

understandings, and has potential for future connections and continued educational growth and application, propelling the learner into continued learning in the future. Dewey argues that those experiences which are educative are not singular or isolated; rather, they are highly connected to both the past experiences of the individual, and lead into additional opportunities for continued learning.

A savvy reader might counter that Dewey was arguing for a model of instructional experience and that to attempt to apply Dewey to sense-making is a misapplication of his theory. In response, I would argue that the two main requirements of an educative experience are evidenced in personal narrative. We can consider that those experiences that are related in the personal narrative have had been interactive, as the individual has not merely lived through them, but has also retained them, made sense of them, and incorporated them into a larger theory. In this way, the storyteller's internal condition interacted with the purposed of the experience. Furthermore, those experiences that are related in the personal narrative have been put in relation to other experiences, giving the singular experience a place in a continuity of experiences, that is related at a time much later than when the experience itself took place. In this way, experiences that are related in personal narratives are those experiences that have both been interactive for the storyteller and that are part of the storyteller's continuum of experiences. In short, the experiences related in personal narrative are educative experiences.

While Dewey was working from a position of how education should be structured by educators, his notions of experience is a useful heuristic for considering how prospective teachers make sense of equity. It is particularly useful for the research problem at hand in that Dewey's notion of experience is not confined to experiences in the classroom or instructional activities. As such, it will not be limited in its scope the way previous research has focused on

interventions within teacher education. In this way, experience as a theory allows me, as the researcher, to analyze all those experiences that have been educative for the individuals in this study, not just the formal ones in teacher education.

In the current study, the relating of experiences through narrative offers us a wider view of what individuals draw on when making sense of equity. The view is not unlimited, because it is confined to those experiences that the individual: 1) has lived through, 2) has remained with them such that they have interpreted it to attach meaning, and 3) that the individual continues to draw on in the construction of personal narratives. Over the course of their life, an individual may have many experiences, but not all experiences are memorable to them. Not all experiences are meaningful. Not all experiences are drawn upon in considering new knowledge or topics. Not all experiences are placed in relation to other experiences in order to make sense of the world. The experiences that rise to the level of inclusion in a personal narrative, then, are important residue of sense-making.

Relevant Experience as Established by the Storyteller. The lens of experience allows me the ability in this study to capture many different types of educative experiences. This is in contrast to the current literature, where researchers often carefully craft an instructional experience (or series of experiences) and investigate the extent to which these experiences were educative. As the researcher, I have limited knowledge of the experiences the individuals have had. Instead, I must rely on those experiences that are evidently educative in that they have been useful in the sense-making of equity and become incorporated into the equity narrative. In this way, the research participants have already culled their myriad experiences related to equity into those which have been educative and will share those in their equity narrative.

In summary, experience is an important lens in considering equity narratives because it allows me, as the researcher, to make certain claims about the experiences included in the equity narratives. As a theoretical frame, when applied to data like narratives, it can highlight for researchers and teacher educators, which experiences were truly educative for teachers as learners of equity.

Affordances of Combining Narrative and Experience Frames

It is certainly true that while narrative and experience are tightly bound, one frame could be used without the other. It is also fair to ask what these theoretical frames afford a researcher, and how those affordances support the research problem presented in Chapter 1. By combining narrative and experience, I am able to investigate the *what* and the *how* of individuals' sense-making of equity.

Experience foregrounds those experiences that have been educative with regard to equity. When combined with a narrative frame, these educative experiences are those experiences which the individual draws upon in their narrative sense-making. Stated another way, experience highlights the *what* of the research problem: *what experiences are drawn upon in sense-making of equity?*

Taken together with experience, narrative sense-making foregrounds *how* meaning is made by the storyteller. The narrative techniques employed by the storyteller make clear the meaning of these experiences in the equity narrative for the storyteller. In this way, narrative techniques highlight the *how* of the research problem: *how are individuals using narrative techniques to make sense of equity?*

By employing both frames, I was able to look both at the experiences drawn on by individuals in their sense-making of equity, and I was also able to consider how they made sense of equity by considering the narrative techniques employed in the leveraging of those experiences in the equity stories. These two frames relate directly to the two research questions I undertook in this work, as defined in the next section.

Research Questions

Building on the existing research and employing experience and narrative as my theoretical framework, I propose to investigate the following research question: *How do prospective elementary teachers narrate their experiences related to equity and equity in teaching?*

Specifically, I see this question as two sub-questions:

- What experiences do prospective elementary teachers draw on to construct equity narratives?
- What narrative techniques are used in equity narratives and what do their use tell us about sense-making?

Chapter 3: Methods

Positionality

I begin the research methods chapter with my positionality statement. I am positioned as both outsider and insider to this research, and this complicated relationship to equity (and inequity) motivates this work for me in a very personal way. I am a white woman who went through a teacher preparation program at a private college and then taught at an urban high school and felt unprepared to manage my own ignorance of students whose culture and experiences differed from my own. I am also a white woman who listened to and learned from Black Twitter during the public conversation of the extrajudicial killings of Trayvon Martin, Tamir Rice, Sandra Bland, and others during what became known more widely as the Black Lives Matter movement. As one such white woman, I am an insider to the white women prospective teachers in this study. Simultaneously, as a person who grew up in poverty and is a first generation college graduate, I am an insider for those students who are affected by teachers' insensitivities to issues of class in their classroom. As a straight parent of a gender creative child, I am both outsider to the queer community, but insider to those who advocate for queer children in public schools.

My complicated relationship with equity in education—as both complicit to, and challenging of, hegemonic structures—is what leads me to seek out the sense-making of other teachers in their learning about equity. I know my own story of how I made (and continue to make) sense of the inequities in the world and in my classroom; now I seek to learn how others are making sense. Are there patterns among us? Motifs? Cases? A progression? What can I, as a teacher educator and teacher education researcher, do to better understand this learning? What can teacher educators do to better support this learning?

Further complicating my positionality in this work is the fact that two years prior to the study, I was the instructor for three of the participants in their Mathematics for Elementary Teachers courses. This position benefits this study as I have established rapport with these participants, but it could hinder the data as they may still view me in that authority role.

Setting and Participants

This study was conducted at a large, public university in the southwest region of the United States that is designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution. This university has an elementary teacher preparation program from which participants were recruited to the study. This program has a social justice focus, so it is certain that the prospective teachers in the program have had significant exposure to ideas and teaching around equity.

The recruitment targeted prospective elementary teachers in their senior year of the program. In this program, coursework in the junior and senior years are embedded in local schools and include fieldwork in elementary classrooms. The second semester of the senior year is when prospective teachers take a new role as student teachers. These senior year participants have had more experiences in the program, including those with children and immersive teaching experiences.

Participants were recruited in person. I attended classes late in the fall semester to recruit and consent study participants. The recruitment script emphasized that I was interested in participants who had a strong disposition for teaching mathematics for all children. I did not explicitly use the word "equity."

The study includes eight participants. All eight identify as women and are between the ages of 21 and 22. Five participants identified as White, one as Jewish (in addition to being White), one as Mexican, and one as Latina/Hispanic.

Data Collection

The primary means of data collection was through open-ended interviews. There was a series of three interviews in this study. Each interview was slightly different in aim and built on the previous interviews (Seidman, 2013). In this way, the structure offered an opportunity for building rapport with participants, as well as for participants to reflect on the narratives constructed in the previous interviews, and revisions of the story produced by prior interview(s).

The interviews were primarily narrative in nature. The first and second interviews were simply a prompt followed by long, uninterrupted time for the participant to tell their story. The interviews were structured this way to offer as much freedom and space to the participants to tell their story as was feasible (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000). This allowed for the structure and content of the stories to be largely determined by the participant, rather than the researcher (me).

The interviews were conducted sequentially and independent of one another. The three were spread out over spans of 3 to 6 months, at least a week apart, but sometimes as long as a few months apart. Each interview lasted from 20 to 75 minutes in length. All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed.

First Interview

I started the first interview by making the following statement in order to orient the participant to the interview format:

> The way this will work is I'll give you an initial prompt and then give you lots of uninterrupted time to talk about your experiences related to how you view equity, while I take notes. When you feel like you've told your story, I'll ask you some questions. After this interview, I will listen to the tape and transcribe your story. At the next interview, you'll have a chance to read over it and change things if you want. As a reminder, everything you say is confidential and if I publish using your story, I will use a pseudonym when I talk about your story.

Then I asked the participant to respond to the following prompt, reading it aloud and offering it to them in a printed version for them to read and refer back to:

> I am interested in hearing the story of how you view equity and what caused you to view equity as you do. The story might include things you learned in formal settings like classes, but it might also include experiences you had at work, with friends, things that happened in the world, things that happened to you personally, or something I haven't named. I really just want to hear the larger narrative—your story. What's most important is that you tell me the story that is true to you.

I then followed the narrative interviewing strategy of giving ample talk time, waiting for a coda to ask clarifying questions that were grounded in the words the participant had already said.

After the first interview, I use transcription software to transcribe the interview. I then edited out the initial prompt and used the responses to questions at the end of the interview to add detail in the earlier parts of the story. By and large, to create the participant's story from the transcript, I merely deleted my questions, moved text to be thematically adjacent when there was

a call back, and created paragraph breaks and punctuation to reflect the cadence of the oral storytelling. I sought to preserve the text of the story as much as possible.

Second Interview

The second interview consisted of two parts. In the first part, I supplied the participant with the story produced from interview #1, along with a red pen. I asked the participant to please read over the story and feel free to make any edits they felt would make it more their voice and reflect their story. The majority of participants only made small edits, and affirmed that this was their story and reflected them and their voice.

During the second part of the second interview, I again gave the participant the same orientation to the format of the interview, and then asked them to respond to the following prompt:

> Please tell me the story of how you understand equity and teaching, as well as how you came to hold this view.

Again, participants were supplied with the printed version of the prompt to read on their own as I read it along with them.

As with the first interview, I took the audio from the second interview, used transcription software to transcribe it, and then edited it to create a single narrative voice. I then combined the story from interview #1 (including any edits the participant made) with the story from interview #2. In many cases, this was merely adding the content from the second story to the end of the first. In a few cases, where the participant had discussed education and/or teaching in the first interview, I made sure that these parts of the text were adjacent, as they were related and often referenced the earlier story.

Third Interview

Like the second interview, the third interview began with an opportunity for the participant to edit their story. I provided them with a printed copy and a red pen. Additionally, if there were any remaining questions I had about their story, I asked them at this point. I then asked demographic questions—age, gender, race/ethnicity, and placement in fieldwork and student teaching.

Any edits that they made, or clarifying details they provided, were added to the story, and ultimately, the story was now complete and ready for analysis.

The Process of Oral Story to Written Story

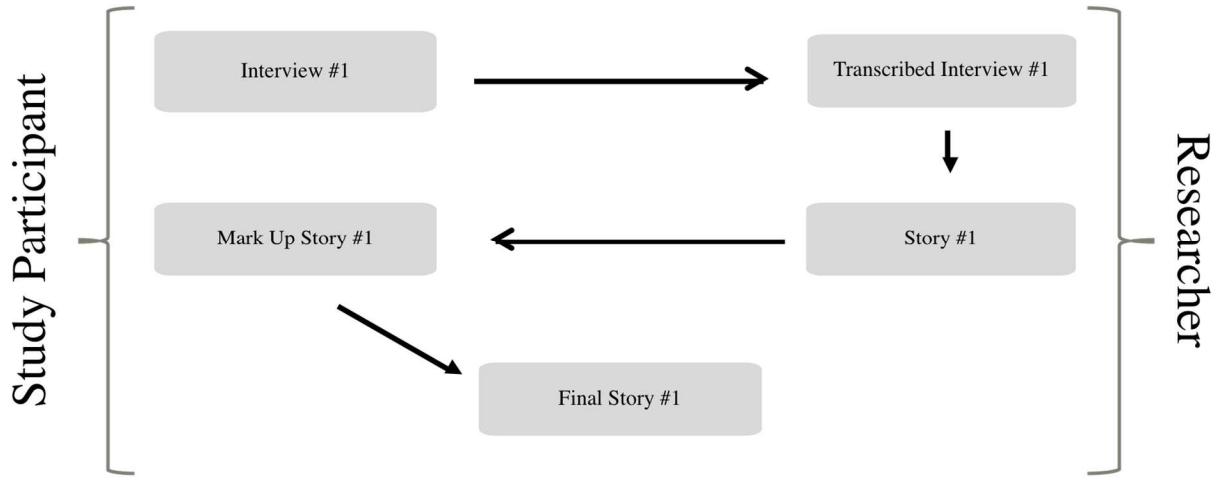
It's worth spending a moment here to discuss the process that moved the data from an oral story to a written story. Since the research problem is about the individual participants' sense-making of equity, it was important to me to keep the data as close to the participants as possible. However, I also agree with Reissman (2008) that as researchers, "we do not stand outside in a neutral objective position, merely presenting "what was said." Rather, investigators are implicated at every step along the way in constituting the narratives we then analyze." (pg. 39). Acknowledging that as the researcher, I would be co-constructing the story with the individuals, I sought to intentionally bring the creation closer to the individuals through the methods.

First, I employed narrative interviewing described above and in Chapter Two. This style of interview gives ample space to the research participant to construct their story. It also constrains the researcher to only those topics elicited from the participant by the initial prompt.

Second, I built the process of moving the orally told story to word on paper so that the individual participants would have multiple opportunities to participate in this transformation of their story. In Figure 3.1, I offer a flow diagram that illustrates how the data was collected and processed between myself and the individual research participants.

Figure 3.1

Co-construction of Stories from Interview#1 to Final Story #1



In Figure 3.1, the study participant offers the oral story in interview #1 and it is audio recorded. As the researcher, I then took the interview and used transcription software to convert the audio to text. In cleaning the transcription, I added punctuation that reflected the cadence of the spoken words. I also created paragraph breaks that reflected shifts in topic or conversation, and quotes when the study participant changed their voice to speak in the voice of someone else. This was important to me because these were meaningful features of the oral story and I wanted to preserve as much of the meaning of the original telling as possible.

To move the transcript into Story #1, I removed the transcription of my initial prompt and my clarifying questions at the conclusion of the interview. I took the participant's response to

these clarifying questions and inserted this information into the larger body of the story. This Story #1 was brough to Interview #2, where the study participant was provided it and a red pen and told to edit it as they saw fit. I also asked question to confirm that the written story "felt like their story." I then made these edits and this produced Final Story #1.

This process was similar for the data from the second interview. As shown in Figure 3.2, the study participants supplied the oral story in Interview #2. I again used transcription software to move the audio to text. I again cleaned the transcript by supplying textual features that reflected the audio.

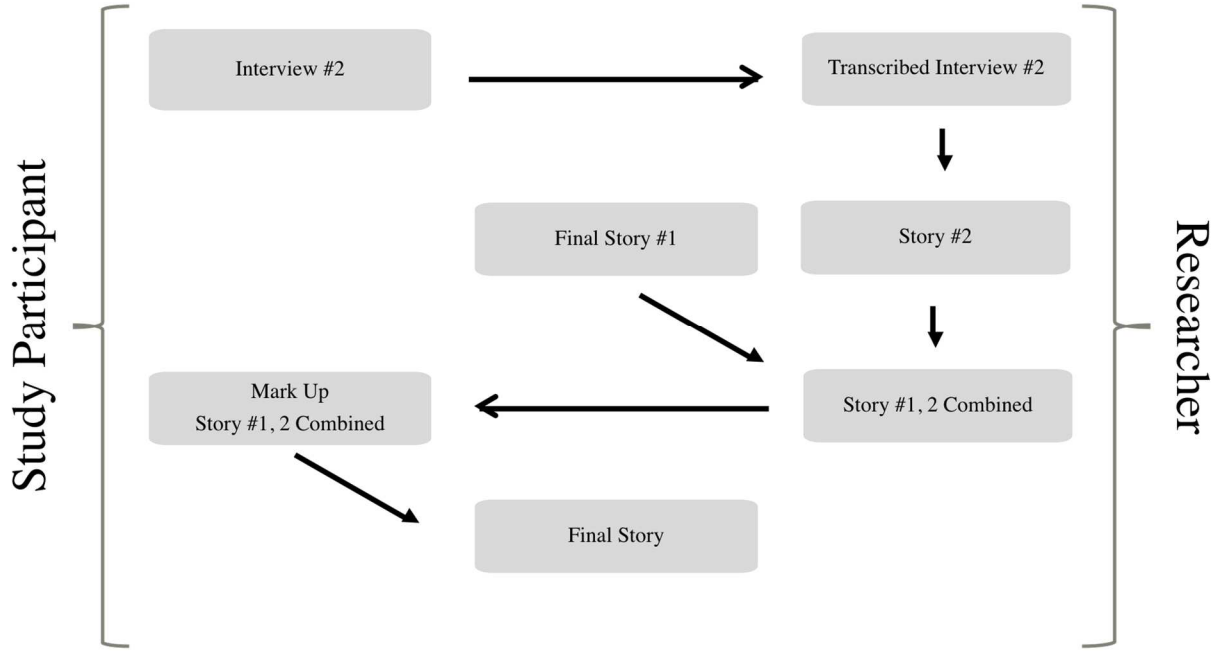
To move from Transcribed Interview #2 to Story #2, I removed the transcription of my initial prompt and my clarifying questions at the conclusion of the interview. I took the participant's response to these clarifying questions and inserted this information into the larger body of the story. This created Story #2.

I then combined Final Story #1 and Story #2 to create Story #1, 2 Combined. This combining process dependent upon the amount of overlap between Final Story #1 and Story #2. In some cases, the first story and second story had very little overlap, and so I created a break in the story and placed the second story at the end of the first story and this was the extent of the combination. In other cases, participants moved between the content of the first story and the second prompt in their second story, so it made sense to move some pieces of Story #2 to be in proximity with the same topic in Final Story #1.

This Story #1, 2 Combined was brough to Interview #3, where the study participant was provided it and a red pen and told to edit it as they saw fit. I also asked question to confirm that the written story "felt like their story." I then made these edits and this produced the Final Story.

Figure 3.2

Co-construction of Stories from Interview #1 to Final Story



It's worth noting here that few participants made edits to their stories. The more major edits included clarifying spellings of names, removing filler words (i.e., "like") and clarifying a detail that was transcribed incorrectly. By and large, the participants in this study felt that the stories produced were their stories, in their voice.

Data Analysis

The two research questions required separate data analysis techniques. As such, the description of data analysis for this study is separated by question.

Research Question One

My first research question asks, What experiences do prospective elementary teachers draw on to construct equity narratives? As detailed in chapter 2, experience is framed as something the individual lived through. This includes things that might not colloquially be considered an experience, as they may be passive, internal, or second-hand. For example, reading a book that describes an idea (like mass incarceration) is an experience that happens primarily in the mind of the reader. Hearing a story of how another person was ill-treated, while not the same as being directly the target of ill-treatment, is still an experience, even if second-hand. Consuming media that details inequity (or ideas about inequity) may seem like a passive experience, but is an experience nonetheless.

Experiences Within the Stories. I looked within each story for places where experiences were invoked. To illustrate what in the stories might be seen as drawing on an experience, and what was not attributable to an experience, I provide two excerpts from the data below. In Table 3.1, I offer Excerpt 1 from Ashley's story. This excerpt is the very beginning of Ashley's story.

Table 3.1

Ashley's Excerpt 1

Ashley's Story	Coding
I haven't really got a full lesson on equity until I got to college. So I never really knew what equity was. I took a class, [education course], where he went into great detail about equity versus equality.[1] And he showed us that picture of the boys and the boxes and how equity is the different boxes and making it so that each child has/is getting what they need. Not each child is getting the same thing.[2]	[1] Ashley identifies this experience as an experience that happened in her teacher preparation program coursework. [2] A specific activity in the program coursework.

And I guess that made me think about my own education[3] and how I view classrooms as a whole. I work at a school called Epiphany. It's for gifted and inquisitive kids and it's an extended care program. I really see a lot of equity in this school because it's private, so it's not cookie cutter and these kids get the same thing regardless of where their talents lie or where their strengths or weaknesses are. They're getting what they need based on the child themselves, rather than just what the teacher wants to teach.[4]	[3] Ashley now reflects back on her own educational experience as a student. [4] Ashley considers her experiences working at Epiphany and how this has also influenced how she thinks about equity in education.

In the excerpt above, Ashley drew on her experiences in coursework in the teacher preparation program, a specific activity during a specific course in that program, as well as her own experience as a student, and her experience as a professional in education at the school she where she worked. In two short paragraphs, Ashley illustrated how in these stories, participants might draw from many different experiences in their lives to tell their story.

To offer a non-example of drawing from experience, I offer the following excerpt, taken from Jessica's story (Table 3.2). Similarly to Ashley's excerpt above, this paragraph is the very beginning of Jessica's story.

Table 3.2

Jessica's Excerpt 1

Jessica's Story	Coding
The way I view equity--within the classroom or just in general--is giving people the opportunity they need to succeed, instead of giving everyone the same equal opportunity. Because people learn differently and if you give everyone the same opportunity to learn,	

not everyone is going to learn it the same way.	

In Jessica's excerpt, she did not reference any experiences in this paragraph. She detailed how she viewed equity, but she does not offer any experiences that led to this understanding. As such, this paragraph was not coded for any experiences. As a side note: this opening is not typical in Jessica's story. In later paragraphs, she goes into more details about her understanding of equity and connects it to her experiences.

Coding for Experiences. The experiences study participants drew on in their narrative were diverse. The following sections describe that process.

Coding of Experience Types. It is worth offering a note about how the codes and categories were developed. I anticipated that my study participants, as prospective teachers, would draw from experiences in their course work, their fieldwork, and as students/children themselves. These formed my first set of codes. As I initially coded the stories, I made note of how experiences used in the stories fit into these preliminary categories, or did not. Those that did not were assigned initial codes, and as I coded across stories, I made note of codes (i.e. experience types) that were present in multiple stories (for example, friendships), or were so strongly present in a particular story as to warrant being seen as an experience type (for example, proximity to education professionals outside teacher preparation fieldwork).

Through iterative coding across stories, I found that some codes could be collapsed. For example, one participant discussed reading a book outside of formal learning, another described a podcast, a third described watching a You Tube video. Rather than see these as distinct types of experience, I decided that these were similar in that they were experiences with media, outside of formal education, and available to the public and combined them into one experience type.

I also found that one of my initial codes for experience type—that of child/student—needed to be separated into two codes. The experiences in this code were not as similar as I anticipated and warranted being split into multiple categories of experience type. Initially I had four codes from this—experience as a K-12 student, experience as a college student, experience as a child, and experience in/with family. I found that age-specific delineations between experiences as a K-12 student, and experiences as a college student, were not distinct enough to warrant separate categories, and were better served by grouping together, the result being the experience type as a student. Similarly, I found that when participants talked about their experiences as a child, or their experiences with their family, it wasn't clear that these two categories were distinct. Often, experiences with family spanned childhood into adulthood, and experiences marked as childhood (and not in formal K-12 education) involved family. Further, as both childhood and familial experiences are formative, it made sense to associate these experiences together. As such, these two categories were collapsed into a single experience type of childhood or family.

Through iterative coding, detailed above, I grouped them into 10 categories, hereafter referred to as experience types. These 10 experience types are: experiences related to coursework in the teacher preparation program; experiences related to fieldwork in the teacher preparation program; proximity to education professionals outside teacher preparation fieldwork; experiences related to being a student; experiences related to childhood or family; experiences at work; experiences related to media; experiences in friendships; personal experiences of inequity; and others' personal experiences of inequity. The types of experiences drawn on by various study participants is shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3

Grouping of Experience Types

Experience Types		
	Related to education	**Outside education**
Related to teacher preparation program	Coursework Fieldwork	
Not related to teacher preparation program	As a student Proximity to education professionals	Media Friendships Childhood or family Work Others' experiences with inequity Personal experiences with inequity

Grouping of Experience Types. Through the process of iterative coding, it became clear that the ten types of experiences that participants drew on in their narratives either directly related to formal K-16 education, or did not. As shown by the column divisions in Table 3.3, the types of experiences that relate directly to K-16 formal education are: teacher preparation coursework, teacher preparation fieldwork, education work outside the teacher preparation program, and as a student. This distinction became salient since many of the study participants, as prospective teachers themselves, were making sense of equity in terms of formal education, but also incorporated a wide range of experiences outside of education. In addition, since the literature base tends to focus on instructional activities and interventions within teacher preparation programs, it made sense to also group the experience types by those within the teacher preparation program, and those outside the teacher preparation program. This grouping is shown along the rows of Table 3.3.

Experience Types as Overlapping. Since the framing of the experiences is dependent upon the narrator of the story, this means that some experiences could be coded in two ways, or rather, fit into two categories of experiences. For example, a single experience might take place where the participant is a student, but may detail a first-hand experience of inequity. In these cases, I looked to the narrative. Which category rose to the level of framing the experience—was it being a student? Or was it personally being a target of inequity? Another researcher might approach the same data with an eye to contexts and foreground the context of student. However, I leaned on the narrative work the participants had done to guide me to make these decisions. In some cases, the context of being a student was the overarching frame provided by the narrative; in others, the inequity experienced was the prevailing frame.

However, when an experience type was not so clearly framed by one or the other of the experience types, it was coded as both. This is worth noting, to underscore that experience types are not mutually exclusive, but rather intersect. For example, an experience of inequity in the workplace would be coded as both "work" and "personal inequity," particularly if the inequity was on the basis of a power imbalance inherent in the setting of the workplace. In coding, it was important to maintain the complexity of the data, rather than forcing categorization and losing nuance and color in the narrative experiences.

Research Question Two

My second research question asks, How are narrative techniques used in equity narratives, and what does it tell us about sense-making? As you may recall from Chapter 2, the work of telling a story is sense-making work. The narrative choices made give value, meaning, causality, purpose, etc., to a story. Since this question focused on how participants made sense of

their experiences leading to their current views on equity, I used narrative analysis for this question.

In keeping with Riessman's (1993; 2008) point that transcription of stories is part of analysis, I would like to address that here. It is fair to say that the analysis and interpretation of the data began during the data collection period, since as described above, I did interpretive work to add punctuation, create paragraph breaks, and move text around within the story. However, these choices were made based on being present to observe the story in real time, as well as the inflection and pauses captured by audio recording and instrumental to transcription. In addition, I brought these choices back to the participants multiple times and asked that they edit the text if they felt it needed it. In this way, I acknowledge that I had a hand in the creation of these stories, but I tried to keep the data as close to the participants as possible.

In addition to this, I made an intentional choice not to reduce the stories by cutting out parts I might have otherwise deemed as irrelevant to equity. I felt that given the open nature of the prompt and the research question, it was important to not determine what the participant's "real" equity story was, but rather to let what they had told me stand. This is in contradiction to some narrative researchers' guidance (e.g., Riessman, 1993), but given the dearth of similar literature on this topic, I again wanted to keep the data close to the participants.

Structural Narrative Analysis. In analyzing the stories, I employed a structural narrative analysis (Riessman, 2008). Since the second research question asks *how* these stories employ narrative techniques to create meaning, it was important to use an analysis that moved beyond a thematic analysis of the content of the stories, to focus on the structural elements of the stories that make the sense-making visible. As Riessman (2008) states, "Because it takes language seriously, structural narrative analysis provides tools for investigators who want to

interrogate how participants use speech to construct themselves and their histories." (p. 114) Since I view construction of the narrative as a sense-making act, the choices in creating that structure are important to understanding the sense-making.

The following metaphor, employed by Riessman (2008), illustrates the importance of this structural analysis in considering how a story is constructed:

> An analogy to classical music may help readers who might be put off initially by the close attention to details of speech in several of the exemplars. To hear how a composition is structured and what each part contributes, musicians break the score down, see what each instrument or musical phrase adds, that is, its function in the overall composition. When we go to a concert, unless we are musicians, we typically just experience the work; the performers, on the other hand, have done considerable "unpacking" in rehearsal to construct the unity we hear. Structural analysis of oral narrative requires the same level of scrutiny; we slow down a narrative account (so to speak)—step back from it—to notice how a narrator uses form and language to achieve particular effects. (p. 92)

Much like a piece of orchestral music, a lay person may experience a musical composition only as the sum of the component parts, generalizing across the various instruments and details of the arrangement, as we only hear the composite. In contrast, a musician will be able to identify instruments in isolation, tuning into how various elements interact and create the experience as a whole. For example, they may take note of a particular instrument that is left out at a particular moment, and what that void does to the rest of the composition. Similarly, structural analysis of narratives offers more than the sum of the component parts; it makes visible to researchers the

narrative techniques being employed by the storyteller to create meaning. It takes stories as carefully crafted and considers *how* they are made, through the narrative techniques employed.

Structural analysis can take a number of different forms. For example, Labov (1972) considered that a "fully formed" story had six components (abstract, orientation, complicating action, evaluation, resolution, and coda) and classified the stories in his work according to these functions. In contrast, I analyzed the stories in this study for narrative technique (List of Narrative Techniques, n.d.). Broadly, narrative techniques are used by a storyteller to convey meaning in the story. While many of the narrative techniques are highly stylistic (e.g., a Greek hero's hamartia), many are used in commonplace storytelling (e.g., setting, metaphor, satire, imagery, tone). Using structural analysis, with particular attention on narrative technique, allowed me to look closely at the choices the study participants made in their stories, and how that conveyed meaning.

To analyze the stories, I read them multiple times, making notes of the narrative choices that were made that helped each author to convey their experiences and understandings around equity. I noted the experiences they drew on and how they drew on them. I observed the structure of their stories, as well as the rhetorical devices employed within that structure. In essence, I paid careful attention to the ways they used language to craft their story. In particular, I focused analytical attention on places in the stories where the participants made meaning, especially around equity.

I compiled a list of narrative techniques that were in use in the stories (Table 3.4). I chose to focus my analysis on two narrative techniques from this list: explicit re-narration and visual metaphors. The reason for these two narrative techniques is that they were both used in a number of stories, but were also showcased by a single participant and tied closely to their sense-making

around equity. In this way, these two narrative techniques show the ways in which an individual can make meaning through their story with a particular technique.

Table 3.4

Narrative Techniques

Narrative Techniques
Explicit Re-narration
Visual Metaphors
Connections across experience type
Connections within experience type
Definition of equity
Generalization
Questions
Alternative viewpoints
Emotions
Taking action
Evaluation of others' actions

These two narrative techniques are the subjects of Chapters 6 and 7 of this manuscript. To analyze these in depth, I analyzed their use in depth with one participant, and in general with other participants. For the in-depth analysis, I noted all instances that this narrative technique was employed in this one story. I then analyzed how the participant used this technique in those places in the text and interpreted how this affected their sense-making around equity. For the broader analysis across stories, I noted where else this narrative technique was employed across

the study participants' stories, and chose additional examples to include a range of uses and illustration.

Quality of Conclusions

Since this proposal outlines a study that is qualitative in nature, I here employ Miles, Huberman, and Saladaña (2014) and their notion "the quality of conclusions" rather than a section on validity, generalizability, or limitations. As Miles, Huberman, and Saladaña outline, validity, and other terms like it, may not best describe the ways in which the research design is trustworthy. In this section, I use several of their suggested adaptations, and describe the precautions I took, to indicate the ways in which this study will be trustworthy and produce quality conclusions.

Dependability

It is important that the conclusions of this study are consistent and reasonably stable over time (Miles, Huberman, & Saladaña, 2014; pg. 312). In employing narrative analysis, I am relying on a commonly accepted mode of analyzing qualitative data. In so doing, I have used the norms of this research methodology, which centers the text itself (in my case, the stories of the research participants), and requires that any interpretation always refer back to the text and based in evidence from the text.

Credibility

In place of "validity," I offer a description of the ways in which I will work to ensure that the conclusions of this study are highly credible (Miles, Huberman, & Saladaña, 2014; pgs. 312 – 313). For credibility, it is important that the conclusions of this study make sense to both research participants as well as the readers of the study. To ensure credibility with participants, I

gave them opportunity within the data collection to revise and edit what they contributed as their story. As described above, the beginning of interviews two and three were an opportunity to revisit the stories from the previous interview, and edit as needed. In this way, I was able to ensure that the participants had opportunity to speak back to their earlier narrative and adapt so that it better reflects their experiences and understandings.

To address the credibility of future readers, the conclusions of this study are both descriptive and interpretive. In other words, the principle conclusions of this study: 1) describe the narratives that prospective teachers create to describe their sense-making of equity; and 2) interpret these narratives using the tools of narrative analysis to better understand their sense-making.

In the next four chapters, I will present the findings. Findings related to research question one are presented in Chapter 4. Findings related to research question two are presented in Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

Chapter Four: Experience Types

Introduction

In this chapter, I will present the findings and discussion for research question 1: *What experiences do prospective elementary teachers draw on to construct equity narratives?* First I offer the list of types of experiences drawn on by study participants and which experience types were used by each participant. Next, I will provide descriptions and examples of the types of experiences drawn on in the narratives. Last, I will discuss the implications of these findings.

Overview of Experience Types

As detailed in Chapter 3, I coded for the experiences that the study participants drew on in their narrative. Across the eight stories, I found that there were ten categories of experiences that participants drew on, hereafter referred to as "experience types." These ten experience types are: teacher preparation coursework, teacher preparation fieldwork, proximity to education professionals, as a student, childhood or family, work, media, relationships, others' experiences with inequity, and personal experiences with inequity.

Grouping Experience Types

Since the research literature on teachers and equity tends to focus on interventions within teacher education, it was illuminating to consider what groupings of these experience types might show about the domains of experience from which participants were drawing. Some of these experience types related to the study participants' experiences in the teacher preparation program, some did not. Some of the experience types related to education broadly, others did not. Table 4.1 groups the ten experience types by relationship to education and relationship to the teacher preparation program.

Table 4.1

Experience Types Grouped by Relationship to Education and Teacher Preparation Program

Experience Types		
	Related to education	**Outside education**
Related to teacher preparation program	Coursework Fieldwork	
Not related to teacher preparation program	As a student Proximity to education professionals	Media Relationships Childhood or family Work Others' experiences with inequity Personal experiences with inequity

Experience Type by Participant Story

Perhaps one of the most interesting findings in this part of the study was the way each participant drew from her own constellation of experience types. No two participants drew from the same subset of experience types. Table 4.2, below, offers a visual summary of the experiences participants drew on in their narrative. Within the table, there are three indications: a blank cell indicates that the participant did not draw on this type of experience; a single X indicates that the participant drew on this type of experience; two Xs indicates that the participant drew on this type of experience such that it was prominent in their narrative. In this way, a single X might mean that a participant drew on this experience type in a minimal way, or only once or twice across the entirety of their narrative. However, they still incorporated it into their story, so it must be acknowledged as a type of experience included in their story. To have

two Xs, the experience type was a feature of the narrative, either in the proportion of the story it took up, the multiplicity of occurrences of that type of experience, or the way that this type of experience used narrative features to make this experience type prominent in the narrative[4].

Table 4.2

Participants and Experience Types Drawn on in Equity Narratives

Experience Types	Monica	Rachel	Ashley	Fiona	Jessica	Ashton	Ellie	Lauren
Related to Education								
Program-related								
Coursework	XX	XX	XX	X	XX	X	X	X
Fieldwork	XX	XX	XX	XX	X	XX	XX	XX
Outside Program								
Proximity to professionals			XX					XX
As a student	X	X	X	X	XX	XX	X	XX
Outside Education								
Childhood or family	X	X	X	X	X	X	XX	X
Work	X	X		X		X		
Media	X	XX	X		X	X	XX	
Relationships		X		X		X	XX	X
Others' exp of inequity		XX	XX	X	X			
Personal exp of inequity	XX	X				X		

[4] For an example, see Chapter 6 where Ellie's use of a visual metaphor is captured in this table by her story having two Xs in the media experience type.

Table 4.2 shows that each study participant drew from a variety of experiences to construct their narrative about equity. A commonality among all study participants was that they drew from experiences in their teacher preparation coursework and fieldwork. This is not surprising, given that the second prompt asked them to consider equity in teaching, and that the study was conducted during the last year of their teacher preparation program. However, it is encouraging, as it indicates that the experiences in coursework and fieldwork in the program were affecting the participants' sense-making.

Beyond the two experience types related to the teacher preparation program, each participant had a different set of experience types and emphases. This is illustrated by a visual comparison between Fiona and Jessica. While both drew from almost the exact same set of experience types, Fiona drew heavily from her fieldwork experiences. Fieldwork was prominent not just in the number of mentions, but also in the proportion of the story it took up, and the tone of the text when these experiences were invoked. Jessica, on the other hand, spoke more frequently and with more detail about her childhood experiences and her experiences in coursework. While fieldwork came up, it did not carry the frequency, space, or narrative weight that it did in Fiona's story. The unique pattern of each participant shows that different types of experiences were more or less salient for each individual. To continual the comparison, Fiona found her fieldwork to be a space where many of the things she learned about equity came together. This is in part why it was such a feature of her story. Jessica, on the other hand, was working on a research thesis on funds of knowledge, a theoretical perspective that argues for viewing children from non-dominant cultures as having assets from that culture that should be tapped and supported and valorized (Civil, 2007). As a result, Jessica spoke quite a bit from her

experiences in coursework learning about funds of knowledge and how that learning affected her thinking.

Table 4.2 offers a visualization of the variety of experiences drawn on by study participants, as well as the ways in which each story has a unique pattern of drawing on experience types. Across these eight narratives, no two participants drew upon the same set of experience types, or in the same way. Stated another way, in constructing their equity narratives, each participant drew from their experience types in a unique way.

Furthermore, the experience types in Table 4.2 (found in the stories constructed by the participants), extend well beyond the experiences that are considered in the literature base outlined in Chapter 2. Consider, for example, that of those experience types grouped in Table 4.1, almost all of the research on how teachers make sense of equity is in the group in the upper left quadrant (related to education and within formal teacher education). This accounts for only two of the ten experience types that participants drew upon in their narratives. It is clear that prospective teachers used their experiences in coursework and fieldwork to make sense of equity (both within and beyond education). However, it is also clear that they drew from many more experiences in their lives to make sense of equity. To better understand their sense-making, we must better understand what experiences they are drawing on.

Description of Each Experience Type

Since I've framed experiences as the source materials for the equity stories, it is worth looking more closely at these experience types from the eight stories in my study. Until now, we've only known in part what prospective teachers draw on to make sense of equity; here I offer a description of each experience type and examples in this section to provide a fuller picture of the source material used.

Teacher Preparation Coursework

In constructing their narratives about equity, every study participant drew from experiences with their teacher preparation coursework. Since, as mentioned in Chapter 3, the teacher preparation program from which the participants were recruited has a focus on social justice and equity, and since participants were still in the midst of this program, it makes sense that program coursework would offer experiences that became part of participants' narrative sense-making of equity.

The experiences that fall under this type are wide ranging. Some are as straightforward as a reference to a specific class (for example, the courses on social justice, inclusion, and/or emergent bilinguals), or a specific professor. This also includes particular instructional activities, like the one that illustrated the difference between equality and equity with a visual of three children attempting to watch a baseball game over a fence (this image is detailed in Chapter Six). This instructional activity was a particular touchpoint among the narratives, as four of the eight participants referenced it (Monica, Ashley, Fiona, and Ellie).

Other experiences that fall under this type are tangential to program coursework, such as the essay on equity that Jessica wrote as part of her application to the teacher preparation program. Or when participants used education research terminology that would have come from coursework. The primary example of this is "funds of knowledge" (Civil, 2007). Jessica referred to it in her narrative when discussing her math methods course, her research thesis work, as well as her understanding of equity broadly. For example, she states,

> Funds of knowledge is being able to connect your home life to your school life and being able to use your home life to your advantage in education. I just reviewed this part of my thesis the other day, about funds of knowledge, but specifically in math.

Here, Jessica used her understanding of funds of knowledge—as developed in her coursework and particularly in her thesis—to support her larger argument about equity and the role of teachers in education. While Jessica didn't detail a specific course or instructional activity, it's clear that her experiences in the coursework impacted her strongly enough that she chose to draw on them in talking about equity, and is able to talk about funds of knowledge in detail.

Similarly, Rachel used this term when recounting an experience in her fieldwork, "But seeing the low kids interact, it's like a small group. It's eight kids and they don't know how to act. They can't reach from their funds of knowledge about this topic at all about phonics." In this moment, Rachel puzzled through ability grouping in her field placement, and noted that in the "low" group, the children aren't able to leverage their funds of knowledge. Though the experience Rachel recounted is clearly set in her fieldwork, the way in which she framed the experience uses research terminology from her coursework. As such, this moment in the narrative is not solely constructed from the fieldwork experience, but also drew on coursework experiences as she applied the lens of funds of knowledge to make sense of what is happening in her fieldwork. This use of educational research terminology demonstrates that the framework introduced in the coursework was taken up by participants and used in their own sense-making of equity in education[5].

Some participants only referenced their experiences in coursework broadly. Fiona, for example, tended to infrequently reference her coursework, and used a broad description of it in her equity narrative:

[5] It is worth noting that this excerpt is an example of an experience that falls under two experience types (as detailed in Chapter 3), and that this connection across experience types is significant and of interest. However, this is the subject of the second research question, and explored in more detail in Chapter 7, so I will refrain from analyzing it as such here.

> I never really knew what equity actually was prior to—like the word for it—prior to Santos' class. But then it's just been reoccurring through all the classes and it's like the common narrative among my [teacher preparation] classes. That's where I've gotten the initial name for it.

In this portion of her narrative, Fiona referred back to learning the language of equity in the formal setting of Santos' class in the teacher preparation program. While she didn't specify a particular moment in the class, she identified how the experience of the class gave her the language to engage in a common discussion across teacher preparation courses regarding equity.

As shown above in Table 4.2, all the study participants drew on their experiences in their teacher preparation coursework in their equity narratives, with half making coursework a feature of their narrative. Though the references to coursework varied from broad generalizations to precise moments of instructional activities, the impact of the coursework is seen across all eight stories in this study. This means that while the research is mixed as to impact of teacher preparation coursework on teaching for equity (as detailed in Chapter 2), coursework does, in fact, have an impact, and offers experiences from which to draw to make sense of equity.

Teacher Preparation Fieldwork

A second experience type related to the teacher preparation program is characterized by its relation to fieldwork in the program. This experience type was drawn on by every participant in the study. Given the timing of the interviews (during senior year, when participants are beginning their immersive student teaching experience), this is unsurprising as this is the programmatic work that was contemporary with the interviews. However, given the nature of the interview methodology as open, the use of fieldwork experiences in constructing equity

narratives is encouraging, as it shows that participants are using these fieldwork experiences to make sense of equity.

In general, these experiences focused on the student teaching aspects of fieldwork, though a few participants also drew from previous semesters wherein they primarily observed classrooms and only infrequently led small instructional activities. Participants drew from experiences that included watching a mentor teacher teach, talking with a mentor teacher about students, watching students, interacting with students, adapting instructional activities for students, discussing students with teachers, school programs implemented for students, and the ways resource services in the school building intersected with the classroom. Participants drew on these experiences in their equity narratives in many different ways. Below, I share an example from Fiona's story, and an example from Monica's story.

Fiona's fieldwork experience getting to know students. As shown in Table 4.2, Fiona's fieldwork experiences were prominent in her narrative. Fieldwork was by far the most referenced type of experience in her story. In addition to the content and structuring of her narrative, Fiona also explicitly states within the narrative that experiences with students in classrooms is how she came to understand equity. She states it this way:

> I came to understand equity this way because I've seen it shown in multiple ways, but mostly in my practicum classes and in my school. Most of my kids, or about half the class, is special ed. Most of them have learning disabilities. So there's a lot that I do during the day where I'll be teaching to the whole class. And then I have to tap the shoulder of one kid or like I have to consistently be monitoring all of them. There's certain kids that need different things.

Fiona attributed her experiences in classrooms, with children, as the main vehicle through which she made sense of equity. It's worth noting that Fiona pivoted from talking about her students in her practicum, to how she operationalized equity in that space.

This operationalization of equity was a recurring theme throughout Fiona's vignettes about her students. In a later portion of her narrative, she stated:

> I came to this view mostly from hearing it and seeing it in the [teacher preparation] classes, but it didn't really come into full effect until I hit my practicum courses and started working with my students now. Now that I'm thinking about it, I think I've seen more examples of equity in this past week with my class in particular—because they're kooky—than I've seen with my other practicum courses. But I also know all the kids and I have lists and I've gone through all their files. So I know all the little things that they need. I know more about this class than I know about any of the practicum classes. And it's only been a week. But, it's good cause then I can at least see who needs what.

Fiona framed her fieldwork experiences as the place where her understanding of equity coalesced. This set of experiences—only a week by her telling—offered her the opportunity to get to know the students best, as well as to take up equity based on that knowledge. Fiona's operationalization of equity was based in getting to know her students, and accommodating for their needs. Learning about students took both informal and formal routes—with the informal being through talking to the students and observing them in the classroom, and formal being through IEPs, 504 plans, and students' school files.

Monica and inclusion in her fieldwork experiences. Many of the research participants discussed these formal means of supporting equity in the classroom when discussing their fieldwork experiences. Inclusion of students with disabilities and accommodations for emergent

bilingual students were common themes across narratives. Some participants, like Monica, used inclusion as a reference point for their explanations of equity:

> I was in a class where we had a student, JD, who had an aid, and sometimes he would have small episodes. He has behavioral problems and some cognitive disabilities. But most of it is behavior. And after a while to the kids that was like, "Oh, that's just JD." I think that's so important because it's like if you show the kids and allow them to be around those differences and they become so used to it. And I feel like that's a really good step on where you would want society to go. Because it doesn't make them different. It doesn't make them strange. It just makes them, "Oh, that's just how they are. They're very different." And not in the sense that it's a bad different, but that's just JD. I think if you can get to that point explaining things like, "Oh, they have an aid because they need somebody to sit there and explain things." They're like, "Okay!" and they're very okay with it. I think that's really important.

Monica recounted her experiences in her fieldwork, focusing on the inclusion of students with special needs. She talked about this inclusion as providing important learning for the neuro-typical students, and extrapolates that learning to supporting a more inclusive society—with the implication that that inclusion is equitable and important.

Across both Fiona and Monica's excerpts, we can see how the fieldwork offered a place to put theory into practice and to consider the importance of this work. I chose these two examples as they illustrate how many of the study participants referenced students' IEPs or other structural labels like Emergent Bilingual (or English Language Learner). With the structural and institutional support for this kind of equity—through IEP forms and meetings, 504 Plans, resource groups, and the like, the study participants tended to identify these aspects of work for

equity much more than others. For example, gender, race, and socio-economic status came up much less frequently than did inclusions, special education, and language learning. This emphasis is likely because of those structural and institutional supports that the participants were now navigating.

Experience in Proximity to Education Professionals

This category of experiences was initially developed because Ashley's narrative talked at length about her experiences working as a substitute teacher in a neighboring school district, and at Epiphany (a Montessori school) as an assistant. While this might have been seen as a subcategory of work experiences, the fact that a participant had extensive experiences as an education practitioner, working with other education professionals and outside of the prescribed teacher preparation program, meant that these experiences were outside of the influence of policy leaders in the teacher preparation program. Experiences as a substitute teacher and assistant at a Montessori school are qualitatively different from those within the program. Even more germane to the research question, and development of experience types, these experiences were central to Ashley's story.

In addition to Ashley's experiences as an education practitioner, Lauren's mother was an education professional. This proximity to education professionals features heavily in Lauren's narrative. Lauren gained insight into teaching as a profession both through her mother's work, as well as her mother's socializing with Lauren's teachers and principal in their home. In her narrative, Lauren details the informal ways that she came to understand education through listening in on her mother and her colleague-friends' conversations about their work. She also details the way that access to these teachers and principals affected her own thinking and choices as a student: "So I was like, 'I need to find a connection with these teachers.'" Lauren's

proximity to education professionals caused her to see them as more than just her teachers, and to consider how she and they might connect as humans, as well as for her academic success. These experiences allowed Lauren to learn how teachers think and talk about education and their students long before she was in the teacher preparation program.

The experiences of professional education are second-hand to Lauren, as she was not working as an education professional as Ashley was. Nevertheless, they are grouped as similar experience types because in both cases, Ashley and Lauren are privy to the expertise and professional knowledge of education professionals outside of the teacher preparation program. This is consequential because the authority of the education professionals they had proximity to is on par with the authority of their teacher preparation program. Additionally, and perhaps because of this authority, in both cases these experiences were strongly featured in their narratives, indicating that they continue to have a strong influence on the women's sense-making of teaching and equity.

This experience type is important to consider, as the number of prospective teachers who have access to education professionals—either through family members, friends, or prior work in education—is not insignificant. Consider, for example, how Lauren's stories of her mother's teacher friend come from the period of her life when she was in elementary and middle school. These experiences are very durable and continue to frame how she thinks about education and teaching. In addition, Ashley is looking to her co-workers in the Montessori school with an eye to potentially becoming a Montessori teacher herself. In this case, it's not surprising that these experiences are so strongly featured in her story—this might be the context of her future employment.

As described above, this experience type resonates strongly for some prospective teachers. (In this study, one quarter of the participants.) Given the authority and durability of such experiences, it's clear that while not all prospective teachers have these experiences, those who do have last effects. As such, this experience type is important to prospective teachers' sense-making of equity.

Education as a Student

In the final category related directly to education, participants drew on their own experiences as students. Similarly to the coursework and fieldwork related experience types, this experience type was also common to all eight study participants. As a group, they drew on experiences as a student in both K-12 and college. Experiences were also varied in that some participants referred back to their experiences as students and did not recall noticing inequities, while others did recall inequities—often ones they experienced personally.

An example of an experience as a student dealing with inequity, Lauren recounted a vivid experience from her AP Biology class when she was a high school student[6].

> In our high school we had work habits grades and then we also had our content grades. Work habits were like homework, participation and stuff. In that I was getting around 20%. But then my test grades, because I had a phenomenal tutor, I was getting an 80% in. But I ended up not passing the class with a D, when I very obviously knew the information, but she didn't appreciate how I presented the information for her.
>
> And I was not the only kid in the class. So for me the equity in the classroom wasn't fair. She wanted things one way specifically and if you could not meet them without proper instruction, it didn't matter. So for me that really was the first time I ever

[6] Lauren's story, and in particular the portion this excerpt comes from, is featured in Chapter 5. In addition, the full text of Lauren's story can be found in Appendix A.

> had a really negative experience in a classroom. And that's when I was thinking, "Okay, this isn't equal, this isn't fair. Not all teachers are great, not all students are great. Not all situations are equal. Not all situations are treated with respect."

Lauren detailed how despite her effort and additional tutoring in her AP Biology, as well as decent grades on tests, she still had failing grades because of the way her teacher wanted information presented. She identified this as unfair, that the teacher only had one way to succeed in her class, and how this was unfair for other students too. Owing to that experience, she decided that education and teachers aren't all equal or fair and that students are not necessarily met with the respect or support they need.

This is an emotionally charged moment for Lauren, and dramatically changes her feelings towards education in general. This personal experience as a student dealing with ill-treatment by the school radically altered her views on teachers, teaching, schools, and her own place in the system. As a prospective teacher, it makes sense that such a strong emotional experience as a student would inform her sense-making around equity and her views of teaching.

However, not all experiences as a student were as traumatic and life altering as Lauren's. Jessica, for instance, reflected on her experiences as a student and noted inequities in learning outcomes, despite the fact that she wasn't negatively affected:

> Growing up in school, I never really noticed inequity because, well I was a good student and I felt that we got a really great education for being in the middle of Phoenix and having very low funding. But I thought my experience within education was amazing. But I noticed that I was farther ahead than most of my peers—I think starting probably halfway through elementary school, like maybe fourth or fifth grade. I remember we took the AIMs test in fifth grade and I got like 100% on the math portion and then my peers

> were like, "We didn't even learn some of that stuff." And I was like, "We obviously did because I passed." But then I realized it's probably because they were teaching in a way that I learned the best and that my peers didn't learn very well. The teachers taught in a way I could learn, but not in a way my peers could learn. And then in sixth grade when we were still reviewing fractions, I was the only one in my class that understood it. So I was told to go around the room and help my peers.

Jessaica recalled how she wasn't aware of inequity when she was growing up. She had noticed at the time, that she was ahead of her peers, particular in mathematics, and outscored them on the state-wide standardized tests. When the other students questioned whether certain content had been taught, Jessica's reaction had been that her high score demonstrated that they had been taught that content. However, upon reflection, Jessica now understands that it's more likely that the content was taught in a way that she could learn, but that perhaps her peers couldn't.[7]

Jessica didn't notice inequity at the time because it did not affect her. However, in considering how she now understands equity, she uses her experiences as a student with different learning outcomes from her classmates, to make sense of equity in education.

The two excerpts above provide two very different examples of how experiences as a student were used in the narrative. In Lauren's case, she had a very durable experience as a high school student that she carries with her and continues to affect how she thinks about equity and education. For Jessica, her experience as a student in elementary school is now re-narrated as she prepares to become a teacher and looks back at her own schooling with new lens, to understand the differential learning outcomes between herself and her peers. Regardless of the different

[7] The narrative move here, that Jessica uses to reflect back on her past views and revise them, is the subject of Chapter 5. This particular excerpt is included and analyzed with a sense-making lens in that chapter.

ways the experiences are drawn on, in both cases, the participants saw these experiences as fruitful spaces to draw on in their thinking and understanding of equity.

Experiences from Childhood and Family

Experiences with family and during the participants' childhood were evident across all eight participants' narratives. This was sometimes characterized as a life-long lesson/relationship that had bearing on their notions of equity. Other times, they referenced a specific experience or conflict that they say as inequitable.

In the first illustrative example, Ellie discusses her parents' management of supporting their kids while being divorced.

> Or another thing, like familial wise—my parents are divorced. Divorced legally for a year but separated for seven. (Just money management to be legally separated for six years.) But my dad makes a substantial amount more than my mom, yet they still split everything 50/50 for the kids, when I think that it should be like a percentage. Like a percentage—if it was $500 and my dad was able to give, it's not fair if my mom pays $250, if that's like her weekly rent or check, even though I know that it's not.

Ellie's parents are divorced but both contribute monetarily to their children's lives. Ellie noted that while her father's income is significantly larger than her mother's, they make equal financial contributions for their children. Ellie did not see this a equitable, since an equal contribution is inherently a larger portion of her mother's total income.

In Jessica's story, she shares the experience of her step-cousin to illustrate what she sees as inequity in her cousin's life.

> Like my step cousin, she got pregnant at the age of 16, (and it's bad to say this), but she's the dumbest person I know. But it's also not her fault because she wasn't given the education that she needed. We never got sex education.

Jessica cited her experience of seeing her cousin's teenaged pregnancy, and implies that this happened because her step-cousin isn't smart. However, Jessica stated that this ignorance isn't the step-cousin's fault, it's the result of a lack of education around sex and pregnancy. In the context of the larger narrative, Jessica used this as an example of how a lack of education can lead to increased risk factors.

In both Ellie's and Jessica's excerpts, they offered an explanation of dynamics and events in their families' lives that illustrate inequity. They also explained what about the situations makes it inequitable. While it's true that not every time a study participant drew on their childhood or family experiences they directly applied their notions of equity, it's fair to say that these experiences provided rich contexts to help study participants consider what equity is, what causes inequity, and what might be done to limit inequity.

Experiences in Work

Half the participants in the study drew on experiences working in settings outside of education, in their equity narratives. The participants referenced their experiences working in retail (Monica and Rachel), dining service (Fiona), and rental property leasing (Ashton). In all cases, the study participants were in entry-level positions in their work.

In her story, Monica details the inequities she sees at work in how the customers view her and treat her:

> I think of equity with work. I work in retail, at [local mall], at Victoria's Secret. So it's definitely a place where you see a lot of rude customers. It's definitely frustrating because

> there's a lot of entitlement. Like, "Well like I should be able to treat you this way because you're a worker." And I think that's just really hard because it's like some people forget that we're also humans. That we're just trying to make a living. For me personally, that's not my career choice. I'm just trying to pay my way through college. There's a lot of instances where customers come in and they think they deserve for us to shop for them or for them to talk down at us. And it's like, "No, just because you're our customer doesn't mean that you're like on a higher plane." My managers are pretty good about that. If somebody is like really disrespectful towards us, it's not just like, "Okay, well the customer's right." It's like, "No, like that's not how we treat each other. And here you are not somebody that they can talk down to just because they're giving us money." So I feel like anybody who works in retail has that experience of how customers can be.

In this excerpt, Monica drew on her experience as a retail worker and how that caused customers to treat her as less than. She also detailed how her manager did not support this view, and instead, honored the employees as fully human and worthy of respect, despite the transactional nature of the retail environment.

Monica is described the power dynamics at play in a retail position. She understood that she is there to serve the customer, but that this dynamic was often abused by customers. She also noted the role her manager plays in this power dynamic, to either reinforce customers' sense of entitlement, or to pushback against it. For Monica, work in retail was an exercise in navigating power, even if she doesn't use this language. She did recognize, however, that equity—or a lack thereof—was at play in this situation.

In all four stories where work experiences were referenced, the participants alluded to power, as Monica does above. By including work in their equity narratives, and discussing

power dynamics, they demonstrate that they, at the very least, have an intuition about how power intersects with labor and equity. Given that a full half of the participants in this study referenced their work experiences in their equity narratives, it is worth considering how these experiences might be promising for connecting to equity in discussions about the power differentials inherent in equity and inequity.

Experiences Related to Media

Media is defined broadly in this experience type, as a range of media were referenced in the equity narratives. These included books, podcasts, news stories, social media posts, You Tube videos, television shows and memes. As a category of experience type, this one encapsulated learning that was largely outside formal education, or was best defined by the medium used to convey information.

There are two ways that experiences related to media tended to be used in the equity narratives. The first was a reference or explanation of an experience of learning about equity through the medium. A prime example of this type is in Rachel's narrative about cops:

> I don't know if this is true, but I was listening to a podcast and it was my favorite You Tuber, David Dobrik, so this is probably not as factual as it can be. But within cops, there's three different types of cops. There's the ones who actually benefit the community and want to like do good, make change. And then kids—or cops—who kind of want to prove something and maybe they had a bad past and they were bullied or something. So they are more aggressive. And then cops who are just collecting a paycheck. It's kinda sad when you think of who's protecting us, who we call when we're trying to call for help. It's like you don't really know who you're going to get. It's not in every situation, definitely. But I feel like we see a lot of that, when it comes to racial inequity. Like those

> cops who are (I mean you don't see the full story on freaking Facebook videos) but those cops who are super aggressive. And it just seems like they're trying to prove a point and they know they have power, so they use it in a negative way and to their advantage. They're all gung ho about it. Which stinks.

Rachel began this section by stating that she doesn't know if this is true or not, but that her favorite You Tube content creator had stated that there are three types of cops. The three categories are those who want to benefit the community, those who have something to prove, and those who are just collecting a paycheck. She stated that it's sad that you're not sure who you're going to get when you call for help, and that while Facebook videos don't tell the whole story, you can see how in the videos on Facebook that cops are clearly abusing their power.

Rachel's experience with the media on You Tube was so memorable for her that it provided her with a classification system for cops that she sees as relevant to equity, and racial inequity in policing specifically. This is despite the fact that the content creator was not an expert on policing or criminal justice. However, he was a hugely popular on that social media, as his channel was the fifth most viewed on You Tube in 2019 (Wikipedia, 2020[8]).

In contrast to Rachel's experience with the Dobrikian classification of police, other participants used media to help frame and explain equity within their narrative. In these instances, the media is not only a learning experience, but a new frame from which to expand and apply the understanding of inequity. Ellie's story, for example, only refers to one media source—an image of three children attempting to watch a baseball game, that is used to illustrate the differences between equality and equity. However, this is the very first thing Ellie mentioned in her story, and then in the course of her narrative, brought up this image five separate times to

[8] From this webpage, viewed 9/12/2020: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Dobrik

frame and/or interpret other situations where she saw inequity. In this way, her experience with this media had become a powerful tool for re-narration and sense-making.[9]

Regardless of the source, these media are easily available to the study participants and by including these experiences in their equity narratives, they demonstrate that they found these sources enlightening for sense-making around equity. Similarly to the proximity to education professionals experience type, the media experience type carries a certain amount of authority with it, whether warranted or not. Given that three quarters of the study participants drew on this experience type, and that a quarter included it such that it was a feature of their story, this type of experience should be better understood in how prospective teachers make sense of equity.

Experiences in Relationships

Social relationships with friends and romantic partners was yet another source of experiences that the participants included in their equity narratives. More than half the participants in the study drew on this type of experience in their narrative. Sometimes, the participants compared the respective privilege among their various friends, as was the case in Fiona's narrative.

> In real life scenarios, my friend is really rich, comes from a big family and everything. He has old money and he's going to have a job right out of college, even though he's majoring in fashion. I mean, no shade on that, but he doesn't know how to do anything for himself. He's never had to have a job. He gets funds. But he's just going to have a job, right out of college. And it's because he's given all of this support that he is able to just do that.

[9] Ellie's use of this visual metaphor for sense-making is more deeply explored in Chapter 6.

> Or there's people like my other friend Elizabeth. She's always grown up middle-class, but then her parents got a lot of money at some point. But she still pays most of her own bills. Her parents make her do that. She has all of this support and she's going through college, but at the same time like she still has to. It wasn't just given it to her. She's still given certain supports, but not entirely.
>
> And then I know people that their family has no support and they're not, they're not able to do anything that they've wanted to do or even go back to school because they're so in debt from school and they have those debts. I guess that's the nature. I guess the negative part of it. Without equity or no. Inequity.

In this excerpt, Fiona contrasted three of her friends' socio-economic status. The first friend was wealthy and is afforded opportunities he hasn't had to work for. The second friend had to work for things, per her parents' requirements, but they were financially secure. The third group of friends were those without support from family, or whose lack of outside financial support has either caused them to leave school or to rack up debt. In sharing these details, Fiona noticed how, within her social circles, class affects the opportunities and educational security of her peers. She was able to see the differences in resources and outcomes, and notice that there was inequity in the lived experiences of her friends.

Often, when the equity narratives referenced friendships, it focused on reciprocity in relationships. Lauren's narrative is one such example:

> I think outside of education, friends are definitely like my absolute world, friends and family. I have really strong relationships and really phenomenal relationships with my friends and I definitely got really lucky. I think lucky's kind of weird way to put it. But I

> know I'm a good friend and I think because of that I attract good friends, which is really cool.
>
> I think equity in a relationship setting is really important because you want to make sure, again, even in a classroom, your relationship is respected and it's treated with fairness. Growing up, my dad always said, "Whatever you do to someone, make sure you would feel comfortable with them doing it to you." And I've always kind of had that in the back of my head. So I really appreciate when people go in above and beyond for me because I know I would do that for them.

This excerpt came on the heels of a long section on equity in education. Here, Lauren was expanding her equity story to spaces beyond education and considering how equity was involved in her social circles. Lauren described her friendships as strong, and attributed the quality of the relationship to what both she and her friends put into the relationship. She appreciated the lengths her friends went for her, and knows she would do the same for them. Within two paragraphs, Lauren laid out the reciprocity in her friendships multiple times. She saw this reciprocity as what is fair within a friendship and labels it as equity.

Whether it's differential access to resources and opportunities, or considering relationship dynamics, participants in this study drew on their experiences in relationship to consider how their viewed equity and how they came to see it that way.

In each of the above experience types, the experience(s) that the participants drew on in their equity narrative were framed by relationships (family, friends), or contexts (work, education) or sources (media). These framings came from the participants, as they foregrounded elements other than equity or inequity in the telling of the story. However, in contrast to these

experiences that foregrounded relationships, context, or media were experiences framed by inequity. The last two experience types foreground inequity.

Others' Experiences of Inequity

The first experience type that foreground inequity involved inequities that happened to someone other than the individual sharing their story. Half the participants in this study drew on experiences that were this experience type. There were a wide range of inequitable experiences shares in this experience type, but the commonality is that the storyteller was about to witness the inequity and connected it to their sense-making around equity in their narrative.

For example, Ashley shares about her brother having oppositional defiance disorder and her mother's advocacy for him in schools:

> My brother, as a kid he was really angry and he had a lot of problems. He very much had to have a schedule. He had oppositional defiance disorder. He had that as a kid and my mom had to fight tooth and nail to get him what he needed with the school because they were just like, "Nope, he's fine. You have to wait until he hits third grade to do testing. Like let's just see how things go." And she's like, "No. Like I need, I want him to get what he needs. He's not getting what he needs right now." I just think based on what happened with my brother that, I mean if my mom wasn't the kind of mom that was there to fight for what he needs, that then he would've been one of those kids that was just labeled as an angry kid who didn't want to work in the classroom. And I think some parents can get bullied by schools into thinking like, "Oh, well my kid doesn't need to be tested until this grade," or, "Oh my kid's fine. He doesn't need the additional testing." And sometimes those are the kids that fall behind because schools were like, "Oh no, he's fine. Just wait it out." But my mom wasn't like that and she pushed and he got what he needed

> because she was there to fight for what she knew that he needed in the classroom. And he graduated like a straight A student. But his IEP carried with him through high school even though he really didn't need it. As he grew up, he grew out of his out of oppositional defiance. But with those resources available to him throughout school, he was able to become a straight A student.

Ashley shared the experience of her brother's oppositional defiance as a small child. The school he was in wanted him to wait until third grade to be tested and Ashley's mother was convinced that he needed testing sooner so that he could get the supports he needed in the classroom prior to third grade. She had to advocate hard to get him tested, because as Ashley notes, he might otherwise be misunderstood and merely seen as an angry child who wouldn't get work done. The advocacy resulted in testing and an IEP that got him the support he needed. He became successful in school, getting high grades.

Though Ashley herself was not the child in question needing advocacy, she witnessed this experience in her family. It taught Ashley that the school system might not easily provide the testing or support a child needed and that parental advocacy was crucial. She also witnessed the difference the advocacy made in securing testing, with the testing in turn securing a diagnosis and all the resources that come with that diagnosis. This experience happened long before Ashley was a prospective teacher, but it undoubtedly left a strong impression of the school system and how in cases like this one, parents and children must self-advocate for resources. That Ashley includes this experience in her equity narrative demonstrates that even the witness experiences of inequity can be powerful for sense-making.

There are additional experiences of witnessing others' inequity across the participants' stories. Rachel relates a recent experience at a gas station when she saw two Hispanic men who

had been stopped by police, were handcuffed, and had their truck searched, only for nothing incriminating to be found. Ashley relates a story of her friend's struggle navigating college with mental health challenges and the ways in which the system is not set up to support her. Fiona relates the experiences her boyfriend's mother has as a school teacher at a large urban school. In each of these cases, the inequity was what framed the experience. In addition to these experiences of witnessing other's inequity, Jessica shares a number of her experiences doing work to address inequity. For example, she shares how her sorority packs meals for children at a local Title I school, or doing mitzvah days with her father to address community inequities through community service.

In their stories, each of the participants drew on others' experiences with inequity in how they understood equity in their narratives. These experiences are important to their sense-making as the individuals are able to see the inequities happen in the real world, in their own communities or families or friend groups. Equity, in these cases, is not something taught about in their coursework, it's something that they have witnessed others be deprived of. These experiences make lasting impressions on the storyteller and bring the issue of equity much closer to their own lived experience.

Personal Experience of Inequity

This category is similar to the previous one in that these experiences were framed primarily by the inequity. However, experiences in this category are distinct from those in the previous category in that the narrator is relating a first-hand experience with inequity.

Three participants included this experience type in their narrative: Rachel, Ashton, and Monica. Both Rachel and Ashton related experiences where as women, they experienced unfair

treatment as compared to men. Monica related an experience where she received unfair treatment based on her race as a Latina, as compared to her White friends.

> Like just in society today—I have a lot of like white friends and just even walking alongside them sometimes or just situations that have happened where you don't receive that same treatment. This summer I was a camp counselor up north and we had an incident where one of my friends accidentally hit this man's car with the door and he got really mad, understandably. We were trying to fix things and he didn't want to hear anything that we were saying; but the attack was really like more on me. He was white and I remember we were just trying to find a solution and he didn't want to hear anything I had to say. He was like, "I don't want to hear anything from you."

Monica was on a trip with her friends who are White. When her friend hit a man's car with the door, the man got upset. However, he directed his anger at Monica, rather than the girl who had hit his car. He singled Monica out of the group, shutting down any suggestions of how to fix things.

This excerpt continues on, but the catalyst to the experience is presented here. Monica pointed out that as the one person of color in the group, she was singled out for the man's anger, despite not being to blame for the damage. In essence, he was angry and took out his anger on her because as the one person of color there, he could blame her and point anger at her, despite her innocence in the matter.

This experience was a powerful one for Monica. Later in the story, she goes on to detail how upsetting this experience was in real time, triggering a panic attack for her. In her narrative sense-making, she referred back to this incident a number of times in her story, drawing on it to

make connections with other experiences and to provide generalizations about equity and the world in general.

First-hand experiences with inequity can be brutally powerful and traumatic. These kinds of experiences will shape the way we think of the world and how we make sense of the world. For those individuals who have had personal experiences of inequity, they will undoubtedly draw on those experiences in their sense-making of equity.

Discussion

The findings described above detail a wide array of experiences from which the study participants drew to construct their equity narratives. These experiences were grouped into experience types and are summarized in Table 4.1. Additionally, Table 4.2 shows which types each participant used—and to what extent—in their equity narratives. The four main findings are that participants drew on a multiplicity of experience types, they each had their own set of experience types that they drew on, that experiences could be quite durable, and the proportion of experience types that are lacking in the literature.

Multiplicity of Experience Types

The first observation a reader of this chapter might make is the sheer variety and number of experience types that were generated from just eight participants. Further, the reader might consider how these experience types extended beyond the scope of formal teacher education (Table 4.1). The participants in this study saw many areas of their personal lives as relevant to equity—extending the salient experiences to work, family, relationships, media consumption, and inequity endured by themselves or others. In fact, none of the participants discussed equity as only related to teaching or experiences in their teacher education. In the Dewian (1938) sense, all the participants in this study had had many educative experiences beyond their teacher

preparation program. We know that these experiences were interactive because the participant took them up and integrated them into their larger (continuous) narrative around equity.

Across these eight participants, there were ten different types of experiences that were drawn on in the equity narratives. In considering Table 4.1, it is worth noting how the current research on teachers and equity falls primarily in the top left quadrant (namely, the experience types that are related to education and formal teacher education). This means that the bulk of the types of experiences teachers draw on in their sense-making around equity are not present in the literature. These include experiences that are related to education, but are beyond the purview of the teacher preparation program, as well as experienced wholly outside of education and the program.

In making sense of equity, prospective teachers are drawing considerably from experiences outside the current research agenda. Yet, the main focus in the research literature is on those experiences and activities that occur in teacher education spaces and programs (e.g. Ajayi 2017; Davilla, 2011; Moore, 2008; Parker, Bartell, & Novak, 2015; Simic-Muller, Fernandes, & Felton-Koestler, 2015). There are, of course, a few exceptions in the literature—recall from Chapter 2, for example, the multi-media auto-biographies of Boyd & Noblit (2015). However for the most part, research has focused on the experiences provided by teacher educators, rather than the experiences prospective teachers see are related to equity, i.e., part of their continuum of experience. In contrast to this, we see in Table 4.2 that all participants in the study included numerous experience types beyond the teacher preparation program. In fact, all but one of participants (Fiona) have narrative emphases in experience types beyond the scope of the teacher preparation program. This means that for seven of the eight study participants, the

experiences that figured large in their equity narratives are not currently included in how we study teaching equity to teachers.

While it's clear that prospective teachers draw on the programmatic experiences in their sense-making around equity, this is not the full picture of their sense-making. Consider, for example, that a full half of the study participants had an emphasis in their equity narrative that drew from experiences outside the teacher preparation program experiences. Prospective teachers' sense-making of equity is more expansive than the teacher preparation program. Including analysis of experience beyond teacher preparation programs will provide researchers and practitioners a more full view of the sense-making, as well as a more nuanced understanding. As with experiences like other's experience with inequity or personal experience with inequity, these are powerful, long-lasting experiences that are unlikely to be replaced with an instructional activity.

The specific experience types encountered in this work likely do not span all the different types of experiences a prospective teacher would draw from in sense-making around equity. However, the specific heuristic typology of the experiences presented here are less important than what the existence of the heuristic tells us—which is that the sense-making is drawn from many life experiences, not just those provided in formal education. And that those experiences are not anomalies, but can serve as prior notions that are built upon, expanded, challenged, or otherwise. We all know that our students do not come to us as blank slates. Even if they have not heard or understood the word "equity" before, they will mine their past and present experiences

to make sense of the concept as they are learning about it[10]. This heuristic helps us to conceptualize those experiences they are building upon.

Possible Richness of Experience Types Beyond Teacher Education

It is worth considering how a narrow focus on teacher education interventions and instructional activities limits the scope of how research engages teachers' sense-making of equity. Consider, for example, the experience types of work and relationships. Each of these offer potential for learning about equity in a broader, more comprehensive way.

When participants related experiences at work, for example, they invoked a power differential in the workplace and they managed with that lack of power. This is a rich experience to draw on, given that prospective teachers tend to come from more privileged backgrounds (Feistritzer, Griffin, & Linnajarvi, 2011) and have few experiences where they are on the lower end of a power differential.

In relationships, participants often described navigating interpersonal experiences with resource differentials among friends, and dynamics like reciprocity and fairness. For the participants in this study, relationships were a small community within which they could consider how equity played out. These insights are rich for extrapolation and complication in sense-making of equity on a larger scale. Differential resources, for example, maps directly onto issues of class. Reciprocity in relationships is an opportunity to challenge and complexify what it means to be fair and equitable in inter-personal interactions. Both of these issues—resource

[10] A closer look at examples of this sense-making is addressed in the second research question in Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

access and inter-personal equity—are incredibly relevant to a teacher's understanding of equity within their own classroom.

These experiences, while not directly invoking teaching or education, are rich for learning about equity nonetheless. In fact, by moving prospective teachers' thinking beyond the context of education, where they may have power or access to resources, we are able to consider equity from the vantage of those who do not have power or resources. As such, these types of experiences could be particularly useful to leverage in prospective teachers' sense-making around equity.

Authority of Experience Types Beyond Teacher Education

Within the wide range of experiences that study participants drew upon, there were a number of experiences that had authority. The experience type of proximity to education professionals gave study participants with connections to educators an alternate source of authority on teaching and education. Similarly, messages about equity in media carried a certain amount of authority (whether real—as in the case of books and journalism, or possibly imagined—as in the case of social media). In both these experience types, encounters with ideas about equity in education carried weight that could be on par with that of the formal learning in teacher preparation programs. Given the authority with which these experiences are viewed as sources for sense-making of equity, the paucity of research considering these experiences and their influence should be addressed.

Summary

Prospective teachers' sense-making around equity and equity in education is draws from many experiences, both within the formal teacher education program, but many experiences

beyond these are well. These experiences are varied, offer richness that could be leveraged in teacher education, and may have authority that competes with the intended curriculum of the teacher preparation program.

In Chapters Five, Six, and Seven, I will share the findings for the second research question, which takes on the narrative techniques participants used in sense-making.

Chapter 5: Explicit Re-Narration

Introduction

This chapter presents the first portion of the findings and discussion of research question two: *What narrative techniques are used in equity narratives and what do their use tell us about sense-making?* As discussed in Chapter 2, the telling of a narrative is a sense-making activity. This sense-making is made visible by the narrative techniques employed by the individuals. The techniques that participants employ show how they're thinking about equity and what caused them to think this way. In this chapter, I will present the technique of explicit re-narration as employed by the participants in this study in their equity narratives. Following this, I will discuss what explicit re-narration tell us about the equity sense-making.

Re-narration

We know from narrative theory as presented in Chapter 2 that individuals makes sense of their experiences and lives through stories. These stories are not fixed and that they change over time, reflecting the learning and changes in understanding that the individual experiences. I term these changes in the story "re-narration." Not all of these shifts in the story are made visible to the audience. As such, I distinguish the re-narration I identify in this chapter as "explicit re-narration." These re-narrations are explicit because the narrator tells the audience that the story has changed.

Explicit re-narration happens in the story when the narrator explicitly tells us that their story used to be one thing, but is now another. Stated simply, re-narration is a change in the equity narrative from how it would have been told in the past. This change in the story reflects a change in understanding. In some instances, the previous story, the catalyst for the re-narration, and the new story, are all thoroughly explained and well understood. In other cases, only some of these

aspects are explicitly detailed for the audience. Across the stories in this study, there were many uses of re-narration that only made some aspects of the re-narration explicit. Lauren, however, not only made her re-narration explicit, she used these shifts in the story to structure the first half of her equity narrative. In the next section, I will use Lauren's story to illustrate explicit re-narration as a technique used in her story.

Lauren's Explicit Re-narrations

Lauren used explicit re-narration to structure her equity narrative, marking shifts in the story, through which she tells her audience how her thoughts on education and equity have changed from her early life until now. This portion, framed by explicit re-narration, comprises approximately the first half of her story. As such, it takes a prominent role in setting the history for Lauren, of how she came to view education as she currently does, and how that involves equity.

In what follows, I have chosen long excerpts from Lauren's story, to showcase how her story unfolds, and how she uses explicit re-narration in the story. The excerpts are presented in the order in which they occur in the story, as this ordering is important to the structure and explicit re-narration. I offer my interpretation of each excerpt alongside the story's text. The first except is in Table 5.1. This excerpt occurs right in the beginning of Lauren's equity narrative and sets the stage for how she's going to present her story through re-narration.[11]

Table 5.1

Lauren's Excerpt 1

Lauren's Story	Analysis
So one of the biggest things that stood out to me when I was considering becoming a teacher. My mom was in education and I	[1]Lauren establishes that she has special access to teachers as whole people through her mother's work.

[11] For those prodigious readers who may prefer to read the entirety of Lauren's story, I have included the full text in Appendix A.

loved that.[1] I thought it was really cool. I got to see teachers from a different perspective because I got to see them outside of the classroom. We're talking about, "Like oh my God, they're people!" It was awesome. But I loved them so much and my relationship with them meant so much.[2] And so I took a very critical eye of students and teachers in the classroom.[3] And there was one moment, it was AP biology and I was really excited. I love AP biology. I love biology. I think it is so cool. I was really excited and I was like, "Oh my gosh, we're going to do like hands on activities! It's going to be incredible!"[4] I'd never heard of this teacher before, but I'd heard some good things. So I was like, "Okay." Pretty confident walking into the classroom.[5] But it was completely opposite of what I thought.[6] She very much had a preferred type of student; which is fine to a certain extent. Obviously you have an ideal student you'd want in your classroom, but that doesn't happen. Her ideal student was a student, who's not very chatty in the classroom. Their work is done on time to its full potential. They participate in class but not too much. And they're probably labeled as a gifted student. I think it can differ in a lot of ways. I think that's definitely what she was looking for, especially in an AP setting. She loved her AP students, which was fine. Cool. Dandy.[7] But if you hadn't taken an AP class before, you were doomed.[8] I had taken an AP class before, but I was very chatty. I would have missing assignments. Absolutely. My homework was not done to full potential according to her. I participated a lot, but my participation wasn't, "I have the right answer the entire time." It was a lot of like questions and questioning her. Not in a disrespectful way, but like, "What do you mean by that? Like, can you expand on that for me, for my	[2]This special access afforded her a positive relationship with teachers. She uses phrases like "loved them so much" and "meant so much" to underscore how much she valued the teachers she knew. [3]This access gave her special insights to education, one that most other children may not have. [4]Lauren sets up her reader for an important moment in her story by framing it as a specific moment. She details her positive feelings ("excited," "loved," "so cool," "incredible"). [5]Lauren tells us that she walked into this class with an open mind towards the teacher. [6]The course was the opposite of the positive experience Lauren was anticipating. [7]Lauren states that this teacher had a preferred student that she structured her teaching around. This preferred student turns in high quality work on time, is not disruptive in class but does participate, and is perhaps labeled as gifted. Lauren concede that most teachers do have a preference ("Obviously you have an ideal student--"), but that teachers should also be prepared for the reality of this not happening ("—but that doesn't happen."). [8]Lauren states the consequences of not being prepared to fit the expectations of this course – doom. [9]Lauren outlines the multiple ways in which she did not fit the teacher's ideal student—being chatty, homework not done the way this teacher would interpret as to Lauren's full potential, and too much in class participation that amounted to questions pressing the teacher for explanations and examples. [10]The teacher did not like that Lauren did not fit her idealized version of a student, nor that

learning?"[9] She didn't like that. She didn't like that I thought very differently than her.[10] But she really loved her textbook, so we were very textbook learning, which was again, fine. Everyone does their own way. I'm personally not a textbook learner, so I knew that class was going to be a challenge for me. So I got a tutor. And he was incredible.[11] But we would take notes in class and then take notes at home for homework. And we turned them in and she would grade them for accuracy and completion. And I think through the whole class, the highest grade I ever got was a 30 something. 30 out of a hundred. Yeah, 30%.[12] The first notes I ever turned in, I'd used pink ink because I think colors are fun. She gave me a zero because I used pink ink. I was like, "Okay, can I redo them?" She said, "No, but next time remember." I was like, "Okay."[13] So then I worked really hard to make sure that I was writing the notes that best fit her and not my own learning.[14]	Lauren thought of the material in a way that was different from the teacher and required further explanation/clarification. [11]The teacher's pedagogy was close to the textbook, which was not how Lauren learns best. Another disconnect and challenge for Lauren. She dealt with this by getting a tutor who helped her. [12]Lauren describes the recurring assignment of note-taking, and how she always scored poorly on this task. [13]The first instance of this assignment, Lauren used pink pen and as a result lost points that were not able to be recovered. [14]Lauren points out that she adapted her work to fit the teacher, not how she might best learn.

In her story, Lauren lays out how she began in her childhood with access to the professional world of her mother's teacher friends. She uses this background to establish her very positive view of teachers and education. This positive view is carried into her excitement and expectations going into her AP Biology course in high school This course, however, is the opposite of what she anticipates, and Lauren attributes this drastic reversal to the teacher and her pedagogy. Faced with this abrupt difference, Lauren adapts to the teacher—changing how she completes assignments to suit the teacher and hiring a tutor to support her learning beyond the classroom.

This portion of the story is important for the audience as it establishes what the story was, prior to the coming explicit re-narration. Lauren's audience can better understand how the story was changed because they understand what the story was formerly. In short, Lauren had a deep

affection and admiration for education and teachers in her early life. When faced with challenges in her education—like a teacher who didn't teach in a way that supported her learning—she worked to adapt and supplement her own learning.

Lauren details the event that brought this tension between herself and the teacher to a head in Excerpt 2 (Table 5.2) and Excerpt 3 (Table 5.3).

Table 5.2

Lauren's Excerpt 2

Lauren's Story	Analysis
One time I got into such a big argument with her because I went in for extra time and I was like, "I really don't understand this and I need you to explain to me." She's the only AP bio teacher in the school too.[1] She spit at me.[2] So I grabbed my stuff and I walked out.[3]	[1]Lauren continues to struggle in this course with this teacher. She goes in for extra help, asking for additional explanation, to her only option at the school—her teacher. [2]The teacher spit at Lauren. [3]Lauren responds by leaving.

Table 5.3

Lauren's Excerpt 3

Lauren's Story	Analysis
So then I had to go to an assistant principal. He didn't like me very much either, but he handled it pretty well.[1] We'd have a meeting, the assistant superintendent came in. And basically they said it was anger. It wasn't actually true spit.[2] But it was true spit. She spit at me.[3] But I didn't care to argue past that. I just got out of her class, which I think I should have pushed harder cause like she was awful.[4] I had started first semester. AP biology is a two semester course, and I finished the first semester and didn't complete the second.	[1]To handle the teacher spitting at her, Lauren goes to the administration. Despite a poor relationship with the asst. principal, he handled the meeting well. [2]The meeting was attended by the assistant principal and the assistant superintendent. What Lauren describes as spit, they interpret as anger. [3]Lauren rejects that she mischaracterized the incident, doubling down that she was spit at by the teacher.

When I was looking at my final grade and going over everything and it was kind of getting closer to finals, I realized that I was not about to pass this class. Which was scary. I mean especially because I was a junior, I was thinking about where am I going to go to college and everything. I didn't want that on my transcript but it was, and I'm here so it ended up working out. So after first semester completely finished, I went on and I took genetics instead.[5]	[4]However, Lauren decides not to assert herself further with the administration, but to just get out of the teacher's class, while questioning whether she should have fought the administration harder. [5]Lauren was afraid of how her grades in this course would affect her chances at college. She recognizes the power the teacher has over negatively affecting her future, and ultimately opts out of the course.

Lauren details for her reader how the relationship between herself and the teacher devolved into her leaving the class. After the teacher spit at her, she took action to bring administration into the situation, but they ultimately decided that what Lauren called being spit at was merely anger. Taking into account the influence this teacher had on her grades and her future college prospects, she opted to leave AP Biology and instead take genetics.

The portion of the story shown in Excerpts 2 and 3 is important to the re-narration as it details the catalyst for Lauren's re-narration. In Excerpt 1 she presented what her story had been in the past, and now she is detailing the event that caused the re-narration. In the following excerpts, Lauren provides for her audience what changes she made to her story about education and equity.

Table 5.4

Lauren's Excerpt 4

Lauren's Story	Analysis
And I was not the only kid in the class.[1] So for me the equity in the classroom wasn't fair. She wanted things one way specifically and if you could not meet them without proper instruction, it didn't matter.[2] So for me that really was the first time I ever had a really negative experience in a classroom.[3] And that's when I was thinking, "Okay, this isn't equal, this isn't fair. Not all teachers are great,	[1]Lauren is not the only person harmed by this teacher. [2]This teacher and her class are an instance of inequity. [3]Lauren realizes that teachers and education can have a negative effect.

not all students are great. Not all situations are equal. Not all situations are treated with respect."[4]	[4]Her notions of teachers and equity need to be revised because of this experience.

Table 5.5

Lauren's Excerpt 5

Lauren's Story	Analysis
So at that moment I decided I did not want to be a teacher.[1] I was very anti-education.[2] I had an attendance contract my senior year of high school because I really was not showing up because I didn't feel like I needed to, because at that point I had lost all hope. And I had lost all faith in how I would be treated, because I knew I wasn't a traditional learner.[3]	[1]Lauren goes from idealizing teachers to not wanting to be one. [2]She goes from feeling extremely positive about education to being against it. [3]She has lost hope and faith in education because she doesn't trust it to do right by her.

In Excerpts 4 and 5, Lauren charts how the unfair treatment by a teacher in high school caused her to completely change her views on education. Lauren makes explicit that the experience of the AP Biology teacher was the catalyst for her re-narration around education and equity. This explicit re-narration is indicated by Lauren's use of time ("that's when," "at that moment," "that really was the first time"), as well as her assessment of the situation ("the equity in the classroom wasn't fair," "this isn't equal, this isn't fair," "I was very anti-education") that her understanding of education changed.

Taken in context with the prior story as laid out by Lauren, it is clear that Lauren's personal narrative has taken an abrupt change. Specifically, because of the experience with the AP Biology teacher, Lauren's story about education and its inherent value or fairness moved—from childhood idealism and a belief in the goodness of education, to a distrust of education and a belief in its harmfulness. Lauren is not merely telling her audience that her narrative on education changed (as other participants did later examples), she has structured her narrative around this re-narration to show explicitly how it changed.

But this is not the only explicit re-narration used to structure Lauren's story. After the above excerpts, she then recounts her experiences in a college course that included discussing the education system broadly and volunteering at a local middle school.

Table 5.6

Lauren's Excerpt 6

Lauren's Story	Analysis
So then I was just taking random gen eds and I had a friend reach out to me, say, "Hey, do you want to take this gen ed with me? It's two credits. I know we both need two more credits to be a 15 credit student. And it's a guaranteed A. Let's, let's go over this." And I was like, "Okay, let's do it." I didn't look into it at all.[1] And then I was like, "Oh okay, we're going to work at schools. Is that like part of our grade?" And she was like, "Yeah, we meet once a week for a little bit and then we just get to volunteer at schools." I was like, "Cool, I love volunteering. That sounds fun. Let's do it."[2]	[1]Lauren emphasizes taking this course as random—something she hadn't looked into but took on the suggestion of a friend to get an A. [2]She was drawn to the course by the volunteer work in schools.

In Excerpt 6, Lauren makes it clear that she did not seek out this course, and she was not looking to change her views on education. She was taking a class with a friend and getting an easy A to round out her course schedule. When she realized that the course involved volunteering at a middle school, she saw this as volunteering, not as working in education. This framing further demonstrates that Lauren was not thinking of this course as a re-introduction to education, but rather as a volunteering opportunity.

Table 5.7

Lauren's Excerpt 7

Lauren's Story	Analysis
But it was really eye-opening.[1] It was this little skinny guy—he rode a bike to class everyday and he was a grad student who was	[1]Lauren characterizes the course as opening her eyes to things she hadn't considered before.

teaching it and he really let us have a very discussion based, meeting once a week. I felt that I could just talk. It was very discussion-based. We had readings in a classroom, but I think he knew that if he assigned us readings, we wouldn't do them.[2] I mean, the class was really diverse, so you had some people who were taking it for the A, which I originally went in with, but I think I left a different student.[3] And then there were some people who were really into like education or certain majors and really wanted to know what's happening in education and what's happening in underfunded education. So we just went into that.[4] But honestly, the meetings were really cool. I learned a lot of really big vocab terms that like really resonated with me.[5] But my favorite was just volunteering at the middle school. I felt that was so cool.[6] I was like, "Okay, I love education. I just had one bad experience."[7]	[2] The class meeting portion of the course was primarily discussion-based, and Lauren felt at liberty to talk. [3] While Lauren initially took the course for an easy A, she credits the course with changing her despite her early intentions. [4] Lauren specifies that this course wasn't just for education majors, but drew students from a number of majors for various reasons. . [5] The class meetings were informative and enjoyable for Lauren. [6] For Lauren, the most enjoyable aspect was volunteering at the middle school [7] Because of this experience, Lauren re-framed her experience with the AP Biology teacher as one bad experience rather than indicative of education overall.

Table 5.8

Lauren's Excerpt 8

Lauren's Story	Analysis
For me, that's when I was like, "Okay, I do love this.[1] And I do see that not everything has equity. Not everything is fair, not everything, but education to its core is absolutely incredible."[2] And I loved that. And so it was really excited to get back on board with that.[3]	[1] Lauren re-affirms that she loves education (the "this.") [2] She recognizes that education has inequities and unfairness, but revises her view on education to be primarily positive. [3] She feels positive and excitement to feel positive about education again.

The course that Lauren took was transformative for her views on education. She characterizes it as "eye-opening" and leaving her a different student. She indicates to her audience that she was changed by her experiences in this course. She then leaves no room for doubt by explicitly explaining to her audience how upon reflecting on education after that course, she again adapted

her story about education. Lauren again uses time to pinpoint for her audience when the change occurred, ("that's when") as well as what changed—namely, her perspective on education.

Across excerpts 5 – 8, Lauren offers us the previous story (anti-education as presented in excerpt 5), then the catalyst for re-narration (the easy A course detailed in excerpts 6 and 7), as well as the re-narration (a view of education that acknowledges inequities but is ultimately positive, in excerpts 7 and 8). Because Lauren chose to structure her story around her multiple re-narrations on education and equity, her audience is able to chart her journey, from an extremely positive and idealistic view of education, to an extremely negative view after suffering inequity in high school, and then back to a positive view of education after spending time learning about education and volunteering in a middle school.

Lauren's views on education after the course in excerpts 6 and 7 are further reinforced and expanded by her coursework and experiences after entering the teacher preparation program. She gives her audience a recap of her views on equity and education in Excerpt 9 (Table 5.9).

Table 5.9

Lauren's Excerpt 9

Lauren's Story	Analysis
For me, when I think of equity and my journey in that, it's having equity and not realizing how incredible it was in a classroom and having such incredible teachers that I didn't know that it was being taken away from me.[1] And once I did experience some really negative things and then coming back and realizing that being able to reflect on it[2] and then working really hard to try everything in my power to make sure that I get to do that to students, I get to make sure that their learning is exactly how it needs to go for them and not just one traditional type of student that realistically the American education system kind of pushes it to be.[3]	[1]Lauren returns to her own experiences of having and losing equity in education to frame her synthesis of her story. She points out that she had equity and hadn't realized how precious it was. [2] She notes that experienced inequity, but then also reflected on that experience to make sense of it. [3]She turns her attention to her role as a prospective teacher and how she has the power to impact students and provide them what they need to learn, not just an idealized version of a student, as the system tends to be.

Lauren gives a summation of her education equity re-narrations, highlighting that the experiences of benefiting from equity in education, then experiencing equity, and having the chance to reflect on those experiences later, all contributed to her current story on equity in education. For Lauren, this includes a future focus on how she, as a future teacher, can work to ensure that other students have positive experiences in education, despite an education system that is set up to be inequitable.

The excerpts thus far have illustrated the ways in which Lauren structured the first half of her equity narrative around explicit re-narration. The second half of Lauren's narrative deals primarily with how she now views equity, particularly in education. Her view on equity calls back to her experiences that were explicitly re-narrated in Excepts 1-9. In Excerpt 10 (Table 5.10) Lauren begins to detail for her audience what she sees as equity in teaching.

Table 5.10

Lauren's Excerpt 10

Lauren's Story	Analysis
Equity and teaching is very hard. It's not something somebody who's lazy could do it.[1] It's something you're constantly thinking about and probably are dreaming about because I've seriously, I think I have the teacher sleeps. Because I swear at least one of my students is always in my dreams. And I wake up and I'm like, "Oh crap."[2] But I didn't realize how hard it was going to be. I knew it was going to be hard. They told me it was going to be hard. I could kind of conceptualize it.[3] But I get why teachers are able to leave kids behind or are able to just like give the gifted kids the easy way out or like favor those who just get it. So you don't really have to work with them as much because it's hard. And it's draining.[4]	[1] Lauren views equity in teaching as hard work. [2] She sees it as requiring continual thought. [3] She didn't anticipate how challenging it would be to teach with equity. She had been told and she understood it as much as she could before experiencing it herself. [4] Because equity takes so much effort, Lauren sees why some teachers don't put in the effort, because it is easier. And this work is draining.

But on the other hand, I think I would literally be sick to my stomach with guilt if I just did that.[5] There's always a moment where I'm like, "I could just sit down." I've sat at the desk I've been provided twice in the past two months.[6] Which is fine. Now the students have taken it over and they did break the computer. That's okay. That's okay. We roll with that. We don't need a computer. But at the end of the day when I finally get to sit down, I'm like, "I did my part that's what I can do now they need to do the rest."[7] It's like way better than like, "Oh my God, I can't believe I failed a kid."[8] And mind you, I am new and so I will put all the effort in also because I have a mentor teacher looking in on me and then I have observations and my supervisor and like all these eyes on me that if I mess up it will be corrected and it will be brought to my attention but I don't have that next year. You know, in the classroom.[9] Like I'll have moments they obviously have a mentor for you that you meet with—what three times a year or something like that.[10] But I hope I don't lose that because I think that would suck for me, because I think that would take my love of teaching and love of education out of the equation.[11]	[5] However, Lauren would be wracked with guilt if she didn't put in the effort. [6] There are moments in her student teaching where she considers sitting down (a metaphor for putting in less effort). She very rarely sits. [7] When Lauren finally sits at the end of the day, she knows that she put in all the effort that she could and that the rest of the work is her students'. [8] She sees this exhaustion as far better than "failing" a student. [9] She recognizes that she puts in this abundance of effort because she has others who are experts who are watching her, and will point it out if she doesn't do what she's supposed to do. But she won't have that in the fall when she's a first year teacher. [10] She notes that she will have a mentor, who may meet with her, but I's not the same. [11] It's important to Lauren that as a teacher, she not lose the convictions of not failing her students, because this passion is what drives her teaching and her love of education.
But also, I would feel like crap if I failed a student.[12] And not fail student as in like literally get an F. Like they could have an A in the class. But if I didn't harness their knowledge and understanding of the world to as full potential as I possibly could in the classroom,[13] I'd feel like crap because that's my job. I don't know. That would suck.[14] And I don't think I could do that for the rest of my life and enjoy teaching if I just like did it the easy way.[15] And you know, just continued with the same lesson plans that I had prepared like five years ago and just did it, never changed anything. Even though all my students were changing and the world was changing around me.[16] I would be so bored.[17]	[12] She would also feel terrible if she failed a student. [13] She clarifies that failing doesn't mean a failing grade. A student can have wonderful grades and still be failed by their teacher if the teacher isn't helping them reach their full potential. [14] Lauren sees this work (supporting students to their full potential) as what the work of teaching is. [15] She thinks that the easy way (not doing the work to support students to their full potential) would ultimately rob her of the joy. [16] For Lauren, part of being relevant is adapting to the changing world and her changing students.

I'd rather put more effort into something. And work a little harder than take the easy way out.[18]	[17] The easy way is boring. [18] She prefers to put effort in.

Lauren views equitable teaching as hard, but necessary work. She knew that teaching would be challenging, but she didn't realize until recently how much work it was to continually be teaching with equity. However, she doesn't shy away from this work; in fact she sees this work as necessary, pointing out that if she didn't do this work, she would be "sick to [her] stomach with guilt." For Lauren, teaching with equity is inherent to the job of teaching.

Lauren characterizes teaching with equity as supporting each student to their full potential in learning. The alternative, for Lauren, is to "fail" a student. This kind of failure doesn't refer to the student's grade, but rather to Lauren's failure to reach and support that student. While she recognizes that not teaching with equity would be easier—and can see why many teachers fall into this—she sincerely hopes that she continues, not just because of her students, but because this supporting students to their full potential is inherently linked to her own joy as a teacher.

In Excerpt 10, we begin to see in general terms how Lauren views equity in teaching. It's worth noting that it is both about ensuring that her students are fulfilled, as well as ensuring her own fulfilment in her work. In Excerpt 11 (Table 5.11), Lauren begins to explain how she would know when she's failing a student and what she would do about it.

Table 5.11

Lauren's Excerpt 11

Lauren's Story	Analysis
I feel like I'll be able to tell when I'm failing a kid because, and this is so like broad for it, but I feel like you can kinda like see it in how they start walking into your classroom and	[1] Lauren will be able to tell when she's failing a student because they no longer engage in her class.

their willingness to do work for you, in their attitude.[1] Because if you're not working with what they know and making connections just as a human, but also academically, their motivation just starts sinking and their willingness just to be in your classroom and enjoy your classroom, it's just completely decreasing and even in their posture, they don't want to be there anymore and they don't really care. They'd stopped talking to you as a whole.[2] I feel like that's a dead giveaway.[3]	[2] She attributes this loss of engagement in a student as caused by the teacher not working from what the student knows or what they're interested in as a person. This lack of connection is demotivating and causes students to not enjoy school. It is evident in their posture and interest and lack of care or interaction with the teacher. [3] For Lauren, these signs are obvious that the teacher is failing the student.
But also even when grading, I see a lot of kids, especially like eighth graders right now because they just really want to be in high school. So they're in that really crappy stage of behavioral problems. And their work they turn in is very habitual. So it's like they're not really moving anywhere and they're giving the same answers over and over again. And it's almost as if they've kind of stopped learning. They've plateaued in their knowledge in the classroom.[4]	[4] Lauren can also see when she's failed a student in the grading of their work, if what they turn in is only habitual, and doesn't show growth or new learning.
And I always found that really interesting because I never realized that that's something kids do when they just need to move on.[5] It's like, "Yes. Okay. You're like kind of grasping things in the classroom. But like quite honestly when you're turning in work, it's the same level. It's like the same." I mean even sometimes verbatim they are the same answers from like the week prior and so I think that's also a dead giveaway.[6]	[5] Lauren sees this kind of work as the student needing a new challenge. This is a new realization for her. [6] Lauren points out that this hypothetical student may be exhibiting their learning in the classroom, but not in their turned in work. This lack of growth in turned in work is a flag for Lauren.
And if that happened, I'd talk to them. Not necessarily in the, "Hi, why aren't you doing well in class?" Because I think that's just so crappy to bring up. But, "How's life going? What's going on in your life? What's interesting, What's fun? Are you doing anything? How's home? Okay, how are you liking class? How are you liking school?"[7] Kind of starting there, picking at their brain and understanding what they like and then molding lesson plans to something that just interests them.[8] Like how we're doing like the Instagram thing right now. They, the eighth	[7] She lays out the course of action she would take with a student who was showing these signs of being failed. She would intentionally not talk about her class, because that would be "crappy." Instead, she would check in with how they're doing, what they're into, how home is, and then how they're doing in school in general. [8] Lauren foregrounds getting to know her students as people, and this knowledge as a resource for adapting her lesson plans to be appealing and engaging for them.

graders, don't want to be in middle school anymore.[9] I get it. I remember doing that. I remember just wanting to be in high school. I wanted that freedom. I shouldn't have had it. I was 14. But I wanted it. And so I get it.[10] And just getting them somewhere that's interesting, that they have the life return to them, is easier.[11]	[9] She gives an example from her student teaching that involved Instgram, because eighth graders are ready to be out of middle school. [10] She reflects back on feeling the same way. [11] She sees the contexts in her lesson plans as a chance to make them interesting to students and have "the life return to them."

Lauren will know when she's failing a student because the student will be disengaged from the class. Signs of disengagement are posture, decreased willingness to do work, poor attitude. For Lauren, the signs are obvious. She attributes this disengagement to a failure on her part to use materials and context that connect with what he student knows or experiences in their lives. She also cites a plateau in work as a sign that the student is ready to move on and needs a new challenge.

Lauren's course of action for students who show signs of being failed is to talk to the student, first on a human level. She emphasizes that going to the student primarily about their coursework is "crappy" and doesn't see the student as a whole person with a context. She suggests a number of contexts she might inquire about—how they're doing, what they're interested in, how things are at home, and how things are at school in general. Across these topics, it's clear that Lauren recognizes that there could be myriad reasons for a student to disengage in coursework, but that among them might be her own lack of knowledge about this student and what is interesting and engaging for them. Her range of questions/topic also point to how Lauren sees students as whole people who exist beyond her class, and that in order to engage them in the coursework, she should adapt her course to the student, rather than approach the student in a punitive way, expecting that student to adapt to her course expectation.

Lauren understands why students disengage, especially in eighth grade when they are on the cusp of being in high school. She draws on her own experiences as an eighth grader to engender sympathy for her students. She also provides an example of how she has drawn them back into her coursework—by adapting a unit to include Instagram. She knows she is successful because she sees it in their posture and attitude: "the life returns to them."

It's worth noting at this point in Lauren's story how her own understanding of equity challenges the ways she experienced inequity as a student. Her AP Biology teacher was inflexible, requiring students to conform to her notion of what a student should be or they would get poor—or even failing—grades. Lauren reverses the onus and takes it from the student, as it was in her own AP Biology class, and puts it on the teacher (herself). When she refers to "failing," it's not the student who is failing, rather, it is the teacher (herself) who is failing the student.

In case Lauren hasn't made it obvious yet why she approaches equity in teaching as she does, she again lay things out clearly for her audience, in Excerpt 12 (Table 5.12):

Table 5.12

Lauren's Excerpt 12

Lauren's Story	Analysis
Bored is like a big thing cause I remember being bored. I remember just being like, "I don't care to be here."[1] I remember what it feels like to be failed as a student.[2] And I had A's in those classes. It wasn't like I was failing academically.[3] So my teachers weren't necessarily worried about me because I had an A.[4] But it's an attitude thing too. I mean I know I told you early I was literally on an attendance contract because I literally hated going to school because I was like, "Who cares, if I'm going to college? I got into college. What are they going to do, not accept	[1] Lauren reflects back on her school experiences and how much being bored was de-motivating. [2] She knows the feeling of being failed by teachers. [3] She clarifies again—not in the academic sense, because she was excelling academically. [4] She notes that her teachers were unconcerned, because their metric of how she was doing was her grades. [5] Lauren details how deeply apathetic she was towards school—she hated it, she was already

me? It's [state university]." You know what I mean though? I was like, "I'll just go to [another state university] if all else fails." That's was literally my mentality. Which is so pathetic. The life left my eyes. I didn't love learning.[5] Because everybody loves learning. No one, especially middle schoolers will never admit that. But when you get something and it clicks, it is such a cool feeling, regardless of who you are.[6] And you can see it—those kids who are sitting there like this, I'm like, "Ok so I'm failing you today. I'm failing you today."[7] But then the kids who can't sit still because they're talking to everybody about it, which is so cool to watch. Heck yeah. I love that.[8]	accepted to college, and even if that fell through, she'd go to the next college down the list. She was "pathetic." She no longer loved learning and there was no excitement, no "life" for her in it. [6] She believes that everyone loves learning, because it's such an exciting feeling to "get" something new. [7] She again talks about students in her class and their posture, and how she can see who she's failing in real time. [8] She contrasts this with when students are excited about learning that they can't contain themselves—they're moving around, talking to peers. This is exciting to Lauren too.

In Excerpt 12, Lauren draws from her own experiences as a student, being bored, not wanting to be in class, being failed by teachers. She again reminds her audience that by "failing" she doesn't mean a failing grade. In fact, she had very good grades during this time, and this was part of why her teachers were unconcerned by her disinterest in class. Lauren's apathy ran so deep that she "hated" school, didn't care where she went to college, and was "pathetic." She had lost her love of learning and the light in her eyes.

Lauren holds a deep conviction that while people won't admit it—especially not middle school students—they actually love learning. She talks about the excitement and rush of an "ah ha" moment. She returns to her students and their posture—describing how when she looks out at them, she can she who she's failing that day. She contrasts this with their behavior when they're engaged—moving around, excited to talk to others about it. She enjoys watching that excitement for learning.

Throughout Excerpt 12, Lauren parallels her students' experiences with her own experiences as a student. She recalls her own time in school as being bored, having an apathetic

attitude, hating school, having the light leave her eyes, doing well academically yet still being failed by her teachers. She places this alongside how she'll identify which students she—as a teacher—is failing. When they are bored, when they sit in class in a posture that communicates their disinterest, Lauren will know that she needs to act to support these students better. And she's know when she's succeeded because her students can't sit still or be quiet, they're so excited about what they're learning.

It's worth noting that inequity is inherently bound up in both Lauren's re-narrations of education. In the first re-narration, she has a first-hand experience with inequity that catalyzed the re-narration. In the second re-narration, Lauren is reminded of the positive aspects of education and has to reckon with how to include both her own positive and negative experiences, to create a cohesive story. She does this by acknowledging the inequity—not just the inequity she experienced, but also the inequity that exists in education in general—but ultimately concludes that education can be a force for good despite this.

Since Lauren's story was structured around her explicit re-narration, it offers a detailed view of the re-narration. In each instance of re-narration, Lauren provides the prior story, the catalyst for the re-narration, and the new story that is produced by the re-narration. In the second half of her story, Lauren offers a rich story detailing the results of these re-narrations, essentially how she views equity now. The call backs to the re-narration from the excerpts in this second half show how important the re-narration has been to Lauren's sense-making, that these experiences and shifts continue to serve as a guide—whether good or bad—to her choices now as a teacher.

While Lauren foregrounded her explicit re-narration by structuring half of her story around it, hers is not the only story that invoked re-narration, only the most complete. In the next

section, I will provide additional examples of explicit re-narration from the data that are less complete and are not used to structure the larger story, but are important narrative techniques for sense-making nonetheless.

Additional Examples of Explicit Re-narration

In many of the cases of re-narration in this study, the re-narration is a technique that is used in a particular point in the text, but does not structure the text itself. In this point in the text, it is often used to signal that there has been past re-narration of the individual's story, however, all the details are not necessarily present. Below, I offer a few additional examples of explicit-re-narration the occurred in other stories in this study. I have ordered the examples, with the first excerpt giving the most details and the last giving the least.

The first example of explicit re-narration comes from Ashton's story (Table 5.13 below). This excerpt comes from the middle of Ashton's story, when she moves from talking about her understanding of equity broadly to her understanding of equity and teaching. She uses this to introduce the topic of teaching within equity.

Table 5.13

Ashton's Excerpt

Ashton's Story	Analysis
My story on equity and teaching would have been very different before I started student teaching.[1] Yeah, I think it's very different now that I'm student teaching just because I've ever had this much responsibility, up until this point. All the aspects of planning, instructional piece, the class management piece. I'm in first grade, so it's still a lot of social emotional development.[2] And I'm also in an inclusive school. So I see equity really playing out a lot in terms of how the teacher can modify the lesson for someone with an IEP or as a full time aid, whatever the case is,	[1] Ashton states that her education equity story has changed since she started student teaching. [2] She attributes this change to the additional responsibilities she's taken on in student teaching. [3]In addition to the full responsibilities of the class, her student teaching is at an inclusive school, so she has more experiences with lesson modification for students with special needs.

but still reaching the high achieving learners and your ELL students and all of that.[3] It's been really interesting to see, because sometimes even when you think it's equitable and you have this great lesson and it's going to go great and they're going to love it and you know they're going to be engaged, it flops.[4] And that's happened to me personally probably three times already this semester. And it will just be because of little things.[5]	[4]Ashton points out that sometimes what she thinks will be equitable, in practice is not. [5]This disconnect between her anticipated equity and equity in practice has happened to her in her student teaching, and can be caused by small things.

Ashton states upfront that her story on equity and teaching has changed significantly from before she was student teaching. She attributes this change to the additional responsibilities she has as she takes on the full responsibility of being a classroom teacher. In particular, the experience of student teaching has shown Ashton that though in planning she may think a lesson is equitable, in implementation it may still fall apart. Ashton has had this experience a number of times and notes that it can even be a small thing that causes the lesson to flop.

Ashton's excerpt is a clear instance of an individual stating that the story has changed, but without structuring the whole story around these changes. In this case, she tells her audience that her story has changed, what caused it to change (increased time in student teaching), and what her story is now (equity in theory does not necessarily hold up under practice). She does not tell us explicitly what her story was before. We might infer from context clues that her story formerly was that equity in theory was sufficient. Regardless, we do not need to see the whole picture of the explicit re-narration to know that it is there. Ashton has told us it happened, explained why, and what her current version of the story is. This is still a re-narration.

In a second example of explicit re-narration, Jessica offers both the former story and the new story, but not the catalyst (Table 5.14)

Table 5.14

Jessica's Excerpt

Jessica's Story	Analysis
I remember we took the [State Standardized Test] in fifth grade and I got like 100% on the math portion and then my peers were like, "We didn't even learn some of that stuff."[1] And I was like, "We obviously did because I passed."[2] But then I realized it's probably because they were teaching in a way that I learned the best and that my peers didn't learn very well. The teachers taught in a way I could learn, but not in a way my peers could learn.[3]	[1]Jessica recalls an experience from elementary school where her classmates felt they were being tested on content they hadn't learned. [2] At the time, Jessica thought that it must've been taught, since she scored well. [3] Jessica's understanding of this event changed to consider that it's likely that the content was taught, but taught such that she was able to learn, but her peers weren't.

Jessica recounts her experience in upper elementary school where she and her classmates took a standardized test. She scored well and they did not. They didn't recall being taught some of the content, and she cited her score as evidence that the content must've been taught. Jessica marks for her audience that she does not still interpret these events this way by noting that she "realized" that it was more likely that the content had been taught, but such that she was able to learn and others weren't. In these few sentences, Jessica shares her previous story (she passed because the content was taught), and her new story (she passed because the content was taught such that she could learn). However, Jessica doesn't present when, how, or why she realized that the story needed to be edited. She does not share the catalyst for the re-narration. However, this is clearly a re-narration nonetheless.

Ellie gives another explicit re-narration. Similar to Ashton, Ellie's Excerpt (Table 5.15) discusses the change in her story since spending more time in the classroom.

Table 5.15

Ellie's Excerpt

Ellie's Story	Analysis

So now being in the classroom--and I was even, even last semester being in there Monday and Thursday all day start to finish, I was able to pick up on what students needed more help and which ones I needed to go and check in on more.[1] And just being with the students throughout the week, throughout the day, throughout a single lesson, I can tell what they need in order to succeed.[2] Now I'm not saying that like I differentiate my entire math lesson, but I definitely know which students I need to check in on throughout it.[3]	[1] Ellie marks that now is different from before, and that in the now, she has significant time in the classroom to notice students' needs. [2] She emphasizes that being with students over the course of a day or week, she can see what they need to succeed. [3] She clarifies that this doesn't mean every student gets a completely individualized lesson, but she knows who to attend to.

In the above, Ellie is implicitly comparing what happened before and what is happening now. She indicates that in her most recent semesters, the larger portion of time spent with students gives her better insights into who needs support in the classroom. Her use of "now" provides an implicit contrast to what was before. In this way, Ellie is contrasting for her readers how her understanding of operationalization of equity has shifted—and her narrative about equity and education has shifted as well—as a result of spending more time in the classroom.

While Ellie doesn't explicitly provide what her former story of equity was, she does detail the catalyst for the re-narration, which is sustained time in the field placement classroom. Whether it is being in in the classroom all day ("last semester") or all day every day throughout the week (this semester, "throughout the week, throughout the day"), she attributes her change in her understanding to the these continuous spans of time to her new ability to identify which students need support, and what kinds of support.

The last example I share of explicit re-narration is from Fiona's story (Table 5.16). This one has the least details and is more of a hint at re-narration.

Table 5.16

Fiona's Excerpt

Fiona's Story	Analysis

I never really knew what equity actually was prior to—like the word for it—prior to Santos' class.[1] But then it's just been reoccurring through all the classes and it's like the common narrative among my [teacher preparation] classes. That's where I've gotten the initial name for it.[2] But after hearing that word, I reflected back on different experiences I've had. Like personally too. Like in classes or the people I'm around or like going to the different elementary schools.[3]	[1] Fiona points to a specific class as the first time she learned about equity. [2] The concept of equity was a theme across her teacher preparation coursework. [3] Learning about equity in her coursework caused her to consider where it might apply to multiple domains of her life—including education, but also personal experiences, classes, and people in her life.

Fiona points out that she hadn't known about equity, or had the language to discuss it or think about it, until her class with Santos and her other teacher preparation coursework. But after being introduced to the concept of equity, she began to consider it both in the context of education (where it was presented to her), as well as in other areas of her life, like her friends, her personal experiences, and her courses.

I characterize Fiona's excerpt at a hint at explicit re-narration because Fiona doesn't give her audience the details, but she does indicate that they are there. For example, Fiona doesn't state what her prior story was, only that it didn't include equity because she didn't yet understand this notion. She shares the catalyst for re-narration as the learning of equity. And she hints at re-narration in multiple spheres of her life, though she does not share a specific story of what she now understands equity to be. By only including the catalyst for re-narration, Fiona lets her audience know that the idea was taken up and brought to bear on her story, but doesn't explicate how or what the results were.

Explicit re-narration, as I have shown across these examples from the data, can take a number of forms and present whole or partial accounts of the re-narration. A whole account is not necessary for re-narration to occur.

In Lauren's narrative above, she uses explicit re-narration to shape and structure her story. In so doing, she foregrounds the way that her understanding of education and equity has shifted, grown, and ultimately become more nuanced over the course of her life. By structuring her story this way, her audience is able to see major shifts in her understanding, why she was prompted to make these shifts, and what understanding resulted. Explicit re-narration, as a narrative technique used by Lauren, provides a very detailed picture of her learning journey around equity and education. However, explicit re-narration can appear in a personal story in less detailed ways. As shown above, Ashton, Jessica, Ellie, and Fiona all used explicit re-narration at different moments in their stories.

Explicit re-narration in Lauren's story sometimes took the form of a reversal (as was the case in Excerpts 4 and 5), but it also took the form of bringing cohesion across experiences (as was the case in Excerpts 7 and 8). In Ashton's Excerpt, it took the form of integrating theory and practice; in Jessica's Excerpt, it took the form of reflection upon past experience to re-narrate those experiences. In all cases, the story needed to be changed, whether reversed, complicated, deepened, or given nuance.

Discussion: Explicit Re-narration as a Sense-making Technique

Since we humans use stories to make sense of our lives (Carter, 1993; Clandinin & Connolly, 2000; Marshall & Rossman, 2016), the ways we create and recreate those stories make the sense-making process more visible. The re-narration of stories happens all the time, but is usually invisible to outside observers as it is largely an internal process. However, sometimes these re-narrations are made explicit in the story an individual tells an audience. These instances of explicit re-narration provide insights to former stories and how or why the re-narration came about.

The explicit re-narrations of equity stories are important as they make the sense-making around equity visible to outside observers. As outlined in Chapter 2, other studies of teachers and equity investigate the product of equity focused interventions and instruction for teachers (e.g. Bieda, 2016; Civil 2016; Davilla, 2011; Felton-Koestler, 2016; Louie, 2017; Rubel, 2016; Simic-Muller, Fernandes, & Felton-Koestler, 2015), few investigate the process. Explicit re-narration offers a window into this process. Explicit re-narration provides researchers and teacher educators with a long-term view of the process of sense-making. For example, in Bieda's (2016) case, some prospective teachers struggled to make sense of inequity in distribution of community resources. It was suggested that perhaps this is because not all the students in the study had experience with needing community resources. A long-term view of the sense-making around distribution of community resources would show which students were able to make sense of this context and what experiences in their lives provided that support. It's true that some students may not have grown up in communities that had resources like community centers, but there may be other experiences with publicly available services that can be drawn on, like public libraries. It may be the case that some of the participants in Bieda's activity that had success used an analogous public service like a library in lieu of experience of a community center.

As outlined above, much of Lauren's current conception of equity in teaching is rooted in her own experiences as a student. The internal work she has done to revise her stories around the A.P Biology teacher and her influence on Lauren is a key element of the process of Lauren's sense-making of equity. While it's true that coursework (both in the teacher preparation program and in her general education work) supported this sense-making, without an understanding of the A.P. Biology teacher and the resultant re-narrations, the richness of Lauren's sense-making all flat. We cannot understand the process by which Lauren arrived at her view of equity in

teaching, as described in Excerpts 10, 11, and 12, without Excerpts 1 – 9. Without the history of re-narration, Lauren's current notion is flattened and loses all the depth, richness, and conviction.

It is worth noting that in all cases (both the detailed accounting established by Lauren, or the partial accounts given by Ashton, Ellie, Fiona, and Jessica) explicit re-narration demonstrates that the individual is aware of the ways they have learned and changed. The formulation of explicit re-narration is centered around a change in the story and understanding, and the explicit telling about this change in the story gives this re-narration a prominence in the individual's understanding of how they arrived at their current understanding. For example, in her excerpt, Ellie attributes her ability to identify when students need support for equity as a function of her immersion in the classroom. The ability of the individual to explicitly name the re-narration demonstrates a degree of self-awareness in learning that is important to deeper understanding and continual learning. These are not subtle changes that happened over years that the individual is unaware of; instead, they are intentional revisions of how they understand the world. As such, this narrative technique is important for researchers in that it signals moments and events that instigated active change in view and understanding.

Explicit re-narration, as a technique, does not only give outside observers insights into the past, it also helps us to better understand the individual's projections into the future. Consider, for example, how Lauren decided to become an Elementary Education major after the course referenced in Excerpts 6 and 7. The re-narration did not just change how she saw her past with education, but also how she saw her future. Additionally, we see how her current notions of equity in Excerpts 10, 11, and 12 project into the future, as Lauren considers what it will be like next year, and is concerned with losing her passion and adaptability. Lauren's experiences with inequity have so strongly affected her that she is determined to be a better teacher than the one

that made her hate school. This re-narration draws to mind Dewey's (1938) notion of continuity. Lauren's re-narration around education and equity allowed her to open up new possibilities for herself to continue to learn and grow in her understanding of education.

As with Lauren, explicit re-narration is a narrative technique that can make prospective teachers' notions of their future selves visible to researchers. It's true that other studies looked at prospective teachers' projections into the future (e.g. Ajayi, 2017; Moore, 2008). However, these studies did not trace the continuum of experience that led to this projection. It may have been the case that those prospective teachers who felt capable of teaching for social justice were drawing on experiences beyond the scope of the teacher preparation program and that made a distinction in their comfort in this identity as a future teacher for social justice.

This narrative technique makes visible how the process of learning (as desirable re-narration) occurs. In stories where the narrator gives us the prior story, the catalyst, and the new story, outside observers are able to chart how the understanding shifts, as well as why. This detailed focus on sense-making of equity has, until now, been missing from the teacher education literature. For both researchers and teacher educators alike, this is a powerful tool to elicit and observe teachers' learning, to understand how they are making sense of equity, and to better support both the individual in question as well as teachers in general.

Chapter 6: Visual Metaphors

Introduction

This chapter presents the first portion of the findings and discussion of research question two: *What narrative techniques are used in equity narratives and what do their use tell us about sense-making?* As discussed in Chapter 2, the telling of a narrative is a sense-making activity. This sense-making is made visible by the narrative techniques employed by the individuals. The techniques that participants employ show how they're thinking about equity and what caused them to think this way. In this chapter, I will present the technique of visual metaphors as employed by the participants in this study in their equity narratives. Following this, I will discuss what visual metaphors tell us about the equity sense-making.

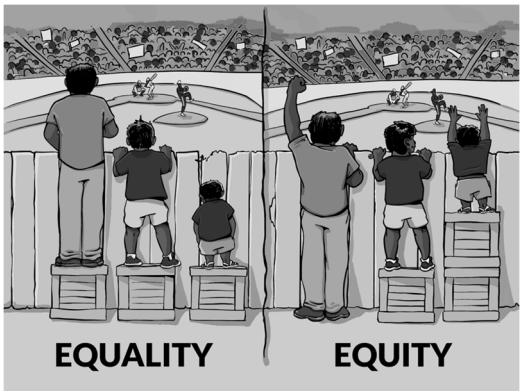
Visual Metaphors

In a number of stories, the study participants referenced images in telling their equity stories. These images were in print or electronic and were supplied to the participants (i.e. not created by the participants), in some cases in coursework or on social media. These visual metaphors are akin to political cartoons in that they use symbolism to convey a meaning or to make a point. I term these images "visual metaphors" because in each case, the image relied heavily on metaphor and symbolism to convey a meaning about equity.

By far, the most referenced image was one involving a baseball game. This image has been remixed a number of times on social media (Froehle, 2016), but the iteration shown in Figure 6.1 (Maguire, 2016) matches the description shared by the participants.

Figure 6.1

The Baseball Image



The image contrasts equality with equity. In both frames, the three people are different heights. In the equality frame, each of the three stand on one box, resulting in the tallest and the middle height person seeing over the fence. The shortest person is not able to see over. In equity, the same three boxes are distributed so that each person can see over the fence. The tallest person has no boxes. The middle height person has one box. The shortest person has two boxes. According to the creator of the first iteration of the image (Froehle, 2016), the message of the image was that equal opportunity wouldn't ensure equal outcomes when individuals had different starting positions. He also notes that equal outcomes does not require more resources (boxes) but rather, a different distribution of those resources.

A number of study participants detailed in their stories that they were introduced to the image in their teacher preparation coursework. For some participants, this Baseball Image served as a starting point for discussing equity. It was evidently memorable and offered a sort of origin from which to orient their thinking and storytelling about equity.

While most participants employed visual metaphors in their equity stories, Ellie's use of the Baseball Image was most pronounced among the group. In what follows, I will demonstrate how Ellie oriented her story around this image, then discuss what this technique afforded her, as well as how it limited her.

It is worth noting that in addition to the Baseball Image, there were two more visual metaphors used in the equity stories told in this study. These will be presented and discussed in the later section for additional visual metaphors.

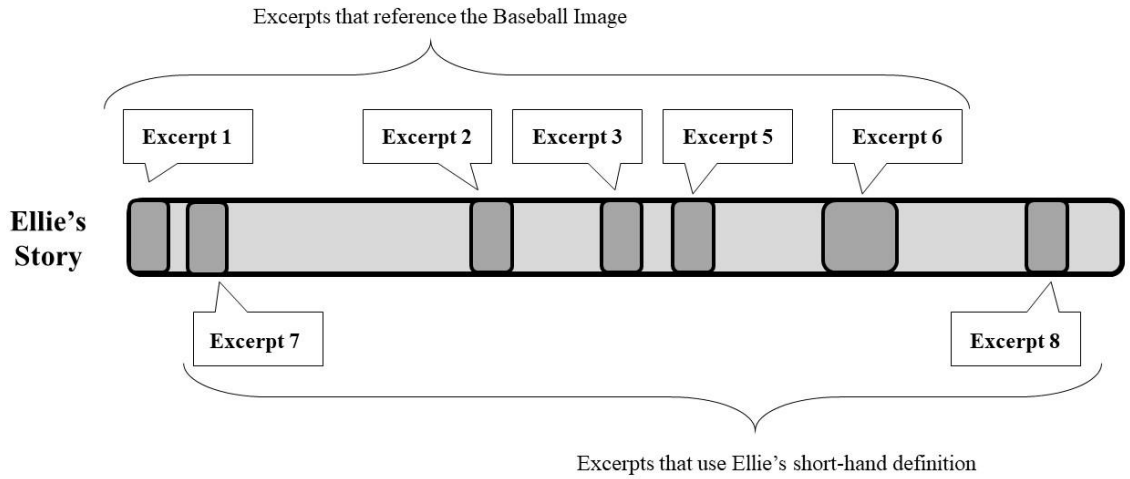
Ellie's Visual Metaphor

While other study participants also referenced visual metaphors, Ellie referred back to the image throughout her story, and used it as a starting point when she was starting new threads in her story. In essence, Ellie used the visual metaphor as a frame from which to understand and apply equity.

It's worth taking a moment to discuss how pervasive the Baseball Image was in Ellie's story. This visual metaphor was a technique that she employed again and again in her text, whether with explicit references to it, or by applying its shorthand definition of equity to situations in her life. To help my readers visualize this pervasiveness, I've created Figure 2, which charts where in Ellie's narrative the explicit references to the Baseball Image were in her text, as well as the two excerpts where she applies her shorthand definition to a situation.

Figure 6.2

Location of Excerpts in Ellie's Story



Similarly to Chapter 5, I will offer these excerpts from Ellie's story to illustrate how she uses this visual metaphor to frame her story about equity.[12] The first set of excerpts will explore how Ellie revisits the Baseball Image to help her convey her understanding of equity. The second set of excerpts will lay out how Ellie applies the understanding of equity—as derived from the Baseball Image—to situations in her life.

Ellie's Notion of Equity as Derived from the Visual Metaphor

Ellie started her story with the Baseball Image in Excerpt 1 (Table 6.1), which began with the very first sentence of her story:

Table 6.1

Ellie's Excerpt 1

Ellie's Story	Analysis
Recently when I hear equity, there was this one class here at [University], and I just remember this visual of equality and equity.[1] And on the equality side, everybody got the same—equal. So they all got the same box to stand on to view over a fence.[2] And they were all still the same height as they would've been.[3] But equity, each individual student or person needs to fill their needs.[4] So in this scenario, the tallest person didn't get anything. The middle height got a medium sized box and then the shortest person got a taller box and they were now all at the same height. So it's what you get in order to achieve at the same level.[5] It might be like your differentiation in classrooms.[6] Um, but how I, that's just how it's such a broad question. That is when I see, hear equity.[7] I always thought equity and equality were the same until I had this one class. It was for education.[8] But that picture is just like burned	[1] Ellie begins her narrative with the recent experience of an image of equity and equality introduced to her in a course. [2] She describes the image—with equality depicted as everyone getting the same (one box). [3] The result of the equality was that the differential heights were preserved as they would have been without the boxes. [4] Equity, on the other hand, is giving each person what they need. [5] Equity, in the image, is the tall person not getting a box, the medium height person getting a medium amount of box support, and the shortest person getting the most box support. The result is that they are all the same height—a metaphor for achieving at the same level. [6] She suggests that equity might take the shape of differentiation. [7] She reflects on the prompt and how broad it is, then confirms that this image is what she sees when she hears "equity."

[12] And much like in Chapter 5, my prodigious readers can find Ellie's full story in Appendix B.

in my mind now of how, that's how I remember equity.[9]	[8] This thinking was new—formerly she thought that equity and equality were the same. [9] This image is "burned" into her mind.

To begin her story about equity, Ellie began with the Baseball Image. She encountered this image in a recent course and it is "burned" into her mind and how she recalls equity. Ellie describes the distinction between equality and equity in the image—equality gives everyone the same thing but preserves differences; equity provides according to need and producing equal results. And in her description of the image, she provides her short-hand understanding of equity—each person getting what they need to achieve the same result. She offers that differentiation is an example of equity in the classroom.

It's noteworthy that Ellie literally began her equity narrative—from the very first sentence—with this image. She told us that it's burned into her mind, but she also showed us—with her story and the principle place this image takes—that this image is an important starting point her for in thinking and talking about equity.

Additionally, Ellie recalled the image with detailed clarity. Where other participants forgot small but significant details (for example, that the tallest person doesn't get a box in the second frame), Ellie's description attended to those small details. Furthermore, Ellie's interpretation of the message in the visual metaphor is similar to the original creator's intended meaning. This message—each person getting what they need to achieve the same result—will become a short-hand throughout Ellie's narrative as she discusses equity.

The beginning of her equity narrative is not the only time Ellie began with the Baseball Image. Throughout her equity narrative, she continually referred back to the Baseball Image, and/or her short-hand definition that she derived from it. For Ellie, this image is how she re-oriented herself to the concept of equity. This often occurred in her story when she had paused,

recently wrapping up a thread, and was considering what else to take up in her story. She referred to the image explicitly in four separate points in the text. That she begins again by returning to the Baseball Image to think about equity demonstrates what a pivotal role this image plays in her understanding of equity.

To illustrate this point, I offer Excerpt 2 (Table 6.2) and Excerpt 3 (Table 6.3). Both Excerpts fall immediately after a section break in the text and begin a new theme. Parallel to Excerpt 1, Ellie began her thoughts about equity by considering the Baseball Image. Of the five larger sections that Ellie's story is subdivided into, three begin with the Baseball Image (Excerpts 1, 2, and 3).

Table 6.2

Ellie's Excerpt 2

Ellie's Story	Analysis
I'm just trying to think of like more things.[1] Like back to like the beginning with like the baseball analogy.[2] Most of my students down in [School District], they're a lot of my class, well my whole class is below for math. There's maybe one that's on level,[3] but my teacher, my mentor still differentiates it for, she tries to, for each student and she'll put them in groups.[4] So that's providing each individual student with what they need to get to the success of how to pass.[5] It might not be the same for each student, but it doesn't have to be in order for them to make it to the same point.[6] They just need to see.[7]	[1] At this point in her story, Ellis is struggling to come up with more to say about equity. [2] To help herself, she orients herself again with the Baseball Image. [3] Her student teaching placement class is mostly below level in mathematics. [4] To address this, Ellie's mentor teacher differentiates for mathematics and groups the students. [5] Ellie applies her short-hand definition of equity—giving each student what they need to succeed (pass). [6] She points out that the support is not the same, and doesn't need to be to get them all to the same goal. [7] This is a call back reference to the image and the goal of seeing over the fence.

In Excerpt 2, Ellie began her thinking about equity with the Baseball Image. She then explained a situation in her field placement class that aligned with the metaphor in the image. The students

in her class were almost all below grade level in mathematics. To address this, her mentor teacher differentiated instruction, using groups, so that each student got what they need to pass. The support is not the same across students, but the goal is.

The way that Ellie returns to the Baseball Image at the beginning of a thread in her story points to the fact that when asked to discuss equity, Ellie first recalls the Baseball Image, then what is important about that image (different supports to succeed at the same goal), to help her consider where she might be seeing equity in her life. Ellie again offers differentiation as an example of equity in the classroom, this time adding that grouping is involved.

Excerpt 3 (Table 6.3) is another instance of beginning a thread of the story with the Baseball Image.

Table 6.3

Ellie's Excerpt 3

Ellie's Story	Analysis
Equity and teaching. So I guess with this, it builds off of that.[1] Um, I'm still gonna go back to that baseball analogy.[2] Of, um, how each person gets what they need in order to succeed.[3] So like the tall guy had nothing, he didn't need anything to see over that. Um, fence when the medium size person needed just a little bit of something to see over in the shorter one, needed a much higher stand. And at this point they're all looking over and are the same height.[4] So, and with teaching it's, I think being able to differentiate and modify.[5] I know those words are hard to like interchange, I get scolded when I do it, but making sure that each student has what they have to succeed.[6]	[1] Ellie is beginning another section and is a little unsure of how to start ("I guess"). [2] To help herself get started, Ellie recalls the Baseball Image. [3] Ellie restates the short-hand message of the Baseball Image: giving each person what they need to succeed (at the same level). [4] Ellie provides the description of the image. Salient points are still that they have different supports but have the same outcome. [5] She sees this in teaching in differentiation and modification. [6] Semantics aside, Ellie see differentiation and modification as the main vehicles for providing different supports for students so that they can succeed.

In Excerpt 3, Ellie is considered equity and teaching (by the prompt for the second interview). As before, Ellie began by starting with the Baseball Image. She recalled her short-

hand for the image ("each person gets what they need in order to succeed") and then gave another explanation of the image. She again used differentiation as an example of equity in education, this time added in modification (though for her, the terms seem to be interchangeable). The excerpt concluded with a return to the short-hand description of equity.

It's worth noting that at this point in the story, she faltered a bit, with more filler words and less conviction in her statements. This is the third time that she has offered this visual metaphor as her understanding of equity, the third time that she has summarized it in short-hand sentence, and the third time she's offered differentiation as the way equity is manifested in the classroom. The repetition begs the question of whether Ellie has other ways of considering equity in general, or additional examples of equity in teaching beyond differentiation.

At this point, it's worth offering an excerpt where Ellie detailed what is meant by differentiation in her student teaching. Excerpt 4 (Table 6.4) provides a description of differentiation in practice.

Table 6.4

Ellie's Excerpt 4

Ellie's Story	Analysis
We have some kids that are like kinder and we're in second grade.[1] So kinder level reading and math and to bring them up to where just we might not even be able to get them to a second grade level but just so they can exit out of kinder and maybe into some sort of first grade, maybe low second.[2] We have a bunch of differentiated packets whether it has to do with word work, comprehension, math.[3] With reading their comprehension, each kid is at a level where they can best read.[4] We have our high kids that are reading at third grade. We have some kids that are just second, some grades lower second and some that are, I think we've pulled	[1] Ellie's placement is in 2nd grade but some students are at a kindergarten level. [2] These students are at kindergarten reading and math and it may not be possible to support them to a level consistent with exiting second grade, but progress is still possible. [3] Students are given different packets depending on where they are. [4] In reading, each student is at a level where they can have success. [5] In reading, the achievement of the students range from kindergarten to 3rd grade.

like kinder readings from them.[5] And for math we have, I work with the low kids and my teacher works with the high kids for math review. So next week we're going to switch and I'll do high and she'll do low.[6] But it's just their review. We still have it We put like the same week on it. I'm like, it's still "Week 22."[7] But for the low kids it's, they are the star group and the high kids are the heart group. Just so they don't know like, "Oh, like I'm low" and "Oh, I'm high."[8]	[6] In math, grades aren't specified, but low and high. Ellie will experience both groups. [7] While the packets have different content, they are both labeled by week. [8] The ability groups aren't labeled in a way that can be ranked, so that the students don't know from the group name that they are ranked by ability.

Ellie detailed how each student is given a packet that corresponds with their achievement level. This is so that each student can move forward, even if they are far below grade level expectations. Ellie stated that for some students, exiting second grade at grade on level would not be possible; however, all students were able to move forward.

It is worth noting that Ellie's description of differentiation is primarily based on achievement level. She spent time in her story discussing the differential achievement levels of her students, and the ways they were given packets and group names in an attempt to hide the grouping scheme from their notice. She did not mention differentiating for multiple modalities or differentiating for student interest, or for student's cultural resources. It may be that this is present in the differentiation—however, even if it is, it is not what came to mind for Ellie when thinking about students' differential needs for success.

In addition, Ellie's description of differentiation does not align with her description of equity. What she described as differentiation is giving every student support so that they can move forward, but not necessarily so that they all can succeed at the same level or giving more support to those who are furthest behind. In fact, the difference in outcomes will likely be preserved with differentiation as described in Excerpt 4. I am not arguing here that equity would mean the neglect of high achieving students—I am arguing that a direct application of the

message of equity in the Baseball Image would mean differential resource distribution to students depending on how far behind they are. However, this is not what Ellie described.

In Excerpt 5, Ellie returned to the Baseball Image, and begins to question whether her short-hand for its message fits what she sees as equity in the classroom.

Table 6.5

Ellie's Excerpt 5

Ellie's Story	Analysis
And I think I more so came to view that like being in the classroom all day every day.[1] And for teaching, I just understand equity of making sure each student has what they need to succeed.[2] Now I guess I'll change it a little from like the baseball story cause like not all of my students will exit second grade at an end of second grade level.[3] So I wouldn't say it's to succeed at the same level.[4] It's to succeed at the level of which they can accomplish.[5] If that makes sense. It's to make sure that the student grows, just to make sure that each and every student grows, whether it's leaps and bounds or just little steps here and there just to see the improvement that has happened from step one to step two.[6]	[1] Ellie's current view of equity is a product of time in her student teaching classroom. [2] Regarding teaching, Ellie views equity as supply each student with what they need to succeed. [3] Ellie edits her usual short-hand description of equity, recognizing that not all her students will likely succeed at exiting second grade on grade level. [4] Ellie decides that in this case, there won't be success as the same level. [5] Ellie alters the goal to be whatever level each child can accomplish. [6] To clarify, Ellie states that the goal is for each child to grow, though the growth may be differential across students.

Ellie's understanding of equity was a product of her time in her student teaching classroom. Ellie again referenced her short-hand description for equity ("making sure each student has what they need to succeed"). However this time, after she explicated what differentiation—her primary example of equity—looked like in her student teaching classroom, she decided that the shorthand must be changes. Not all students will succeed (exit second grade on level); so the goal is changed to be success that is attainable. Ellie shifted her notion of success to be growth, so that she could cover large gains ("leaps and bounds") or small gains ("just little steps here and there").

For the first time in the text, Ellie broke from her usual formulation of what equity is. In unpacking how equity is operationalized through differentiation in her student teaching classroom, she realized that the end goal for the students is not the same in practice. To accommodate the reality of her classroom, Ellie altered the goal so that it's no success at the same level, but rather growth and moving forward, recognizing that students will make different gains and end in different places.

In Excerpt 6 (Table 6.6), Ellie returns again to the Baseball Image. She reaffirms the importance of this image in her understanding of equity and her ability to identify it in the classroom.

Table 6.6

Ellie's Excerpt 6

Ellie's Story	Analysis
I think with just the coursework and all goes back to that [teacher preparation course] day with the baseball.[1] And she drilled that in our head. I mean I did not like that professor. I had her twice, did not like her at all, but she drilled that into my head and everybody's head.[2] And at first I really didn't understand. She was always like, "Okay, was this equitable or equality?" And everyone would look at each other like, "Aren't they the same?"[3] And then it was really like she had just kept going through it and then she'd ask us, "Okay, what are you seeing in your practicum hours?" Cause at that time we weren't in our student teaching or even in our cohort yet.[4] And it was really hard for me to pick out what they were doing. And I think that was because I was in there Monday, Wednesday or Wednesday, Friday from like 11 to three.[5] So that's hard to like really understand each and every student.[6]	[1] For Ellie, it all goes back to the Baseball Image. [2] Ellie did not care for he professor for this course, but she did drill the Baseball Image into Ellie's head. [3] Ellie (and others) did not understand the difference between equity and equality at first—thought they were the same. [4] The professor asked Ellie and the other prospective teachers to consider what they were seeing in their field placements. (Though this was not full student teaching yet.) [5] Because Ellie was only in the field placement a few hours per day, a few days per week, it was hard for her to identify equity vs. equality. [6] Ellie couldn't identify equity because she didn't know the students well enough to identify their needs.

For Ellie, it all went back to the Baseball Image. She recalled how the professor would ask them whether a particular action was equality or equity, and she and her peers weren't sure. She struggled at that time, to identify equity in her field placements because she was only seeing the students for a few hours for a few days each week. She hadn't gotten a chance to know the students to understand their individual needs.

This is the fifth explicit mention of the Baseball Image in Ellie's equity story. She consistently came back again and again to the Baseball Image to help herself re-orient to what equity was. Though she didn't understand the meaning of the image at first, it was so drilled into her head that it has now become her platonic definition of what equity is.

Ellie's Application of her Notion of Equity to Situations

In addition to using the Baseball Image as an origin from which to begin new thoughts in her narrative, she also makes use of it by referencing her short-hand description of equity that was derived from it. There are six instances of this short-hand description of equity in her story. In this section, I will share two excerpts that demonstrate how Ellie applies her notion of equity (as derived from the Baseball Image) to different situations in her life.

In Excerpt 7 (Table 6.7), Ellie used this shorthand to process her experiences with her roommates and their unkind behavior. She leveraged this to help her consider how equity might look in a friendship setting:

Table 6.7

Ellie's Excerpt 7

Ellie's Story	Analysis
But with friends and personally I was just talking about this with my mom, how my roommates stay up super late and of course, this semester and the past few, I have to get up way early.[1] So it's like the equity of when	[1] Ellie sees equity as an issue in her relationship with her roommates. They stay up late, and she (being a prospective teacher) has to be up early.

they're up late and I'm in bed, I want them—or I would hope they—would be quiet. They're not so much.[2] But when I'm up in the morning and they're sleeping and they still have like five hours of sleep and I'm up at the crack of dawn, I try to be as quiet and respectful as I can.[3] So that's how I see equity in my living at home. But they're not as equitable as I'd say.[4] Like I feel like if I'm quiet then they should be and since they're loud I'm like, "Well maybe I'll be loud in the morning."[5] My mom was like, "Don't do that. You gotta be nice."[6] So for equity, I would say in that situation it's getting what each person needs to succeed at the same level.[7]	[2] Ellie hopes that when she's in bed early, they would be equitable and be quiet. But they are not. [3] However, when Ellie is up early and they are still sleeping, she's quiet. [4] This is an example of inequity that Ellie experiences in her living situation. [5] Ellie feels that if she's quiet when they're sleeping, they should be too. But since they're loud when she's sleeping, she is tempted to be loud when they are sleeping. [6] Ellie's mom squashes that reciprocity. [7] Ellie returns to her platonic notion of equity—both she and her roommates should get what they need to succeed.

In this excerpt, Ellie saw an equity issue in her living arrangements. Her roommates were up late and she had to go to bed early. When she was in bed early, her roommates were not as quiet as she needed them to be. However, Ellie was quiet in the early morning when she was up and her roommates were still sleeping. She felt that if she was quiet in the early mornings, they should've bene quiet in the late evenings. She was tempted to not be quiet in the mornings to reciprocate their choices back to them, but her mom discouraged this. She summarized by stating that in this situation, equity would be each person getting what they need to succeed—quiet for her in the evenings, and quiet for them in the mornings.

Ellie applied her shorthand notion of equity to this situation. She saw a differential need among the roommates—she needed quiet in the evening; they needed quiet in the morning. It's not the same need, but it's what is needed in order to succeed.

It's worth noting that Ellie lifted what she saw as the main point of the baseball image into a short-hand and is able to then apply this short-hand to a situation completely unrelated to the image, baseball, or education. She developed a transferrable working definition of equity—as

evidenced by the frequency with how much she used it (more than 10 times across 13 pages of text).

In this instance, the application of her notion of equity to the situation makes sense. The only aspect of this excerpt and the application of equity that isn't quite smooth is how Ellie retains the common goal of "success." She doesn't alter the common goal to "sufficient rest," for example, which is more specific and fits the situation better. Regardless of their success or hers, a mutually respectful roommate situation would allow for necessary rest.

The retention of the goal of success shows that Ellie had imposed something specific upon the definition of equity—it's only equitable if the outcomes can be called success. This aligns with how she adapted her shorthand for Excerpt 5. She needed to be able to call it a success but knew that it wasn't a success if a number of students were still not meeting grade level expectations. So she changed it to success that is attainable.

This vestigial notion of success as inherently bound up in equity also made an appearance in the second example of Ellie applying her notion of equity to one of her life situations. In the Excerpt 8 (Table 6.8), Ellie discussed how she saw inequity in how her father treated her sister and herself differently.

Table 6.8

Ellie's Excerpt 8

Ellie's Story	Analysis
And I suffer from anxiety, depression. My mom does, my sister does. And my dad kind of.[1] But when my sister told my dad about her stuff, he was like right on it. Very, like, "Let's get you into see somebody." And he wanted her to talk to the person he talks to.[2] And	[1] There is an established family history of (and familiarity with) anxiety and depression. [2] When Ellie's sister told their father about her mental health needs, he was responsive, ready to help her access care, the same care he sought.

when I approached him I said, "No, I want to talk to somebody here. Like I don't want to talk on the phone." And he like blew up on me and was like, "There's no reason to have anxiety. You have a great life."[3] But like with my sister-- or like, I just don't think he saw it. And my mom could relate.[4] But with my sister, he was like on it and knew, wanted to help in every which way.[5] But with me, he's like never ask his family. So I've seen that difference, I don't know is-- to me, I think that's equity because we're both trying to, my sister and I are both trying to get to the end goal of graduating.[6] I mean I'm two years ahead of her, so obviously I'm there closer, but I see it as, she's still getting more than I did as a sophomore.[7] Is equity and like my personal life, I guess. I mean hers is more severe, I do think hers is more severe, but the way my dad still handled it, it could have been with more love and tenderness towards me.[8]	[3] Ellie's father's response to Ellie's need for mental healthcare was to get angry with her and argue with her and invalidate her experiences. [4] Her father didn't see it. But her mother was supportive and understood. [5] With her sister, her father was responsive, attentive, wanted to support however he could. [6] Ellie notes that there is a difference in treatment between herself and her sister, despite the fact that they have the same end goal—graduating. [7] Ellie sees their gap in progress towards their degree as a potentially different starting place, but then rejects that idea because her sophomore self got less support than her sophomore sister. [8] Ellie notes that this is an instance of (in)equity in her personal life. She hedges by saying that her sister's mental health challenges are more severe, but that her dad could still have been kinder in his response to Ellie.

In Excerpt 8, Ellie shared about how both she and her younger sister have had mental health challenges in the past. This is not uncommon or unfamiliar in their family. However, when Ellie's sister sought help, their father was sensitive, responsive, and wanted to support her in any way that he could. When Ellie communicated having mental health challenges, her father blew up at her and argued with her, invalidating her experiences and telling that she had no reason to be anxious. Ellie identified this as an instance of inequity in her life (though she referred to it as equity), noting that while their mental health challenges weren't the same, both she and her sister had the same goal of graduating college.

In her telling of this situation, Ellie focused on her sister and herself having the same goal of graduating. In order to make her shorthand notion of equity fit the situation, an essential

element is successfully achieving a goal. The work she did to explain this—comparing her sophomore year self to her sophomore year sister is unnecessary. On its face, the way her father treated her mental health needs was inequitable and unkind. Ellie shouldn't have to make a utilitarian argument about her sister and herself having the same academic goals, or being in the same academic space in order to have the support of her parent.

In this way, Ellie's shorthand notion of equity holds her back from being able to articulate the ways in which she's been unfairly and unkindly treated. She is so adamant about satisfying the platonic definition that she misses that a simpler explanation satisfies the definition of inequity. If she needs a goal that both she and her sister should be supported to achieve, can it be mental health? But because her shorthand notion of equity is rooted in performance, goals, and success, she is compelled to frame it in measurable outcomes.

This need to define equity in terms of success is akin to the way that Ellie framed her conflict with her roommates. In that case, the context of being college roommates and being successful in college is a pervasive theme given their shared experience and that college brought them together. And Ellie's examples of equity in teaching all involved successful academic achievement. Her adherence to the shorthand definition of equity derived from the visual metaphor has made Ellie unable to humanize equity beyond performance, goals, and success. In some instances (with her roommates and with her mentor teacher) this notion of equity is limited but useful. In the situation with her father, it reduces something as urgently important as mental health to an objective of college completion.

While Ellie certainly made use of other narrative techniques to make sense of equity in her story, She relied heavily on the visual metaphor of the Baseball Image, as well as the

shorthand definition for equity that she derived from it. In the next section, I will offer additional visual metaphors used in the equity narratives in this study.

Additional Visual Metaphors

In addition to Ellie, a number of other participants used visual metaphors, though none as thoroughly throughout their story as Ellie did. Lauren, Jessica, Fiona, Ashton, Ashley, and Monica all referenced visual metaphors to help them convey their understanding of equity. (Rachel was the only participant of the seven who did not reference a visual metaphor in her story.) For these individuals, the image was illustrative or memorable, and helped them to consider elements of their understanding of equity.

The Baseball Image was not the only visual metaphor invoked across the eight stories in this study. Three different visual metaphors were invoked across the participants' equity stories. Two of the images—the Baseball Image (Figure 6.1) and the Fish Image (Figure 6.3)—were presented as part of coursework for the students in the teacher preparation program. The Stairs Image (Figure 6.2) was encountered on Instagram. In this section, I will share these two additional visual metaphors that were referenced by Monica and Jessica.

Monica and the Stairs Image

In her story, Monica referenced a cartoon that she came across on Instagram that serves as a visual metaphor in her story. The image, hereafter referred to as the Stairs Image (Figure 6.3) is of children waiting outside a school, for an adult to shovel snow from the ramp and stairs. The adult is shoveling the stairs. A child in the wheelchair asks for him to shovel the ramp. The adult responds that the other children are waiting and he will shovel the ramp when he's done with the stairs. The child in the wheelchair responds that if he shovels the ramp, all the children

can use it. The caption reads, "Clearing a path for people with special needs clears the path for everyone!"

Figure 6.3

The Stairs Image

In her story, Monica referenced this visual metaphor. The mention is brief and only happened once. This reference is given below in Monica's Excerpt 1 (Table 6.9).

Table 6.9

Monica's Excerpt 1

Monica's Story	Analysis
And it's funny because you always see memes on Instagram and after our interview I was like scrolling through Instagram, and I saw this meme.[1] And it was a teacher. It was like a little comic thing and it was a teacher and a student in a wheelchair and there was snow. And, the student in the wheelchair is telling the teacher, "Can you shovel the snow off of the ramp?"[2] And the teacher's like, "Okay, well all of these kids are waiting to go in, so I'm going to shovel the stairs cause the majority of them need to go in first and then	[1] The image she describes was encountered on a random scroll through Instagram. [2] Monica describes the image and the student in the wheelchair asking for the snow to be removed from the ramp. [3] Monica describes the adult's response. In her telling, the adult is a teacher.

I'll shovel the ramp, no problem."[3] And the kid is like, "Well, if you shovel, the ramp we can all go up, you know?"[4] I was like, "Oh my gosh, that's so true."[5] Because sometimes we don't think about that and we're like, "Okay, we're meeting the needs of the majority or we're meeting the needs of one."[6] But it's like, "How can we find something that meets the needs of everyone?"[7]	[4] The student points out that shoveling the ramp will provide all with access. [5] Monica is struck by the truth of the message in this visual metaphor. [6] She points out that in education, we think of it as two competing views—meeting the needs of the majority or the single child. [7] She offers that a better question is how can we meet the needs of all?

In this excerpt, Monica recounted stumbling upon the Stairs Image on Instagram. She accurately described the image from memory, including details like how the adult in the image prioritizes serving the able-bodied children first, and how providing access via the ramp would make the school accessible to everyone. She described how this image resonated with her and reflected on how often in education, we consider the needs of the many first and then consider the needs of the one special needs child. She suggested that instead, we should look for a solution that solves the needs of everyone.

This image clearly made an impact on Monica in her ability to recall with clarity the details and message of the visual metaphor. In addition her exclamation of how the truth of the message resonated with her shows how a very short moment gave her pause and caused her to reflect on common practices in education.

It's worth noting that when Monica discussed typical education practices, she used the pronoun "we." Monica included herself in the community that sets up a false binary of the many versus the one, the stairs versus the ramp. She challenged this false binary by instead challenging the community (again which she identifies with "we," thereby including herself in the responsibility) to rethink and find solutions that serve all.

This is not the only time in her narrative that Monica took up the notion of inclusivity as a means to equity. In Monica's Excerpt 2 (Table 6.10), Monica shared a conviction about whether equity causes some children to miss out.

Table 6.10

Monica's Excerpt 2

Monica's Story	Analysis
I've never seen a moment where you taking the time to help another person succeed ever takes away from another person's success.[1] I've never seen it. [2] And I think I talked about too as a teacher, finding strategies that help everybody. I think an effective teacher will be able to find those strategies well and easily.[3] I obviously don't know all the strategies that are used, but the strategies that I've seen, they always end up helping more students, whether it's that inclusion class we talked about, students who do have disabilities, students who might have medical conditions, things like that. Where you incorporating kids who sometimes might suffer from seizures.[4] Having like a little area in the classroom or something. So that if something does happen, training your students on what to do.[5] The way I've seen it, it's never taken away from another.[6] I think it just expands everybody because you're being more aware of new things to look to or new ways of learning.[7] I think it enhances everybody's learning rather than hinders them.[8]	[1] Monica cannot fathom that taking the time to support one person to succeed takes away from another person's success. [2] She repeats—never seen it. [3] As a teacher, she sees this as finding strategies that help everyone learn. Effective teachers find those strategies well and easily. [4] She doesn't know all the strategies for supporting all students yet, but what she's seen always creates a larger set of students supported. This includes various kinds of inclusion—disabilities, medical conditions, seizures, etc. [5] Even just having a space in the classroom for students who have events (perhaps seizures or outbursts), and training the larger group of students on how to handle that situation. [6] She emphasizes a third time—she's never seen it where it takes away from others. [7] She reframes inclusion as learning for all the students. The able-bodied kids become aware or learn in a new way. [8] It benefits, rather than hinders, the majority.

In Excerpt 2, Monica stated and then discounted the notion that inclusivity takes away from other children's success. Monica has never seen this happen. She stated this three separate times in this excerpt—she has never seen an example where supporting a particular student—be it in an inclusion school or a medical issue like seizures—Monica was thoroughly convinced that this kind of inclusion is to the benefit of all students. She cited that the other students learn about

other people and became more aware, and may have found a new way to understand something. Inclusion does not harm the dominant group, rather it benefits all.

For Monica, this is clearly a deeply held conviction. Within the space of a paragraph, she emphasized three times that she had never seen an instance where equity for one child took away from another child. Further, she rejected the notion that it's an either/or proposition. Instead, she took a broad, society-level view of learning where the inclusion of students with special needs is to the benefit of able-bodied children. Her definition of success is not confined to standards and grades, she also sees understanding and supporting others as an important learning opportunity for students.

The Stairs Image is a distillation of this view. It is a concrete example of an instance when prioritizing those with special needs does not, in any way, hinder the majority. In this way, the visual metaphor was a well-defined example of a view that Monica held. Perhaps for this reason, it was so powerful to her that she was able to detail it from memory. Similarly to Ellie and the Baseball Image, for Monica, the Stairs Image offered a memorable visual that encapsulated a larger view and offered a shorthand way of remembering and referring to the larger notion.

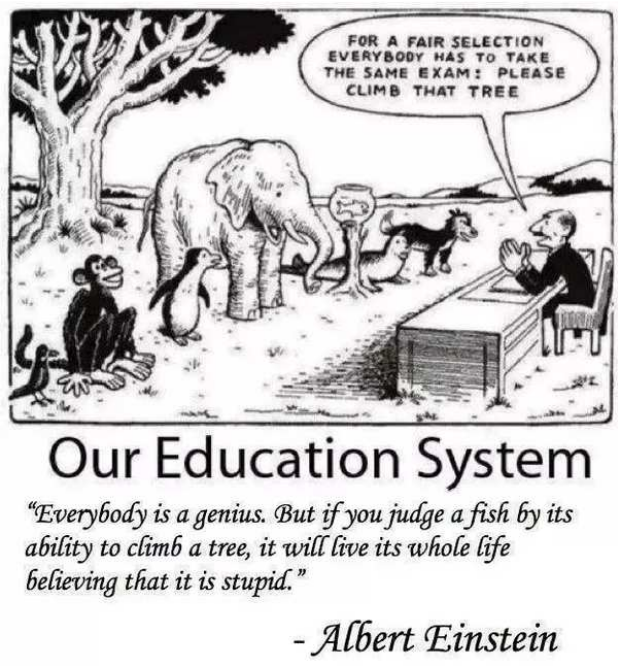
Jessica and the Fish Image

In Jessica's story, she references an image that she encountered during her teacher preparation coursework. The image, hereafter referred to as the Fish Image (Figure 6.4), is in the style of a political cartoon and shows a line of various animals (small bird, monkey, penguin, elephant, fish, seal, and dog). Behind the line of animals is a tree. In front of them is a man at a desk. The man says, "For a fair selection, everyone has to take the same exam: please climb that tree." The caption reads "Our Education System" and below it is a quote attributed to Albert

Einstein, "Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole like believing that it is stupid."

Figure 6.4

The Fish Image



In her narrative, Jessica cited this visual metaphor as being instrumental in her early learning about equity. In the excerpt below, Jessica's Excerpt 1 (Table 6.11), Jessica detailed the image.

Table 6.11

Jessica's Excerpt 1

Jessica's Story	Analysis
Because the way I view equity starts in the classroom, especially because that's how I started learning about what equity really is, is in my education classes.[1] Learning about equity in my [teacher preparation] classes was the first time I really learned about it.[2] Because normally we all would say equality, right? Like equal opportunities.[3] But I didn't	[1] Jessica leaned about equity in her education courses, and this has affected how she thinks about equity—that it starts in the classroom. [2] Teacher preparation courses were the first time she learned about equity. [3] Before being challenged by the courses, she thought of equality as equity.

know the word equity until education courses. I think it was our social justice class.[4] I remember one of the first times I realized that education is not very equitable within the classroom is that famous picture. "If you teach a fish how to climb a tree, it'll fail." It's the fish, the elephant and like a monkey. And it's like, if you teach all of them how to climb a tree, only the monkey would succeed or something like that.[5] So like you can't teach everyone the same exact way because everyone learns differently and everyone's capabilities are different.[6] But I didn't know the word equity was related to that picture until I learned in my social justice class.[7] The picture was a quote from Albert Einstein, he wrote, "Everybody's a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its full life believing that it is stupid."[8]	[4] She didn't know the term equity until her social justice class. [5] One of the first introductions to inequity in education was encountering the Fish Image. She describes it as animals—though not exactly accurately, as she mentions teaching and the image focuses on assessment. Regardless, the message of one-size-fits all and unrealistic expectations is consistent. [6] From this memory, Jessica distills the message that not everyone learns the same way and therefore should not all be taught the same way. [7] Jessica didn't know that the message of that image could be described as equity until her social justice class. [8] [Data collection note: this last two sentences in this section of text occur because Jessica pulled out her phone and googled the image.] Jessica affirms that this is the image she was referring to.

Jessica provided context in her story that she began to understand equity from learning in her teacher preparation coursework. Prior to her coursework, she had thought that equal opportunity was the same as equity. She referred to the Fish Image as the first time that she really understood that education was not very equitable. She described the Fish Image, though her description focused on teaching and the image itself focuses on assessment. Regardless, the common message of students having differential needs but the education system only offering one mode (whether instruction or exam) is consistent. Jessica didn't know that this problem in the education system had a name—equity. She then googled the image and read the quote attributed to Albert Einstein aloud.

For Jessica, the Fish Image was a touchstone when her early understanding of inequity acquired a name and a larger context, through her social justice coursework. Unlike Ellie and Monica, her description of the image is not entirely accurate, and in fact confuses assessment for

instruction. The central message of varied learners and a one-size-fits-all approach is consistent between the Fish Image and her description of it from memory. It is likely the case because Jessica encountered the image in an early stage of learning about education, when the distinction between instruction and assessment weren't as well-defined.

Like Monica, the message of the Fish Image has echoes in her story. In Jessica's Excerpt 2 (Table 6.12), Jessica provided specific details about her convictions regarding how equitable the current assessment schemes are in education.

Table 6.12

Jessica's Excerpt 2

Jessica's Story	Analysis
I noticed that within the American education system, starting off from the beginning, we have standardized tests but they're written towards White people.[1] And that's why we noticed White students are the ones that are succeeding more on the tests and they're having the higher scores is because not everyone gets the same experience growing up, especially depending on your culture.[2] And in America, we have such a diverse population, that it's just unfair.[3] It's unjust to be writing tests towards a group of people that's honestly starting to get smaller because the minorities are starting to get bigger.[4] I view that part more in [state in the southwest] because I take more classes with people who are Hispanic or of multiple different cultures.[5] I think that's also me being in education, but I think we just need to get rid of standardized tests all together.[6]	[1] Jessica notes that in the American education system, standardized tests are written towards White people. [2] This is why White people score higher on the tests, because the test is written towards their experience, but that experience may not be shared by all students, depending on culture. [3] America is diverse. Jessica argues that having a test that is only written towards one group is unfair. [4] She argues that because of growth, this group of White people is becoming a smaller proportion of the population. [5] Jessica attributes this view of increasing diversity to her geographic location in the southwest and to the diversity of cultures. [6] She also attributes it to being in education—she thinks standardized tests need to go.

In Excerpt 2, Jessica detailed the inherently racist nature of standardized tests, as they are written for White people under the false assumption that the experiences of White people are universal. Jessica pointed out that experiences can vary culturally, and that the high performance of White

students on these tests is a product of the assumptions made by the test makers. Jessica pointed out that the United States is diverse. She stated that because non-White populations are growing, these tests are written towards a group that is becoming a smaller proportion of the population. She posited that her geographic location in the southwest may cause her to be more attentive to this, given the diversity of cultures. She also posited that she feels this way because she's in education and that ultimately, standardized tests should be done away with.

While Jessica's recall of the Fish Image was not centered on standardized assessment, the message of the Fish Image about the failings of standardized assessments has certainly made its way into Jessica's equity narrative. The message of the Fish Image is that creating an exam that only a certain group can perform well on (in the case of image, the monkey), is inherently unfair. The message of Excerpt 2 in Jessica's story is the same, but she has made the metaphor real and replaced the animals with children, pointing out that the reason White students score highly on standardized tests is because the test is written with them in mind.

This is an interesting foil to Monica's Stairs Image. Monica recalled the image with shocking clarity, given that her encounter with it was due to happenstance. In contrast, Jessica tied the Fish Image to her social justice coursework but only recalled the central message of the visual metaphor, needing to look it up to get the wording right.

Discussion of Visual Metaphors

Visual metaphors were a narrative technique employed by almost all the participants in their equity stories. At times, the participants' description of both the visual metaphor and its central message were clear, detailed, and accurate. For example, this was the case with Ellie and Monica in their excerpts above. It was also the case with a few of the participants who referenced the Baseball Image but didn't return to it. In other instances, participants' descriptions of the

visual metaphor weren't entirely accurate or clear, but regardless, the central message of the visual metaphor was preserved. This was the case when Jessica described the Fish Image, as well as how some participants (not excerpted here) described the Baseball Image. Since the Baseball Image was clearly and accurately recalled by some participants, but not others, we know that the different in ability to recall the image with clarity is less about the visual metaphor itself and more about its interaction with the individual.

What was common among all instances of visual metaphors in equity narratives was that they were memorable to the individual, and aided their recall of the central message of the metaphor. That the central message of the visual metaphor remains memorable, regardless of the whether the exact details of the image are memorable, is interesting. This indicates that the imagery in the visual metaphor is a powerful vehicle for conveying a central message, regardless of whether the image details themselves are memorable. In this way, the visual metaphor is similar to a compelling argument. Some individuals may recall and recreate the details of the argument with clarity, others may not, but the conclusion of the persuasive argument is retained regardless.

These visual metaphors appear to be very common in narrative sense-making, as they were used in seven of the eight stories in this study. They are also extremely durable as the central message of the visual metaphor was not maligned or misinterpreted. The imagery of the visual metaphor gave the participants a strong example to return to, in making sense of equity. The images often deepened participants' thinking about equity, either by challenging a pre-conceived notions (for example, that equity is the same as equality), or by giving a clear example that crystalized and strengthened previous understandings (e.g., Monica and the Stairs Image, or

Jessica and the Fish Image). In this way, these images offered individuals an experience of re-narration that came with a visual metaphor to include in their new version of their equity story.

In considering Ellie's story, there is no denying the power of this sense-making technique, as this was her primary technique of sense-making in her story. The derived shorthand definition for equity makes this technique portable and transferable. It is not context-dependent. She repeatedly used this technique to remind herself the shorthand she developed for what equity is, and applied this shorthand to other situations in her life to consider whether the situations were equitable.

However, as a single sense-making technique, the visual metaphor can be limiting. For example, because Ellie's visual metaphor and derived shorthand for equity doesn't account for things like a student's group membership, or how that affects their academic identity. Her thinking about equity in teaching is solely driven by differences in ability and achievement. As a result, she isn't considering race, gender, class, or cultural factors that influence equity, nor is she considering them in her analysis of whether the attempts at equitable teaching in her student teaching placement are sufficient. There is a lack of system-level awareness of why the differences occur to begin with.

This shortcoming is echoed in the discussion around this particular image as a visual metaphor for equity. In considering how this image and similar frameworks are used in academic medicine, Barcelo and Shadravan (2020) point out that there is often a failure to illuminate the mechanisms of injustice. Since the image does not suggest why the individuals are different heights, the systems that cause these differences are obscured.

The image has been critiqued within the education research and outreach community as well (e.g. Joseph, 2017; Stein & Andreotti, 2017). Specifically, Kuttner (2016) critiques the

image as a metaphor for education: "This metaphor is actually a great example of deficit thinking — an ideology that blames victims of oppression for their own situation. As with this image, deficit thinking makes systemic forms of racism and oppression invisible." In reducing the complex systems of inequity and injustice to a visual metaphor that focuses only on where individuals are in the system and what can be done to address the different in location with regard to the goal, the systems that cause the differences are erased while the differences in the individual are preserved.

My point here is not to throw out the metaphorical baby with the bathwater, but to recognize both the strengths and the limitations of visual metaphors as a sense-making technique. In as far as the visual metaphor is portable by becoming a distillation of the central message, it is also limited to the central message. And because this is the only technique Ellie uses in certain places in her story, her understanding of equity in situations is limited as well. A single visual metaphor will never convey the complexity of inequity—however, it can convey aspects and details, and provoke sense-making and extension of sense-making beyond contexts.

As a sense-making technique, visual metaphors can be powerful to provoke re-narration, and to support individuals to understand a central message that they will retain. It can also provide a technique to extend thinking about inequity beyond a single context. However, this technique is insufficient when used on its own, and its limitations—particularly in what it renders invisible—must be considered by both researchers and teacher educators.

Chapter 7: Additional Techniques

Introduction

As with Chapters Five and Six, this chapter presents the larger findings and discussion of research question two: *What narrative techniques are used in equity narratives and what do their use tell us about sense-making?* As discussed in Chapter 2, the telling of a narrative is a sense-making activity. This sense-making is made visible by the narrative techniques employed by the individual. The techniques that participants employ show how they're thinking about equity and what caused them to think this way.

Narrative Techniques

In the participants' equity narratives, there were a number of narrative techniques employed beyond explicit re-narration and visual metaphors. While there are in fact more than I have space to consider here, I focused my attention on those techniques that were most instrumental in the explicit sense-making of equity within the narrative, and/or those that were most ubiquitous across the eight narratives. The techniques that met these criteria are: experience connections, generalizations, equity definition, emotions, and questions. In this chapter, I will give attention to connections and generalizations, and offer a brief description of the others I observed across the stories. Then I will offer a discussion of how these techniques have affordances and limitations for sense-making.

Experience Connections

In Chapter 4, I laid out the ten types of experiences that study participants drew on in their equity narratives. We might think of these experiences and experience types as source material from which narratives are constructed. It becomes important, then, to consider how

these experiences are placed in relation to one another, as this is one technique of meaning-making in narratives.

In considering how study participants used connections in their narratives, I found that the ways that experiences were connected to one another fell into two major groups—those where experiences were connected within a single type of experience, and those where experiences were connected across experience types. Each is discussed below.

Experience Connections Within One Type. When an individual was discussing a particular context, often the experience type was consistent. They might talk about multiple experiences within that type and draw similarities, or contrasts, in order to make their larger point. Consider the following example from Ashton's narrative in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1

Ashton's Excerpt 1

Ashton's Story	Analysis
I also think of the differences between school districts too. I would say that being in [District A] and [District B]--night and day.[1] I think that it's really interesting that somewhere 25 minutes down the road it seems as if the people have really taken a big interest in education.[2] There's new schools that pop up in that area every like three to five years. They keep expanding the district boundaries and they keep investing in all these resources.[3] And I don't think—I think [District B] would want to—but I don't think they necessarily have the means. But the end goal of both those districts is to send people on to higher education. Like a [University].[4] But is it really considered equitable if one student is growing up with the technology piece? Because in [District A], they have 90	[1]Ashton is talking about two schools that she has experienced through her fieldwork and noting that there is a strong difference between them. Data collection note: District A is a suburban district in a bedroom community. District B is a large urban district in the heart of the city. [2] The difference between the two districts is that District A, which is just down the road, has more interest in education. [3]Evidence offered is new schools, expanding boundaries, and investment (despite the fact that new schools are a function of population growth and expanding boundaries, not of community value in education). [4]She points out that District B would want to have this investment, but lacks the means.

minutes of computer time every week, versus a student in [District B] who might not have the access to that during their educational experience. Is that, is that leg up as fair? So that's kind of what I've seen.[5]	And that both have the goal of sending students to higher education. [5]She returns to the difference in access to resources (in this case, daily time on computers) and uses it to question whether it's equitable if this difference in access is present.

In Excerpt 1, Ashton identified the difference between the two districts in terms of investment in education. She saw how in the suburban District A, there are new schools regularly opening and the boundaries of the school are expanding. She read these details as interest in education, as opposed to a function of population growth and residential development in a suburban area. She points out that both Districts A and B likely have the same goal—sending their students on to college—but questions whether it's equitable if the resources (i.e. technology) aren't evenly distributed.

By working within a single experience type (fieldwork in schools), Ashton is able to consider the different experiences she has had and how that is reflected by the communities. In this excerpt, she identifies the differences in resources, and attributes them to the communities' values and interest in education. While she is able to note the differences, she doesn't tie them to larger structural issues, like tax base, population growth, or socio-economic status of the community.

In Ashton's Excerpt 2 (Table 7.2), Ashton continued to contrast the two districts, now considering the professional culture within the schools she was in.

Table 7.2

Ashton's Excerpt 2

Ashton's Story	Analysis

I think thing with [District B] that I've learned from them a lot is more of the community aspect of building your classroom community, learning that you're going to have a lot of different characters.[1] I would say I've learned more about outside of the classroom experiences than I have from that district solely, "This is how you teach ELA and this is how you teach--."[2] I did my observation hours in [District B] and I'm going to student teach there too. And it's really interesting because when I talk to teachers, like my mentor teacher that semester, the first thing they talk about is their kids and it's so interesting.[3] Because in the past, I've been at [Elementary School B1], [Elementary School B2], and [Elementary School B3] and now at [Elementary School B4], they always bring up their kids first.[4] And at [District A], it's more that content is the first thing they talked to you about.[5] One of the things that I like about it, is I've seen—and I'm sure I'll see it with my new teacher—they are very socially conscious of what is happening outside of their classroom at times more than they are the actual content.[6] And I think at times that is more important than a math lesson. And I like that.[7] But I also liked the experience of, "This is your literature block, it's ninety minutes. This is what you're going to do. This is how you set up your rotations. This is how you set up this." Everything that we've learned in [District A].[8]	[1] Ashton has learned from District B to think about her students and building the classroom community. [2] In District B, she's learned more about the world outside the classroom than how to teach certain subjects. [3] She's spent a number of fieldwork experiences at District B, and across the board, when she talked to teachers, they talked about the kids first. [4] She names 4 different elementary schools in District B that she's done fieldwork in, and the teachers all bring up their students first. [5] In contrast, at District A, the first thing teachers talk about is the content. [6] In District B, teachers are very socially conscious about what happens beyond the classroom, sometimes more than the content. [7] Ashton notes that at times, understanding students' social context is more important than a math lesson. [8] However, she concedes that she does appreciate content-based explanations for how to teach—i.e. what the teachers focus on in District A.

In Excerpt 2, Ashton continued to compare the two districts, this time pointing out that the aspect of teaching that the teachers foreground is different. In District B, Ashton has experienced four separate elementary schools and across the board, the teachers have mentioned first the children. These teachers, to Ashton, as very aware of the community and experiences that their students have outside the classroom. Ashton notes at one point that this is sometimes more important than the content. She contrasts this with the teachers in District B, where the content is foregrounded

and the teachers she's worked with tended to be direct about how to structure the content over the time period, how to use different grouping strategies, etc.

Across these two excerpts, Ashton identified the ways in which the education students receive in these two districts were different. And while considering access to technology, she questions whether this is an equitable situation. However, when she moves on to consider the priorities within the district culture, she notes that the social consciousness of the teachers as a strength of the urban district (District B). In using this technique, Ashton makes visible the dichotomy she has set up as a result of her experiences in the two districts. She can see a distinction in what is prioritized (child or content), but hasn't considered that these two need not be in competition, but could instead support one another.

In making these connections—and distinctions—between her experiences in fieldwork, within the context of her equity narrative, Ashton is showing us that she knows that inequity is reflected in differences between resources (technology) and priorities (child vs. content). This use of this narrative technique allows us to see a context-specific understanding of equity in an individual. Namely, the ability to look at two similar situations, compare the situations, and identify where there is inequity. It moves beyond a basic understanding of the concept of equity to an understanding that can be applied to two situations in a similar experience.

However, this narrative technique is limited in that it is limited to one type of experience. And in this particular instance, it also does not grapple with larger dynamics that are in play with inequity (for example: funding, race, and political policy—all of which could be part of the inequity in the differences between Ashton's two fieldwork districts).

Experience Connections Across Experience Types. In other cases, study participants made connections between experiences of two or more different types. An example of these connections across experience types comes from Rachel's equity narrative. She has been talking about racial inequity and policing, drawing on her experiences with social media. In what follows (Table 7.3), she build on this experience and extends the connection to other types of experiences.

Table 7.3

Rachel's Excerpt

Rachel's Story	Analysis
Like those cops who are (I mean you don't see the full story on freaking Facebook videos) but those cops who are super aggressive. And it just seems like they're trying to prove a point and they know they have power, so they use it in a negative way and to their advantage. They're all gung ho about it. Which stinks.[1]	[1] Rachel is wrapping up a section of her story where she is talking about police. She's seen the videos on social media (though she concedes they're not always the whole story), but her assessment is that it seems like they're wielding their authority and power because they know they can, because they want to prove a point.
I feel like for cops that like, you tend to see that a lot, but they talk about the power thing in teaching too. I remember [professor], she was talking about like don't be entitled to your authority. I forget what she was specifically talking about, but it was kind of along the lines of when you're disciplining, you don't want to be over-authoritative and be like, "I'm doing this" just cause you're the teacher—that isn't fair. It's not just.[2] So I can relate that having too much power to a lot of places, teaching definitely being one.[3] I don't know, I've had crap managers, too, who are just power hungry and they're just mean to you. Like literally because they can and it's horrible. It doesn't make any environment great at all.[4] So yeah, people who can or think they have authority, I can even relate it to my friendships too. One of my friends, super alpha female and she's literally a huge biatch	[2] Rachel points out that the conversation around abuse of power has been around cops, but that power (and its abuse) exists in teaching too. She recalls a situation in coursework where a professor encouraged them to consider their authority and not wield it against the students just because they can. Using authority merely because you can is not just. [3] Rachel points out that power is relevant in a lot of spaces, teaching is just one. [4] Rachel extends the concept of power to her work experiences with bad managers who are power hungry and cruel. It makes work a bad environment. [5] Rachel extends it to spaces where others perceive that they have power, for example in

sometimes just because, she can.[5] And I will never be like, "You're out of li--." Like I should—but it just causes even more problems. So I know that.[6] Yeah, you see that everywhere. And even I think my mom, when we were growing up, she would just yell at us, even though we probably deserved it.[7]	a friendship. She describes a friend who is domineering because she can be. [6] Rachel points out that she doesn't call this friend out because it causes more problems. (The problems reinforce the friend's power.) [7] Rachel can see the power everywhere. She can even see it in her relationship with her parents, though in that case suggested that perhaps she has earned being yelled at.

After Rachel established her ideas on police abuse of authority and brutality as wrong, she connected this abuse of authority to education. She did this by recalling a moment in one of her courses where a professor discussed authority in disciple, and then Rachel expanded the notion of abuse of power beyond police to include teachers. She then pointed out that in work contexts, she'd had experience with managers who abuse their power. She describes how toxic this made the workspace. She then moved on to include two additional contexts—friendships and parent/child relationships.

In this example, Rachel was able to develop the notion of abuse of power, and identify similar situations in other contexts. She drew on two other types of experience to note two additional contexts—education and work—where power is institutionalized. In her description of the effect of abuse of power, she characterized it as unjust and harmful to the environment. She then drew on two more experience types and expanded her notion of abuse of power to contexts where power is not institutionalized, but is present nonetheless. Namely, she referenced friendships and parent-child relationships. In her consideration of power in friendships, Rachel touched on a more loose type of power—social pressure. She described how her friend could be unkind, but that Rachel was not willing to call that behavior out, because she knew it would have repercussions. In this way, Rachel identified how power can be wielded in less institutionalized way, but are real nonetheless. Lastly, Rachel identified the parent-child relationship as one that

has power—however, she concede that perhaps in the case of her mother, the use of power was warranted.

By the end of this section of her story, Rachel has drawn a through line of power (and its potential abuse) that spans five separate experience types: social media, coursework, work, friendships, family. In each case, Rachel explicated power in five different spheres in her life. In so doing, Rachel shows that her notions of power are not context-dependent, and that she can consider both institutions and relational dynamics that cause a power differential.

As a narrative technique, connecting experiences across type shows how the individual is able to look beyond a single context to additional contexts and consider similarities. In this case, it opens up the ability to consider larger dynamics like power or authority that are important features of equity that are not context-specific. While these connections are certainly not the full picture or understanding of equity, they help researchers and teacher educators to identify where individuals have emergent notions that move beyond context.

Generalizations

Generalizations are statements that are applied to larger groups or structures. These generalizations operate in the equity narratives as a way for participants to display the views they hold about groups of people, institutions, or the way life generally is. Often—but not always—these generalizations are offered alongside an example as a way of illustrating "how things are." When this happens in the narrative, the specific experiences serve as a case from which the individual is extrapolating to create a rule. Regardless of whether the generalization is accurate, its pairing from the case experience shows the importance place that experience holds in the individual's sense-making.

Ashton's Generalizations. In the following excerpt from Ashton's story, she speaks in generalizations about equity and the way the world works (Table 7.4). She then gives a few examples. Unlike excerpts in Chapters Five and Six where I analyzed them piece by piece, I have chosen to share this excerpt as one, almost completely unbroken, excerpt.[13] It was important to me to convey to my readers how closely these pieces of Ashton's story were in proximity to one another.

Table 7.4

Ashton's Excerpt 3

Ashton's Story	Analysis
But I think the way I see equity is a lot of like, it's never going to be—anything in life is never going to be equal. It's never going to be fair.[1] And I think if you try to spend like all of your energy on making everything equal and making everything just and correct, and I think the world is moved into trying to do that.[2] But I think in return, everybody has become very sensitive to things.[3] Which some of it is good—that the world is now sensitive about certain social issues. But most of it wasn't a big deal five years ago and now it's the biggest deal in the world.[4] And I think if you just spend the rest of your life trying to make everything equal, you're going to exhaust yourself.[5] And I really wish it wasn't that way. That's honestly just kind of the way the world works.[6] For example, I have my unit plan, that's due for social studies and I'm doing it on the pilgrims of the Wampanoags. And I asked my teacher, because when I was growing up, we made the pilgrim bonnets and the guys had the hats. And I asked my teacher, "Oh so	[1] Ashton states a generalization: things in life aren't equal, and will never be fair. [2] She gives more detail to the generalization and begins an if statement about people trying to make the world fair (but leaves it hanging). She also says that the world is becoming more this way. [3] She provides the "then" part of her if-then statement—then everyone is very sensitive about certain issues. [4] Ashton clarifies—some of this sensitivity is good. But most of these sensitivities weren't an issue a few years ago. The implication is that these sensitivities are unwarranted. [5] She points out that the main outcome of trying to make everything equal is exhaustion. (Implication: not necessarily equality.) [6] She re-affirms her generalization—it's just the way the world works. She wishes it wasn't. [7] Ashton offers an example—she is working on a unit plan for her social studies methods course on the early colonists and the Wampanoags. She asked when the students would make crafty hats/bonnets.

[13] Note: Ashton's Excerpt in Table 3 spans approximately two pages in Ashton's story. I have taken out a single paragraph from the middle that was an aside (denoted by ellipses). The rest is continuous, both in her story version as well as in the data collection interview. If you would like the unbroken excerpt with the aside paragraph, please contact me and I will be happy to share.

when are we doing that? Basically?"[7] And she's like, "Oh, we stopped doing that about five years ago because it's not socially just," and I was like, "Okay."[8] I see where people could be upset about that. And like really at the end of the day it is a seven year old wearing--[9] I really think if it's truly that offensive that that should be one, communicated to the teacher prior.[10] Like if you're a teacher and you want to do that and let's say you have somebody who for religious belief or whatever finds it incredibly insulting and you give the parents the heads up and you don't get any backlash on it[11], and then all of a sudden you have a parent. That's like you had your opportunity.[12] I just think a lot of times people make big deals about—I mean, it's a seven year old. Throw it away if it's really that—[13] I just think there's a lot of things that used to really not be a huge deal that like are. Like people think that SpongeBob is incredibly offensive apparently. And like growing up, I've watched-- like it's SpongeBob.[14] They say it's the language and it teaches on sarcasm, at a young age. Apparently it's very sarcastic language but I'm a pretty sarcastic person so that would be really hard for me to differentiate where it is.[15] […] I think there's a lot of thing—there was so many things that we did growing up that like aren't okay now, but there's a lot of things that we did growing up that aren't okay now for a reason that when you're older and you get told the actual story you're like that is messed up.[16] Like giving Indians small pox infested blankets. That's pretty, that's was a very key component that—[17] Or, I think just in general I wish people would have been more truthful sometimes about holidays, Thanksgiving being the main one.[18] Because it wasn't like, "Oh we landed the Mayflower and we all had to be--" like no. That's not exactly— Like we stole land away from people and then ended up stealing a country.[19] And now we're like,	[8] Her teacher says they don't do that anymore because it's not socially just. [9] She states that she understands why—but then argues against this position. She states that it's just a young child wearing a hat. She [10] Still questioning the issue, she states that if it's that offensive, this is something that should be communicated to the teacher in advance. [11] She plays out this scenario—perhaps someone, for religious reasons, sees this as offensive and you give notice, but no backlash, [12] Then there isn't space for offense—the parent should've taken the opportunity to tell the teacher in advance. [13] She doesn't see the harm—it's just a little kid. Throw it away if it offends you. [14] Again, she argues that we used to be fine with these things. She gives the example of Sponge Bob—she grew up watching it and it is now deemed offensive. [15] The critique of Sponge Bob is that it's too sarcastic for young children. But Ashton's a sarcastic person. Data note: The […] denotes a paragraph aside about children's sports and giving out trophies. [16] Ashton revisits the generalization, but now takes the opposing view in earnest—there are things that used to be ok but aren't now, for good reason. She points out the experience of finding out the truth. [17] She gives the example of early colonizers giving indigenous people small pox blankets. She struggles with how to describe it sufficiently in how bad an action that is. [18] She wishes she hadn't been lied to about holidays like Thanksgiving. [19] She points out how these events are mischaracterized to cover the theft of land, of a county.

"We'll give you this t--". Like stuff like that isn't necessarily okay with me, but it's a fine line.[20] I think you really have to think, people really have to think through their decisions and think 5 to 10 years from now are you going to look back? Or is that person going to look back on that experience and be like, "Wow, that made me really biased this way. Or like really biased that way."[21]	[20] Ashton affirms that she isn't ok with those things—but it's "a fine line." [21] Ashton's suggestion is that we think deeply about these things—in 5 or ten years, will we wish we hadn't done it? Will others look back on these events and attribute their bias to it?

Ashton's excerpt demonstrates a number of generalizations in action. She began this excerpt with a generalization about how life would never be equal—how even if we tried to work at making things equal, the end result would be that everyone becomes too sensitive. She conceded that some of this sensitivity would be ok—but the implication is that there was an over-abundance of over-sensitivity. She stated that the real outcome of working towards equality was exhaustion, not equity. She re-affirmed that this was just the way the world was.

After these generalizations, Ashton offered a few examples to illustrate. She began with her unit plan for social studies. She had anticipated doing a craft with her students that involved pilgrim bonnets for the unit around the Pilgrims and the Wampanoags. When she raised this activity with her teacher, her teacher informed her that they hadn't done this lately because it wasn't "socially just." Ashton was not convinced by this and felt this was an example of the over-sensitivity, because as she saw it, it was only a small child wearing a craft as a hat. Here, she offered a hypothetical—that if it's actually so offensive (for religious reasons, perhaps), then it should be the parents' responsibility to notify the teacher in advance, and that if the parents don't offer this proactive notification, they don't have space to be offended. She then doubled down on how it should not be offensive, and invoked the children's age. She suggested that people who were offended should just throw the hat away. She stated that there are many things that are deemed offensive that weren't just a few years ago (which implied that they should still

be deemed inoffensive). She offered Sponge Bob as an example. The show was deemed as too sarcastic for young children, though Ashton admitted that she is a sarcastic person and may not be able to judge such things.

Ashton then took up the generalization that recent attempts at equity have caused increased sensitivity and argued for the opposite view in earnest. She stated that there were a number of things that were acceptable when she was growing up that aren't acceptable now and shouldn't be. She gave the example of early colonizers giving small pox infested blankets to indigenous people. She contrasted this with the white-washed story of landing the Mayflower. She explicitly stated that that is not the entire story and that in actuality, we stole their land and ended up stealing an entire country.

Ashton then returned to the generalization that there are good and bad sensitivities that have been created as a result of increased attention to equity. She stated that it's a fine line, and then suggested that a way to determine where that line would be is for a person to think about where they might be five or ten years from now. She suggested reflecting on whether they'll wish they hadn't done the thing, or whether other people will trace their own biases back to those actions.

First, allow me to state that this excerpt from Ashton's story offers a view in the disjointed way she tells her story. She often moved from one association or context to another, sometimes offering her audience a view into how she sees these things as related, other times it is only implied. In addition, Ashton often broke off mid-sentence, particularly when she was animated or felt strongly about something. In the written story, this means that it reads as if there are pieces missing, but it should be read in the voice of a person who is speaking rapidly and passionately and can't keep up with her own feelings and thoughts on the topic.

Ashton's excerpt is a fascinating view into how she is making sense of equity. Within the space of a few minutes of storytelling, she stated a generalization that, on its face, appears to be a statement of resistance to equity. She first told a story to reinforce that resistance, then moved on to adopt the opposite views, and ended up argued both for and against the whitewashing of the colonizing of North America. On the one hand, she couldn't conceive of how a craft of a pilgrim bonnet could possibly offensive, unless there was some kind of religious reason. But on the other hand, when she spoke of the atrocities of the first colonizers, she felt lied to by her teachers that it was portrayed as unity and togetherness when there was in fact genocide and land theft. In both sections, she demonstrated incredulity, pointing to the passion with which she holds these seemingly antithetical positions. It's worth considering each position in turn to consider how she is able to hold these contradictory views.

Moving through this text sequentially, Ashton first stated the generalization that the world is not equal and will never become equal no matter how hard we try. She essentially saw that the work to make the world more equal has a primary consequence of just making people over sensitive. She conceded that some of this sensitivity is necessary, but that ultimately the world will remain unequal, despite her hopes to the contrary. This generalization could be read as resistance to working towards equity, or as apathy towards the work of equity.

She then offered her audience an example to support this generalization. She shared how she anticipated doing the pilgrim bonnet craft with her students and inquired about it, to be told by her teacher that it's not socially just. Ashton didn't tell us whether her teacher explained further why it's not socially just, but if there was a larger explanation, Ashton did not accept it or incorporate it into her thinking or her story.

Ashton focused her attention instead on how the craft is only a small thing that a young child would wear. She did not see, for example, the way that this craft is a cosplay version of the colonizers, or that framing and re-inscribing them as pilgrims offers religious cover for atrocities. It is at this point in the excerpt that Ashton suggested that the proper protocol for handling such sensitivities would be for the teacher to let parents know that this activity is coming up and that if the parents were offended by it—perhaps for religious reasons—that it's their responsibility to let the teacher know. In the event that they fail to let the teacher know, it's presumably their fault and the teacher cannot be blamed for not anticipating or accommodating their sensitivities.

Ashton's characterization of the offense as overly-sensitive or only justifiable for religious reasons is not uncommon. It parrots the common discourse around political correctness. Ashton clearly did not see the harm, as she stated that if it's so offensive, those who are offended shouldn't make such a big deal and just throw it away. She didn't think a big deal needed to be made over it, and likens it to how the show Sponge Bob had garnered backlash. She details that it had come under criticism for being too sarcastic for little kids. She stated—without irony—that she grew up watching the show and didn't think it's too sarcastic, while conceding that she was a pretty sarcastic person. Ashton didn't reflect that perhaps the critics were correct and that her exposure to the show contributed to her sarcastic nature. Though to be honest, I don't think she sees sarcasm as harmful, as she is comfortable aligning her identity with it. Similar to the pilgrim bonnet craft, she did not see how this could be harmful and therefore rejected the criticism as over blown and overly sensitive.

After a brief aside (removed from Excerpt 1), Ashton returned to the generalization of how things that were acceptable when she was a child were no longer acceptable. However, at this point in the story, Ashton argued for those things which she thought should be deemed

unacceptable. She cited how when she learned the truth, she realized how messed up the unacceptable thing was. She offered the example of giving indigenous people blankets contaminated with small pox. At this point, her sentences broke off and she seemed to be searching for the right way to point out the role this played in the genocide of indigenous people. She returned to wishing that things were more honest about holidays—Thanksgiving being the main example. She began to offer the whitewashed version of the Mayflower landing, broke off mid-sentence to make clear to her audience that no, that was not the truth. She then included herself in the correction narration of the history—offered that we stole their land, we stole the country, and now we only gave indigenous people small tokens.

To this point in the narrative, Ashton was very clear that these actions—the lying about genocide and theft of land, the whitewashed Thanksgiving story—was not ok with her. She personally felt lied to, and also identified herself with the colonizers who committed these atrocities. Given her position on the pilgrim bonnet craft, this reversal feels abrupt—shocking, even. Though Ashton did not acknowledge the incongruence directly, the way she continued offers some insights to how she held these contrasting views at once.

Ashton then offered that the delineation of what was over sensitivity, and what was acceptable sensitivity, was a "fine line." For Ashton, the way to determine whether the action or belief was on the over sensitivity side or the acceptable sensitivity side, was to consider how one might feel five or ten years in the future. If you think you'll regret the action or belief, or that the action or belief will foster bias in others, it is an acceptable sensitivity.

While Ashton never said this outright, she clearly drew on her own experiences throughout this excerpt. Her expectation that the pilgrim bonnets be an acceptable activity is ground in her own experience with the craft as a child, and her own belief in its not harming her. Her defense

of Sponge Bob is the same—she grew up with it and doesn't see the harm, so it must be ok. In the hypothetical situation she proposes with parents who are offended by the pilgrim bonnets, she cast herself as the teacher in this moment, and is more concerned with handling the backlash and being able to say she gave notice, than that the activity might not be just and that she might need to consider more deeply why. Her feelings about small pox blankets, the Mayflower, and Thanksgiving all come from the notion that she was misled and that she wasn't trusted with the truth. Lastly, her attempt at drawing the fine line also comes back to this—will she, in five or ten years, wish she hadn't done the thing she is considering? There isn't a question of whether it harms someone, beyond creating/instilling bias. The through line in the whole excerpt is that Ashton, as an individual, views inequity as something that she personally can determine whether it is appropriate or not.

Let me be clear—Ashton has certainly made significant growth in her learning about inequity. She speaks passionately, if not articulately, about the lack of truth around the "founding" of the United States. She knew now that this was genocide and theft of a whole country. She identified both are unacceptable, and invoked herself as identifying with those who stole the land. So then why doesn't she understand how a pilgrim bonnet is socially unjust? This is what is so jarring about Ashton's excerpt, but what also makes her excerpt intriguing for this work. It is contradictory on its face, despite the fact that her generalization provides just enough cover for both views.

Two aspects of Ashton's excerpt should be considered to make sense of this contradiction. First is the scale of the actions deemed appropriate/inappropriate, and second is the position Ashton is in, in relation to that action. Genocide and theft of land are large-scale harm. These were intentional acts that decimated a previously thriving culture and people. It

involved countless death and millions of acres worth of theft. In contrast, a pilgrim bonnet craft is small. It is probably only affects approximately 30 children and their families, no one is losing their life, land, or nation by its creation. A sensitive, savvy reader will counter that symbolic violence is still violence. They might point out that, while made of construction paper, these crafts are not without harm and they are part of the symbolic white washing of the history—the same white washing that erases small pox blankets. That reader would be right. And they have helped me identify where Ashton's generalization has fallen short. Her fine line fails her in that it only helped her identify those acts that do bodily harm and damage property.

The second aspect of Ashton's generalization to consider is how she is positioned in relation to the action in question. In the first case, with the pilgrim bonnet craft, Ashton is a prospective teacher who is expectant that this is an activity that is acceptable. One that should be included in the curriculum and perhaps been accidentally left out. When she brings this up to her teacher—a person in authority over her—she is told that it is not socially just and is not done any more. Had Ashton not asked about this activity, she would likely have submitted her unit plan with an activity that her teacher viewed as socially unjust. Further, if she had been in her own classroom in her first year of teaching, she might have included such an activity and gotten criticism from parents for being socially unjust, as indicated by her development of a hypothetical situation that protects the teacher's interests around implementing the activity. Lastly, she describes herself as being lied to in the last part of the text. Because of the choices of her own teachers to mischaracterize and whitewash history, Ashton is ignorant of the truth of the atrocities, until she learns otherwise. She also includes herself in with the group that stole the land from the indigenous peoples.

In both the pilgrim bonnet craft portion of the story, as well as the theft of land portion of the story, Ashton has been caught off guard by her own ignorance. In the case of the theft of land, she feels that she's been misled. In the case of the pilgrim bonnet craft, her teacher's response takes her by surprise. Her willingness to include herself in the group of people who stole the land of the United States causes me to think that given more time and better explanation, Ashton could come to realize that the pilgrim bonnets are part of the misleading description of history that she had been given.

As I mentioned above, Ashton's generalization—that the world will remain unequal and that working against it will only produce exhaustion—could be taken a number of ways. It could be read as a way to sidestep responsibility for working on inequity, as jadedness in not seeing things change, or in an acceptance of how inequity will always be with us (not unlike the way critical race theory states that racism will always be with us). However, the full context of her story provides context in how to interpret this generalization. Elsewhere in the text, Ashton detailed the inequity she experienced when failing a math class. She worked hard to go to office hours and to try to figure out where she went wrong but in the end, failed the course regardless and had to retake it. This pronouncement is informed by that experience. She has worked hard to try and secure equity for herself and in the end, felt only exhaustion.

Furthermore, Ashton lacked an understanding of power structures and of systems of inequity. This was evident in her treatment of the pilgrim bonnet craft. Without understanding this structural aspect of hegemony, she can't see symbolic harm in a construction paper hat. But this is not to say that she isn't capable of forming this understanding. For example, in the whitewashed Thanksgiving narrative, she has an example of how dominant narratives can influence commonly held understandings and erase portions of history. This example has been

powerful for her, but she has yet to connect it to larger forces and power structures, beyond individual actions. As such, there seems to be a real opportunity for Ashton to learn about structural oppression, and even her own place within a power structure like a classroom. Without this knowledge, it makes sense how she can hold contradictory views without seeing them as contradictory.

Ashton's excerpt is an example of how surfacing both the generalizations, as well as the experiences that contribute to them, can illuminate the sense-making of experiences that contributed to the generalization.

Even More Narrative Techniques

While I lack sufficient time and space to present examples and analyses of additional techniques, I wanted to at least mention those narrative techniques that were used in the stories created in this study. The array of narrative techniques in these stories was impressive and each displayed a different aspect of the participants' sense-making.

Questions. Across a number of stories, participants used rhetorical questions to demonstrate their sense-making. These questions illustrated the reflection that the individual posed to themselves as their thinking moved and changed.

Definition of Equity. In almost every story, the participant provided a definition of equity. How this definition was employed in their stories was interesting, as some used it as a framework, similarly to Ellie's visual metaphor in Chapter 6. Others only offered broad descriptions, then leaned heavily on examples.

Alternate Views. In some cases, participants took up multiple views in their story to help them make a point about equity. Monica, for example, often raised common criticism of equity

in teaching, so that she could then refute these positions. Rachel discussed how an experience of a reading program at her school offered her multiple view points on ability grouping. She detailed the various influences on her thinking, from her coursework to her mentor teacher, to the reading specialists. In talking through these views, she made her thinking visible in how she contended with these contrasting claims and influences.

Taking Action. In some of the stories, individuals detailed choices they made in their student teaching that promoted equity. These choices ranged from differentiating instruction to choosing to reward a child who was often the "behavior problem" in the room. These moments in the stories make visible spaces where the prospective teachers have identified inequity, consider what should be done to address it, and feel agency to act. Since operationalizing of equity in the classroom is a significant concern in the movement towards more equitable and just education, considering the sense-making that contributed to the choice to take action is important.

Evaluating Others' Actions. Akin to taking action, a few participants in this study discussed the actions of others and evaluated the equity associated therewith. These situations arose organically in their lives and are therefore another instance of individuals identifying equity and/or inequity in situations. In a few cases, these situations were in classrooms, and the evaluation of the actions could offer insights into how these experiences contribute to sense-making of equity.

Emotion. Some of the participant's stories evoked emotions or detailed the emotions the individuals felt, both in experiences connected with equity, and in considering equity in education. Emotions are powerful motivators and analysis of the emotions that are evoked around equity could illuminate aspects of sense-making not yet explored in the literature.

Discussion

This chapter gives three examples of additional narrative techniques, and describes and additional six. The overarching theme across these techniques is their potential to illuminate prospective teachers' sense-making. I will share from the three detailed examples.

With experience connections within experience types, Ashton's connections between her experiences in two different school districts makes her sense-making visible. First, it shows how her conceptions of equity in terms of resource allocation and community values in education. She used her experiences in two districts to draw comparisons between these two districts and considered whether the experiences of students at these two districts are comparable.

Ashton extended this comparison in her description of what the teachers in these two districts foreground in their conversations with her. She noted that teachers in one district foregrounds knowledge of students and their communities, teachers in the other district foregrounded knowledge of curricular content. This is a distinction Ashton draws in these two districts, and it leads to an either/or formulation for Ashton of which is valued more highly in the respective professional communities.

This view of Ashton's sense-making makes visible her ability to compare two similar contexts to identify when equity might be an issue, given differential resources. It also makes visible how Ashton notes differing priorities between the two schools and sets them up as a dichotomy. This challenge of equally valuing and integrating content and community is consistent with what we know about prospective teachers and how they progress in their knowledge and ability to draw on students' communities as well as the content in their teaching. Both Turner and colleagues (2012) and Bartell (2013) found that prospective teachers struggled to integrate both mathematics content goals and equity goals in their mathematics lessons.

Similarly, Ashton does not take on how the community-focused district might incorporate content, or conversely, how the content-focused district might also leverage the community.

These connections demonstrate how individuals are drawing on multiple experiences of the same type to create a web of meaning. Is so doing, they demonstrate their degree of understanding of how equity operates. For example, Ashton's interpretation that new schools are a function of interest in education, as opposed to tax revenue base and growing population. Since these connections are generated by Ashton in her equity narrative, she is showing us how she sees equity within this one type of experience.

Connections across experience type demonstrate how individuals are drawing on multiple experience types to create a web of meaning that expands beyond context to consider overarching ideas. As Rachel considered how power is wielded (and potentially abused) across a myriad of contexts, she is drew on multiple experiences across multiple experience types, to construct an understanding of power. As she did this, she was able to chart out aspects of power, for example, spaces where it is institutional, and spaces where it's social. She also considered the effects the wielding of power has—on the environment for work, or in relationships.

The connection across experience type allowed Rachel to think of power beyond a single context, so that it became a construct of its own. Further, Rachel's connections across experience types showed a readiness to consider larger, over-arching constructs like power, privilege, systems of oppression.

And lastly, generalizations make visible both the individual's broad conception, as well as the significant experiences that led to this broad conception. Generalizations are helpful not just that they make the individual's thesis explicit, but also that they make visible the backstory

behind it. In the case of Ashton, her generalization made explicit that she was open to certain ideas about social, but is resistant to others. The experiences used to explain this generalization showed why Ashton saw a "fine line" in what was acceptable sensitivity (the truth about the history of the United States) or unacceptable sensitivity (pilgrim bonnet crafts). In this case, Ashton is experiencing a tension between her new learning about equity and her past learning about teaching through her apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975). Knowledge of the experiences that were salient for her, particularly those that re-inscribe the resistance, can be informative in how to better support students like Ashton to make necessary connections (i.e. small pox blankets and bonnets as both symbols of harm). This disconnect is also illuminating in that it shows that the possible next learning for Ashton could be about society-level systems that cause and perpetuate inequity.

The overarching contribution that is common among all these techniques is that by creating equity narratives, participants are doing sense-making. This sense-making is captured for researchers and teacher educators, so that we are able to look more closely at what experiences are drawn on, and how those experiences are used in the larger sense-making.

Chapter 8: Conclusions, Lingering Questions, and Implications

In this section, I will offer a summary of the major conclusions of this study, lingering questions, reflection for my own teaching and research, and implications for the fields of education research and teacher education.

Conclusions

There are several conclusions to be drawn from this study. The first is the usefulness of narrative inquiry and narrative interviewing for investigating sense-making. The second relates to the literature of teacher-as-learner of equity. The third relates to the experiences that are educative for teachers in making sense of equity. In this section, I will discuss each in turn.

Narrative and Sense-making

The first major conclusion of this study is that as a theoretical frame, narrative inquiry is powerful for investigating sense-making. This is particularly true when used with narrative interviewing (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000) and structural narrative analysis (Riessman, 2008). Narrative interviewing was a productive interview protocol for evoking rich stories from individuals. While providing individuals ample space to talk can be daunting to researchers, it allowed the data to be framed and structured by the participants in the study. Since this work sought to give a wider view of sense-making of equity, this style of interview addressed that need by foregrounding the individual's sense-making. Likewise, structural narrative analysis allowed me to look closely at the narrative techniques applied to the stories, so see how sense was being made. Since participants were free to follow a stream of consciousness and associations not often found in more structured interview techniques, their stories closely reflect

their individuality. Their voice, thinking, and narrative techniques were all preserved and available to be analyzed as indicative of the sense-making. This is in contrast to the current literature, where there is a great deal of focus on whether learning has occurred (e.g., Ajayi 2017; Cochran-Smith, Shakman, Jong, Terrell, Barnatt, & McQuillan, 2009; Davila, 2011; Moore, 2008; Parker, Bartell, & Novak, 2015) rather than how learning is occurring, even if imperfectly.

Additionally, the structural analysis made visible how the equity stories were shaped and reshaped over time. In particular, the narrative technique of explicit re-narration (described in Chapter Five) confirmed what the literature has long argued—that teacher learning of equity should be viewed as an on-going process (McAlister & Irvine, 2000; Nieto, 2000). In detailing life stories, McAdams (2001) stated that stories are "continually made and remade." (pg. 118) In other words, a narrative interpretation of a life experience is not fixed. This making and re-making of stories is the work of sense-making. In this study, this making and remaking of stories is particularly evident in explicit re-narration. As such, narrative provides a window into this dynamic process of sense-making of equity.

The last point about this method as applied to this research problem is that the stories created by the participants in this study are incredibly rich. They are candid and are not bound by performance for a grade or an instructor's expectation, as is often the case with work done within coursework. This is in contrast to a number of studies that focused on an instructional intervention within a formal teacher education experience (e.g., Bartell, 2013; Boyd & Noblit, 2015; Simic-Mueller, Fernandes, & Felton-Koestler, 2015). The narrative frame allowed me to see the richness of prospective teachers' sense-making of equity, unbounded by a particular instructional intervention or course. This richness—and its visibility—is important because it informs the wider work on how teachers learn. Further, this richness allows researchers like

myself to look closely at individuals who have not completely figured out equity, and perhaps better understand how they made progress in their sense-making, and what supports they might require to continue to grow in their understanding.

Prospective Teachers as Learners of Equity

Despite the acknowledged need for teachers must be learners of equity (Cochran-Smith, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Lowenstein, 2009), little has been done to investigate teachers' learning of equity. As outlined in Chapter Two, there have been two studies to date that have used teachers' learning of equity as the central focus of their work: Philip's work on ideology in pieces (2011) and the work of Aguirre, Turner, Bartell, Kalinec-Craig, Foote, McDuffie, and Drake (2012) on an emergent learning trajectory for prospective teachers' incorporation of students' mathematical ideas and cultural funds of knowledge. This study builds on this work by offering an additional study on the sense-making of equity, and its implications for teaching.

Philip (2011) emphasized that an ideology in pieces perspective required that teachers' learning of equity not be viewed as static and decontextualized, but as a compounding series of factors that contributed to conceptual change. However, Philip was careful not to assign causality to any one experience as causing this change.

In contrast to ideology in pieces, my work in this study allows the individuals to identify the causes of change. This was often seen in the narrative technique of explicit re-narration (described in Chapter Five), as individuals explicated what their story used to be, what happened to cause change, and what their story was as a result of that catalyst for change. Furthermore, owning to the openness and participant-oriented nature of the interview technique and narrative construction, causality is assigned when—*and only when*—the individual storyteller assigns it. In

this way, the work here builds on Philip's ideology in pieces. Philip's work made obvious the ways in which many experiences come together to support conceptual and ideological change, but because of this alchemy, it was not possible or prudent to assume that the catalyst could be identified. However, in my work, we can see causality that is indicated by the individual in their sense-making and changing of their equity narratives. As such, my work here offers an important research tool for understanding precisely how particular individuals arrive at conceptual and ideological changes (i.e., changes in their equity narratives).

This explicit re-narration is not unlike the work of Boyd and Noblit (2015), whose use of an autobiography as an early and concluding assignment in prospective teachers' course on equity. In their work, they saw a number of prospective teachers reframe their understanding of their own story and incorporate elements of equity (e.g., privilege, heteronormativity). However, this was done within the confines of coursework, and the reframing was invited by the instructors. This is not to diminish this reframing by these individuals, but it is to distinguish it from the work here, where there was not a specific educational intervention and the reframing (re-narrating) was both done and made explicit by the prospective teachers of their own accord and initiative. In this way, this study extends and confirms the work of Boyd and Noblit by demonstrating that prospective teachers can do the work of explicit re-narration, even when outside coursework, in less performative settings where their re-narration may be evaluated for a grade.

In this way, the work presented here offers similar sense-making results as can be seen in the positive outcomes of the research focused on educational interventions, but also offers theoretical framing for identifying and describing the sense-making of equity, as well as the catalysts for this sense-making.

Prospective Teachers' Educative Experiences of Equity

The third major conclusion to draw from this study regards the experiences that prospective teachers drew on in their sense-making of equity. As detailed in Chapter Four, prospective teachers drew from a wide range of experiences in creating their equity narratives. Of the types of experiences that were included and/or emphasized in the narratives, many are not well-represented in the research literature or their presence is under-investigated. For example, those experience types that invoke power in sense-making (e.g., experiences in work), as well as those that invoke authority that may contradict or complicate the teaching of teacher preparation programs (e.g., social media influencers or proximity to educational professionals), are not represented in the research literature.

In contrast to this, the existing literature on teachers' learning of equity focuses primarily on those experiences within formal teacher education settings, such as teacher preparation coursework and fieldwork (e.g., Gay and Kirkland, 2003; Gorski, 2009; MacDonald, 2005). While participants in this study certainly did leverage experiences from within their teacher preparation programs, this study demonstrates that the emphasis and role of experiences beyond the teacher preparation program should not be ignored. If we, as teacher education researchers, are only investigating those experiences that happen within the confines of formal teacher education, we are not investigating the full picture of teachers' sense-making of equity.

Since a majority of the experiences incorporated in the equity narratives are from outside teacher preparation program, the participants in this study confirm that individuals are already life-long learners of social justice and equity, as they have drawn from their various experiences to build their understanding of equity (whether desirable learning or not). This builds on the

notion that teachers' learning of equity is a process (McAlister & Irvine, 2000; Nieto, 2000, Philip 2011) and is unlikely to be well-studied in a single educational intervention or course.

Lastly, this wide range of experiences, combined with the narrative technique of explicit re-narration, show that the full scope of prospective teachers' lives are opportunities for learning and re-narrating their experiences related to equity. It is often considered a challenge of working with teachers from privileged backgrounds, that their own lack of personal marginalization is a hindrance to their learning of the marginalization of others. However, the extensive use of educative experience types that were beyond personal first-hand experiences demonstrates that hearing others' stories, consuming media, as well as formal educational interventions are still fruitful for sense-making of equity.

Lingering Questions

While the conclusions of this study are exciting for future work in teachers as learners of equity, I would be remiss if I didn't point out aspects that were missing from the equity narratives and the lingering questions they provoke.

Much like the work of Cochran-Smith, Shakman, Jong, Terrell, Barnatt, and McQuillan (2009), there was a lack of discussion of structural aspects of inequity in the narratives. Power, privilege, and structures that perpetuate inequity were notably lacking. The equity narratives tended to focus on inter-personal interactions and the sphere of the classroom, rather than on this systemic level. While this was commendable, it only reflects part of what we would want prospective teachers to understand about equity. The limitations of this lack of understanding can perhaps be best seen in Chapter Six, where Ellie's use of visual metaphor—and the limitations therewith—is discussed.

In addition, there was little to no mention of race or gender identity as a group membership that could influence inequity, particularly within education. There were frequently moments in the interviews when a participant would talk about a particular student of theirs and I would wonder whether that student was a student of color, and how that might be a factor in the study participant's thinking about that student's behavior or place in the class. (Owning to the guidelines of narrative interviewing, I did not invoke these questions or ask the participants the child's race.) This lack of group membership discussion is in contrast to the regular discussion of inclusion of special education students and English language learners (ELL) in equity considerations. Similar to the findings of MacDonald (2003), it's not clear to me whether this was because the program from which these participants came had questions of race and gender infused throughout, so as to make them common place, or perhaps because these prospective teachers had had coursework that focused on inclusion of special education and ELLs. As with the structural aspects of inequity, racial and gender identity groups are an important aspect of understanding inequity. Their absence in these narratives leaves me wondering why these prospective teachers did not include these identities or groups in in their stories.

Taken together, these aspects of equity that remain left out of the equity narratives in this study are dismaying. As detailed above, it's clear that prospective teachers are learning and making sense of equity, but these omissions show that this sense-making is necessary but insufficient. The incompleteness of their notions of equity brings the conversation back to the framework proposed by Dyches and Boyd (2017) for social justice pedagogical content knowledge. I am intrigued by how my work here on teachers' sense-making might be considered in light of this work of mapping domains of knowledge, to help the field understand what aspects of teacher learning of equity are incomplete, and perhaps how to better support that learning.

These gaps in equity sense-making also cause me to wonder how other teachers—whether prospective or practicing—who *do* understand these aspects of inequity have made sense of these aspects.

Reflections

As a teacher education researcher and a teacher educator, this work is important to me, not just for my research agenda, but also for my practical work with my own students. I take this section to share with my readers a few reflections on how this work affects me, as a teacher education researcher and a teacher education practitioner.

As a teacher educator, this work has caused several points of reflection. The first is whether my students (who are prospective teachers) have the adequate understanding of systems of power and privilege in our society. And if they don't, perhaps I need to include that knowledge in my own coursework, by including readings that are beyond the scope of education. This past year, I have assigned Cottom's (2018) essay, *The Stupid Logic of Poor People* in my math methods courses for secondary math teachers. While this reading is not about mathematics or teaching, it is about reasoning, and assumptions of those in positions of power about what qualifies as a "smart" argument for certain economic choices. I have found that this reading generated great discussion in my class and that it created a bridge to discussing how students of different backgrounds may view the contexts of mathematical tasks and solutions in differing ways.

In addition to considering a wider range of readings and knowledge within my own teacher preparation program coursework, I am considering whether it might be important to require sociology courses of education majors. In particular, a course that covered race, class,

and gender would be particularly helpful in helping students to better understand the systems and institutions within society that define and maintain inequity. I often wonder if in attempting to do all the things we do in a teacher education program, we forget that other disciplines offer the expertise we need, and that seeing society through a broader lens might support the better understanding of how public education fits in that wide view.

Lastly, this work has caused me to question how I assess learning of equity. For example, the visual metaphors discussed in Chapter Six illustrate how one facet of equity can be well-understood by our students, while their larger understanding is lacking. How do I assess—both formatively and summatively—for various knowledge and understanding of equity, throughout the courses and fieldwork that my students experience? If I ask them to describe equity and their description is based solely on the popular meme, it is worth celebration but is completely insufficient on its own for a rigorous understanding of equity.

As an education researcher, White woman, and a first-generation college graduate, I am fascinated by the ways that teachers who care about equity in education become who they are. Many of us have come to these convictions in spaces beyond the educational institutions we attended, though formal education at times buttressed this learning. I am curious whether (and how) these learnings can become institutionalized. I am curious what commonality there exists across our experiences of learning about equity. I am (still) curious what learning theory best models this growth—is it conceptual change? A learning progression? An enculturation to a larger ideological view that encompasses more than just teaching? My intellectual curiosity to better understand this sense-making is stoked by the work in this study.

Implications

Given the summarized conclusions above, I offer the following implications—grouped by those useful for the research community and those useful for the teacher education community.

Implications for future research

Given the findings of this study, and the reflections shared above, I am particularly interested in investigating the equity narratives of practicing teachers. The classroom experiences of practicing teachers, who self-identify as valuing equity in education, would certainly be more rich regarding teaching and children and may also be more authoritative. This raises a number of questions for me: Would these teachers have different narrative techniques—ones as of yet not accessible to prospective teachers? Or might the distance between teacher preparation coursework and classroom teaching have decreased the opportunities to consider equity in their classroom? Would a practicing teacher have a more robust set of sense-making techniques for equity, as compared to the prospective teachers? Where along the trajectory of the myriad things that teachers learn and operationalize, does equity naturally fall? What are the experience types that practicing teachers draw from in their sense-making around equity and equity in education?

Implications for teacher educators

Since prospective teachers draw from a wealth of experiences to make sense of equity, we teacher educators should consider how we are supporting this sense-making. We should consider broadening our discourse of equity beyond the sphere of education, to welcome participants to bring in their own experiences and connections. This is one way that we may surface and contend with other sources of authority that our prospective teachers are drawing upon.

We should also consider the range of sense-making narrative techniques we are providing to prospective teachers. For example, are we supporting their sense-making of equity beyond a reductionist image? Are there techniques that the participants in this study are using that we currently aren't supporting, or could better support? What other disciplines could offer areas of SJPACK that would support prospective teachers' learning of equity?

Final Thoughts

Equity in education has been a decades long project but is an immanently worthy project. Teachers have long been conceived of as important agents in this work, but the research on teacher learning of equity has been mixed at best. This study has demonstrated that a wider range of experiences, beyond just teacher education experiences, should be leveraged in this sense-making. It has also demonstrated that while messy work, a better understanding of teacher learning of equity holds promise of better support for teachers' sense-making—and therefore enactment—of equity in education.

Appendix A: Lauren's Story

I've always used equity as like, honestly like equality, like treatment in a setting. And when I talk about it—we talk about at school—I bring it back to what I am seeing in any setting.

So one of the biggest things that stood out to me when I was considering becoming a teacher. My mom was in education and I loved that. I thought it was really cool. I got to see teachers from a different perspective because I got to see them outside of the classroom. We're talking about, "Like oh my God, they're people!" It was awesome. But I loved them so much and my relationship with them meant so much. And so I took a very critical eye of students and teachers in the classroom.

And there was one moment, it was AP biology and I was really excited. I love AP biology. I love biology. I think it is so cool. I was really excited and I was like, "Oh my gosh, we're going to do like hands on activities! It's going to be incredible!"

I'd never heard of this teacher before, but I'd heard some good things. So I was like, "Okay." Pretty confident walking into the classroom. But it was completely opposite of what I thought. She very much had a preferred type of student; which is fine to a certain extent. Obviously you have an ideal student you'd want in your classroom, but that doesn't happen. Her ideal student was a student, who's not very chatty in the classroom. Their work is done on time to its full potential. They participate in class but not too much. And they're probably labeled as a gifted student. I think it can differ in a lot of ways. I think that's definitely what she was looking for, especially in an AP setting. She loved her AP students, which was fine. Cool. Dandy. But if you hadn't taken an AP class before, you were doomed. I had taken an AP class before, but I was very chatty. I would have missing assignments. Absolutely. My homework was not done to full

potential according to her. I participated a lot, but my participation wasn't, "I have the right answer the entire time." It was a lot of like questions and questioning her. Not in a disrespectful way, but like, "What do you mean by that? Like, can you expand on that for me, for my learning?" She didn't like that. She didn't like that I thought very differently than her.

But she really loved her textbook, so we were very textbook learning, which was again, fine. Everyone does their own way. I'm personally not a textbook learner, so I knew that class was going to be a challenge for me. So I got a tutor. And he was incredible. But we would take notes in class and then take notes at home for homework. And we turned them in and she would grade them for accuracy and completion. And I think through the whole class, the highest grade I ever got was a 30 something. 30 out of a hundred. Yeah, 30%. The first notes I ever turned in, I'd used pink ink because I think colors are fun. She gave me a zero because I used pink ink. I was like, "Okay, can I redo them?" She said, "No, but next time remember." I was like, "Okay." So then I worked really hard to make sure that I was writing the notes that best fit her and not my own learning.

She didn't go to school to be teacher. She laid it out for us first day class and I was like, "What?!" She went to school. She was a biochem major; which I was like, "Oh cool. She knows a lot." Didn't think anything of it because that was my kind of first introduction to somebody who probably didn't want to be around children. But her husband was the money maker and she found a job that kind of fit his agenda, which is fine. But because of that, I think she was kind of angry. I mean, she would talk about how she didn't want kids, how she hated kids. And I was like, "Okay, like yeah, okay we're 16, 17 years old in this class but we're still children." I mean it

was like when people say, "Oh like she was teaching for the summers"—she was teaching for the summers. She was teaching because her husband wasn't home.

I mean even when we graded tests it was, "Okay switch with a partner. They're grading it and we're talking about it out loud." Yeah. So that was unethical. You can feel it. I definitely really value people's emotions and how they're feeling. For me that's number one, and I could feel it when people were really embarrassed to say their test score and you don't ever want to do that. That's rude. But she didn't care. She would also hand out tests in order of who did the greatest and who did the worst. And it was really interesting because I knew she hated me and I would sometimes have the top score. I'd get the first test back and it was like an eye roll. I remember one time she thought I was cheating. "How am I cheating? I'm not cheating. I work hard. That's okay. To work hard."

One time I got into such a big argument with her because I went in for extra time and I was like, "I really don't understand this and I need you to explain to me." She's the only AP bio teacher in the school too.

She spit at me.

So I grabbed my stuff and I walked out.

And the principal was my mom's great, great friend. I loved this woman and I was like, "She spit at me." She said, "Lauren, what do you mean?" And I was like, "She spit at me." She was like, "Okay, was it like an accident?" I'm like, "No. She spit out." She was like, "Okay, we're going to have to file a form." She was like, "I can't do this because we like know each

other outside of school. I don't feel comfortable doing this and I want you to be treated the same respect as other students in this situation."

So then I had to go to an assistant principal. He didn't like me very much either, but he handled it pretty well. We'd have a meeting, the assistant superintendent came in. And basically they said it was anger. It wasn't actually true spit.

But it was true spit. She spit at me.

But I didn't care to argue past that. I just got out of her class, which I think I should have pushed harder cause like she was awful. I had started first semester. AP biology is a two semester course, and I finished the first semester and didn't complete the second. When I was looking at my final grade and going over everything and it was kind of getting closer to finals, I realized that I was not about to pass this class. Which was scary. I mean especially because I was a junior, I was thinking about where am I going to go to college and everything. I didn't want that on my transcript but it was, and I'm here so it ended up working out. So after first semester completely finished, I went on and I took genetics instead.

In our high school we had work habits grades and then we also had our content grades. Work habits were like homework, participation and stuff. In that I was getting around 20%. But then my test grades, because I had a phenomenal tutor, I was getting an 80% in. But I ended up not passing the class with a D, when I very obviously knew the information, but she didn't appreciate how I presented the information for her.

And I was not the only kid in the class. So for me the equity in the classroom wasn't fair. She wanted things one way specifically and if you could not meet them without proper

instruction, it didn't matter. So for me that really was the first time I ever had a really negative experience in a classroom. And that's when I was thinking, "Okay, this isn't equal, this isn't fair. Not all teachers are great, not all students are great. Not all situations are equal. Not all situations are treated with respect."

I had never sent my parents in to school, but I did for this. I was like, "Dad, I need help." I didn't want my mom to get involved. She had a phenomenal relationship with my principal. They had get togethers every Friday, and I really didn't want her to ruin that. So I was like, "Okay dad, can you go in?" And he was like, "Fine." I was pacing around my house for two hours, I think, while they had the meeting. And he came back and he said, "I'm pulling you out of the class. She doesn't like you and she will not pass you." And I was like, "Okay." He went in and he pulled me, I don't know anything about the interaction they had. He used some very foul words towards her, but I didn't know anything about the conversation and I never asked. And she no longer works at the school. I believe she quit, but I think it was getting to the time that she was going to get fired.

So at that moment I decided I did not want to be a teacher. I was very anti-education. I had an attendance contract my senior year of high school because I really was not showing up because I didn't feel like I needed to, because at that point I had lost all hope. And I had lost all faith in how I would be treated, because I knew I wasn't a traditional learner. In elementary school I even had a teacher called me a "boy learner" because my desk was really messy and I didn't show my work. And I got it pretty quickly. So that was really interesting to kind of see all the biases that teachers held in a classroom.

It was like I distanced myself from being a learner. It was more like I was "studenting." So I did my work, I completed my work and that was it. My emotions had very much been in education, and after this moment I completely removed all emotions and, if I didn't have tests, I wasn't showing up to class. But my grades were fine. So my parents were like, "Well, we can't really tell her. She needs to go to learn because she's learning and she's on an attendance contract…" They haven't quite threatened anything yet. But my parents also understood that I was so pissed off. I was kind of pissed at the system. And my senior year, the principal who my mom was good friends with, she left. Our superintendent was terrible. People had bumper stickers. Her name is Vicki Flannigan, they had "Fire Flannigan" stickers on their car. The principal's mom passed away. She was going on a flight and her mom had cancer and when she landed, they said, "You need to turn around, you need to be in this meeting, otherwise you're fired." She turned around, booked literally the plane back. Her mom died when she was on the plane. She quit. She like kind of early retired quit. And so I was just angry at the system. I was like, you're hurting these people I love so much, and you're hurting me. And so that was when I was like, "F education, I don't like this."

And people didn't know. And I couldn't say anything. I remember people were like, "That's so immature of her to quit when we need her the most. That's so pathetic." And I'm like, "You don't even know what she just went through." And so that was also really hard. And then I would hear my teachers talk about it and they didn't know either, but I knew. And I'm like, "You are so pissed that people are assuming you're doing this one thing." And that's not the case.

I actually had one teacher—I did not miss a single one of her classes. She was my AP Lang, AP Lit teacher also in sophomore year. I love that woman. She was phenomenal. She was

so cool. She was like, "Your grades do not define your intelligence. Your work ethic and your spirit in this class is what's important. We're going to learn and grow together." And I was like, "Wow, a community?" Because that was stripped from the school. So I loved her. I still keep in contact with her too. I told her when I switched my major and I wanted to be a teacher, she was like, "No freaking way!" She was like, "That's hilarious. I'm so excited for you." Which was awesome. And I loved that.

But senior year was really rough at some points because I hated it. But it was very interesting because I was studenting so hard, it was my best grades, but I didn't feel like I learned the most, which was weird for me.

Once I got to college, I went into pre-business. That was a terrible idea for me. In my first class, they told me to open up Excel, and I said, "Absolutely not. This is not for me. I hate this." I took a very lovely W. And I reached out to my advisor and I told her, "This isn't what the path I wanted." She didn't respond for three weeks. I was like, "Okay, so this is probably not what I want."

So then I was just taking random gen eds and I had a friend reach out to me, say, "Hey, do you want to take this gen ed with me? It's two credits. I know we both need two more credits to be a 15 credit student. And it's a guaranteed A. Let's, let's go over this." And I was like, "Okay, let's do it." I didn't look into it at all. And then I was like, "Oh okay, we're going to work at schools. Is that like part of our grade?" And she was like, "Yeah, we meet once a week for a little bit and then we just get to volunteer at schools." I was like, "Cool, I love volunteering. That sounds fun. Let's do it."

It was [project name]. We were volunteering at a middle school. I don't know, I think it's controversial, but I don't know enough about it, but essentially we just go and we have meetings and we learn about these really big ideas. Like one thing I took away from it, the big thing, was the opportunity gap. That was really big for us to learn about. And we learned a lot about the [city] community as well. And that was really cool, especially as a freshman, not really knowing anything because I didn't grow up in [state]. (I grew up in [another state]; in [town], a suburb of [city].) So it was really cool too.

But it was really eye-opening. It was this little skinny guy—he rode a bike to class everyday and he was a grad student who was teaching it and he really let us have a very discussion based, meeting once a week. I felt that I could just talk. It was very discussion-based. We had readings in a classroom, but I think he knew that if he assigned us readings, we wouldn't do them. I mean, the class was really diverse, so you had some people who were taking it for the A, which I originally went in with, but I think I left a different student. And then there were some people who were really into like education or certain majors and really wanted to know what's happening in education and what's happening in underfunded education. So we just went into that. But honestly, the meetings were really cool. I learned a lot of really big vocab terms that like really resonated with me. But my favorite was just volunteering at the middle school. I felt that was so cool.

I was like, "Okay, I love education. I just had one bad experience." In that school, the kids had free and reduced lunches. They had uniforms provided to them. And for me that was a reality shock. Because that's not how I grew up. And I knew that it was happening, but I'd never seen it or experienced it. So it was really intriguing to me to go into a situation like that and see

that education is still kind of the same but also very different in other ways. Education for them was opening doors like for them and their future. And they were learning about things that their household did not provide for them.

And it was a mentor program so I didn't have to teach them anything, although they wanted me to do a one on one thing. I tried really hard not to do because they asked us not do that. They were like, "Just get to know the kids." And I was like, "Cool. Okay." I absolutely loved this kiddo. She still has my email and she'll email me when she has questions. She's now a freshmen. Gosh. Yeah, she's a freshman in high school. And I just learned about her life, what she wanted to do, what she thought she could do. Because she was telling me, "There's no way I'll go to college. I don't even know if I'll make it through high school." And I was like, "Oh my God, you're in sixth grade and you're already thinking about this." Since sixth grade, I was really like hell bent that I was going to Harvard. And then looking and I would reflect on it. "I'm okay. I'm not going to Harvard. Harvard's probably not the best option for me." But I just thought that was really interesting that she really didn't have a lot of hope for what she wanted to do. I asked her, "Okay, well if you could go to college for what you want to?" And she's like, "Yeah, it sounds really fun." I was like, "Yeah, like college is really fun. It's a cool time." But she never even considered it. And I was like, "Okay, what if, what do you really want to do?" And she was really interested in like the beauty community and she really wanted to do hair and makeup and I was like, "Ooh, this is really cool. This is start." Because that was like our one goal was to get them inspired to do something. Because they showed us statistics. And they offer classes, I believe, at [school district] or at [high school], I think it's an aesthetician thing they offer. And I believe she's enrolled in that, which is really awesome. Also I have a ton of friends who do that and they're making a ton of money. So good for her.

But, I liked that and I liked getting to know her as like a person. And she really didn't open up to me the first five times we met. She would barely remember my name. She'd get annoyed that I would come during class time and sit with her, because she thought I was just there to help her with homework. She's like, "I don't need help." I was like, "You're right. Like you don't need help. You're very smart. You just are very sassy and don't do your work. So that's why you have a C." She was like, "I don't want it. I don't like my teacher." I'm like, "Oh yeah, I can relate to that. If I don't like my teacher. I'm probably not doing my work either."

I loved that and now I'm student teaching in middle school I want to be a middle school teacher. I really like this age because it's uncomfortable. It's really weird. There's hormones; there's crushes. And I thought that was funny because they're expected to deal with it on their own or it's not valid because they're so young. It's like, "Why would you be feeling that way when you're only like 12?" And I'm like, "Oh, but they are feeling that way and they are only 12." It's valid. So I was like, "Okay, wow. This is really cool." Even now when I'm doing my part time field work in my eighth grade classroom, the stuff they say—it's so profound. And I think people completely discredit that whole age and I'm like, "Cool."

For me, that's when I was like, "Okay, I do love this. And I do see that not everything has equity. Not everything is fair, not everything, but education to its core is absolutely incredible." And I loved that. And so it was really excited to get back on board with that.

So then I ended up, somehow accidentally, reaching out to Janet, the director of education. She was like, "Oh, let me help you." I was like, "Thank God, cause I don't know where I'm going". And she got me all settled and I was able to take classes. She was so sweet. She got me in classes with my friends, so I felt comfortable. She was like, "Who do you know

here? Who would you feel comfortable with?" And I was like, "Wow, that's so kind." I felt so accepted and loved and that my voice was being heard and that I was actually going to grow as a student.

And so once I got into that, it was really cool. And then I know we talked about equity a lot in [professor]'s class. [Course number], I believe it was classroom management. And that for me was the first time I actually heard rules and procedures that actually went along with education. I thought that was really cool. It's how you treat every single student with respect and you treat every student the same, but every student is different. So the same might not look the same for each student. Which for me that was really cool and that was really interesting for me to reflect on some of my negative times in school, especially my AP biology class that I really did not thrive in. And I felt like my voice was completely taken away, like me as a student completely changed after that. And so it was really cool to then go and reflect on that and realize that she was a bad teacher, I was not a bad student and that I was a good learner. She was a bad teacher. And go through that way and then reflect on my time in the classroom, which was really cool to say, "Okay, I need to make sure that I am treating every single student with the same respect and fairness that I want and that they deserve."

And so when I'm going through and I was looking—every student is so different. And they all do things so differently. So then I was like, "Oh my goodness, I have to be a strong enough person to be able to go through and make sure that every lesson plan, anything I do is available to all students, not just one type of student that makes sense to me." That was kind of daunting because that's a ton of extra work that I didn't realize that kind of needed to be done.

But it was also really powerful and empowering to go through and say, "I have the power to make each child feel very comfortable and safe and that their voice is heard and their learning is valued in the classroom," which I know not every student gets. I mean, every time I tell people I want to be a teacher, they're like, "Why?" And like, "Ooh, that's cute. Do you like young kids?" Like, yeah, okay, sure. It's cute. Like kindergarteners say funny things. But like that's not the reason. It's because I had a terrible experience, but I also had a phenomenal experience and I was able to do that.

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I probably should mention this also. My mom works now for a company with my old principal, called [company name] and it's an educational based company and it basically goes in and does profiling. Not like, "Hey, this is your brain and you're probably going to be really good at that job," because that doesn't work. And that's not realistic. It's, "This is how you comprehend information, this is your behaviors." So it breaks it down. Like how extroverted are you? How flexible are you? How assertive are you? And then also how much of your brain is analytical or conceptual, structural or social relational. So how much you care about people.

So they go into schools and they basically break it down like, "Hey, you have a really wide variety of learners. Please don't teach to one." And so they go in and teachers get really emotional about it. I've seen some of their conferences, it's really cool. But I also knew know my profile and know what I go into. So I knew that a lot of times, teachers taught to one type of student. But there's billions of types of students and you can't just teach one because you're going to be leaving students behind that you think are struggling when in reality you're struggling to teach them the material correctly. So I knew that I had my background in that and I like

acknowledged it, but I think I acknowledged it in a very selfish term. So I would go in like, "Okay, I know I'm really analytical, I'm really conceptual and I care a lot about people, but I don't care about the details." Literally like full 3% of my brain was to details. They thought they broke the system because I was the first kid to ever take it, and they were like, "You did something wrong." No, I just really don't like details. So I knew that going in. So at first I was like kind of getting angry. I'm like, "Why aren't they teaching them?" Then, "Oh, I'm, because I'm not the only one, because I know that there are people who really love details and that's probably why they're giving them that many."

So I was like, "I need to find a connection with my teachers." So all my teachers in high school also have this profile. So I'm just that weird kid, I was like, "Can I see it?" And they're like, "Yeah, sure." I'm like, "My mom's Debbie, you know, we're in--" They're like, "Okay, yeah, here we go." So I would just like, okay, I know I need to connect with him on this part because that's where we're going to have a relationship. That's where we're going to have our better understanding. So I would go in very selfishly and be like, "Okay, how am I going to connect with this teacher to have the best outcome for myself?" And then once I went into [professor]'s class, she gave a couple examples of when she did something wrong in a class and hurt a student and that like for me was like really like authentic and I had never experienced a teacher admitting fault like that. And I thought that was really cool. And when she gave examples like it very much tied into the terms we were learning or these big ideas. And so I remembered them, which was so lovely because that really rarely ever happens for me, when it comes to memorization. But, I got to see that when she was doing things for us and she'd model things, then she'd go and she'd break it down. Okay, this is why I did it this way because she even like point kids out in the class. Like she'd get to know us and she'd be like, they needed this. Or like

Lauren needed time to go chat with her friends. And so I wanted to make sure we had some time that we feel discuss things with our friends. I knew she wasn't off topic, but I also knew she needed to talk it out. And I was like, "Oh, that's so nice. You were able to break down your lesson so flawlessly that everyone got what they needed out of it." And so for me, that was like my first time was like, "It's possible." I know it was, because I'd seen teachers do it, but I never done it from my perspective and if I just want to teach us to do it for me, but then at that point I was like, "Oh, I need to do it for other little human beings." So I thought that was really cool because that's when I was starting to make these connections. What I wanted as a student versus what I need to do as a teacher. So I thought that was really cool.

Teachers need to be strong. Not like strong as in like you know the material and you're really like educated, but I think more like emotionally strong and like your emotional intelligence kind of needs to play into that. I know keep saying, well like reflecting, which I know you've heard because you teach education. But for me that's really important—going back and like, "Oh okay." I need to be a strong reflector. I need to be strong emotionally to understand what everybody needs in the classroom. Not necessarily the material. But like you should know the material as well, but I think emotions go a long way too in the classroom.

For me, when I think of equity and my journey in that, it's having equity and not realizing how incredible it was in a classroom and having such incredible teachers that I didn't know that it was being taken away from me. And once I did experience some really negative things and then coming back and realizing that being able to reflect on it and then working really hard to try everything in my power to make sure that I get to do that to students, I get to make sure that their

learning is exactly how it needs to go for them and not just one traditional type of student that realistically the American education system kind of pushes it to be.

I think outside of education, friends are definitely like my absolute world, friends and family. I have really strong relationships and really phenomenal relationships with my friends and I definitely got really lucky. I think lucky's kind of weird way to put it. But I know I'm a good friend and I think because of that I attract good friends, which is really cool.

I think equity in a relationship setting is really important because you want to make sure, again, even in a classroom, your relationship is respected and it's treated with fairness. Growing up, my dad always said, "Whatever you do to someone, make sure you would feel comfortable with them doing it to you." And I've always kind of had that in the back of my head. So I really appreciate when people go in above and beyond for me because I know I would do that for them. And I don't think we've ever really discussed it like as friends. But I know that I will go out of my way to do something for them because I know they would do the same and it's constantly back and forth. And I think if we even laid it out on a piece of paper, like it would be completely equal. All the things we've been able to do for each other and experience together. And I think that probably is a really good foundation for my emotional and mental stability going through everything because it's not easy. Life is not easy, but it's very fun. And when you're surrounded by people who are really incredible in your life, it makes, it makes it fun. So I think equity in a friendship is really important.

And equity, like honestly in a whole, it just kinda makes everything worth it and it makes everything a little bit easier. If you feel valued and respected in any sense, it makes it worth it to

do. It takes the nervousness or embarrassment to do anything out of it because you know you have support behind you, which is really cool.

I have friends who didn't get the opportunity to go to college or they didn't take the opportunity to go to college because that didn't fit their lifestyle, which is incredible and awesome for them. Not here to make their choices. But I know that comparing my life and the equity vibe I've received and maybe the backing they've had has been completely different. And I always kind of wonder like if my life hadn't gone exactly how it was until this very moment, I wonder what I would be doing. Or maybe if I didn't take that stupid Excel course freshman year, I probably would still be in business, which is fine and really cool. But I don't think that's the path that would've brought me the most happiness.

So I think just equity is a really good foundation to start on in anything you do.

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I feel like my thinking about equity and teaching probably started as a student. Yeah, definitely as a student. Because I knew my teachers so well cause my mom worked at the school. So they used to come over in elementary school, Friday night wine nights, always at my house. A lot of the times that would turn into Saturday morning hangovers. And then I would be that kid who walked down and I was like, "Can I get homework help since you're here?" Which I loved. But I also got to hear (even if I wasn't allowed to I was still listening) their conversations about what they were doing in the classroom and how they were helping kids. Because how my elementary school teachers talked about their students was really pure and it was never naming names. In student teaching now, I've realized that education isn't all Disneyland and lovely and

wonderful and names do get dropped and teachers do talk poorly about children. But I never realized that because when I was listening to teachers talk about students, it was always incredible and lovely. And they wanted them to do so well. And so I guess when I understood equity and teaching, it was, I liked that they'd talked about a kid who was gifted and be like, "I need to do this for them because they really need to be challenged in the classroom. I'll give them an A if they have A quality work on that because that's where their mind is at." And I liked that because I was the gifted kid who wanted to be challenged. Like getting A's in all your classes is fun for a short amount of time, until you stop caring about your grades because you don't actually have to work for them. But I also loved when they were talking about the kids who were really struggling in class and they were like, "Oh my gosh, they'll totally connect with this topic. We need to do this as a class. They're going to soar. That's their A opportunity. That's their connection moment." And I loved that. I thought that was so cool. And then I liked it too, because then you know, the following week I'd be in class and we would do that subject or that topic. And even if I didn't have a connection with that, I knew it was for another kid in the class (I never even knew who too, which was I think the coolest part of it). And I was just so excited for that one kid regardless of who it was. Like to do well and love it. I loved it as well and I thought it was cool to see how hard teachers work to make sure everybody has this fair and equal opportunity to have connections and succeed in a classroom.

That was my, I always call it my Disneyland idea of education because it was like so pure and happy and everything was right. And then high school came and education was no longer Disneyland. But that's also because I wasn't with the same principal who hand-picked every single teacher at this brand new school with all this incredible funding. So my idea of education was also very unrealistic because of the area I lived and the people I was surrounded by. So I

think once I got to high school I kind of was pissed off because I've seen teachers who didn't care. It was just "I'll grade according to the rubric and I'm not going to go the extra mile for one student. I don't care if they fail, that's not on me. That's on them" type of thing. And so then I was like, "Ew, so education isn't fair and they actually don't care." And you know, in middle school they try and tell you. They're like, "High school—the teachers aren't gonna hold your hands. High schoolers, the teachers aren't going to care if you have missing work and stuff." Which I don't necessarily agree with. I get at high school you need to be responsible, you need to be accountable for your own actions and all that. But at some point you need to recognize that everybody's human and everybody makes mistakes and there should be something that—I don't know—there should be at least that some type of human connection and human understanding instead of just this robotic education system, that I think like a lot of times people try to portray that high school is. Which it isn't because I had incredible teachers who always went the extra mile for so many people and because of that we did well in the classroom. So I think that's my, how my idea of equity and teaching started was just watching my teachers and getting to know my teachers and how they were planning for their students' success, which was really cool.

And kind of once I got over the fact that I don't actually hate education, I just hated some teachers, I would like sitting in the classroom. It was really eye opening to hear other people teach you and tell you that like, "Hey, there are different types of learners and not everybody's going to get an A in the class. And that doesn't define their intelligence." Because I feel like as a student sometimes you feel very restricted that you have to get an A or a B in a class to be considered intelligent and for your teacher to like you. I think there's always that pleasing aspect that a lot of kids look for. And I thought it was really cool that like they're like, "Just find something even if it's not the subject you're teaching that that kiddo just thrives at and connect

with them on that." And I loved that because then I was like, "Okay, you, everybody can be, I guess, equal in some sense. It's just not going to be equal with the same measurement." So if Billy Bob Joe loves math and does really well at math while I'm teaching math, okay, that's awesome. We can connect on that. But if like the kid sitting next to Billy Bob, Joe hates math and hates his life in the classroom, but we can connect on something art. I think that's really cool.

And I like that there's not the expectation that every kid's going to be good at everything. It should. I mean ideally you'd love every single kid in your class to do well, get an A and love the subject. But sometimes that doesn't happen and it really will never happen if you're not connecting with them on something.

First and foremost, equity and teaching is just getting to know the students and their interests, how they react to certain situations, their family life as much as possible. I mean some kids will open up a lot quicker and a lot more in depth than others. Which I'm okay with cause I know not everybody's like a big sharer but just having like something to like connect with them about I think is easier. Because if there is an instance where a kid is making a poor choice and consequences need to be put into action, I don't think consequences are like a fine, like do this if a kid does this. Because one kid I could yell at in front of whole class and they would be like, "Yeah, sorry!" It wouldn't ruin their day and it would be okay. I was that kid. Like if you took me out in the hallway and talked to me privately, that would do absolutely nothing. But if you were like, "Hey stop talking, you're being disrespectful," I'd be like, "Yep, you're right. So sorry." But like if I did that to another kid, some of it could be a complete day runner and I don't feel like that's fair. So just getting to know how they react to situations and who they are as people and you know, what is meaningful in their life, what is not meaningful in their life and

how they do their school work and stuff like that. Just getting to know that I think is a really good step. That's what my mentor teacher had me do and I was like, "Oh my God, that's genius." Because I don't know, it just, it makes planning a lot easier and lesson planning a lot easier when you know who's about to walk into your classroom and you know, "Okay, what ticks you off? Like what's a bad day for you? Can you learn on a bad day? Like how's your family life? What are you bringing into the classroom?" Stuff like that.

I guess my idea of like equity and teaching is about like human connection, like as the foundation and then you can work on the academic part once you get there. Especially like student teaching. I absolutely adore my mentor teacher. I think she's the greatest lady in the whole entire world because she said, "If you get anything out of this, just understand the students and who they are as people." She was like, "And then you'll be fine." And I was like, "Okay." Because I always thought that the teaching part would be the hardest part and not like classroom management and understanding your students. I thought that would come naturally and—oh, I mean some kids it totally does. Especially if you're a little bit more similar to them, but some, it's not natural at all.

Like I can stand in front of a classroom and explain how to write an essay 17 different ways and make sure everybody understands it, but nobody's going to actually write for you unless they like give a shit about you. Which was cool but also very daunting when you have 151 students and you see them an hour a day, and a lot of the times they don't feel like talking to you, which is cool. I get it. I didn't want to talk to my middle school teachers either. I thought it was weird when they asked me about their life.

But I like the idea that there's a foundation for education and the actual academic part is like probably 20% of it, which I don't get it. I think education is like incredibly powerful and it opens a lot of doors and it gives a lot of people opportunities that they probably wouldn't have without that knowledge, but I also know it's really hard to learn from somebody that you quite honestly couldn't give a crap about.

I guess scaffolding too. The idea of scaffolding is really cool. And accommodation or modification. I know they tell you that all the time. It's so textbook and after a while I was kind of like, "Okay cool. Like I've heard the definition like 17 different times. But quite honestly I don't even know what scaffolding is," which is always fun. I would get an A on the test because I had the definition memorize but never actually understood what scaffolding was because that wasn't something I never really, truly ever saw even in practicum hours because I was never there consistently enough to understand the students and understand cause I never saw testing scores. I never had access to that. I just would teach a lesson and then sit in the back. That was my job. But now student teaching, you know, I see where they came from, what they're doing now, where they're going, their test scores, what I can do to fix it, how I can improve it, things I need to go over again. Things that I probably shouldn't have even had to go over at the beginning. And so I think scaffolding is so much easier in that sense. And on top of that, I know the kiddos, so that makes my life a lot easier.

Like they're so obsessed with Instagram and Tik Tok right now and it's the funniest thing in the whole entire world. And, but I get it because I grew up in the technology generation too and I get like this obsession with these applications and like. They're so obsessed with everything. And so now we're doing nonfiction. And let's be real, everybody hates nonfiction

except for like one kid who's like really into the discovery channel and he's like, "I would love to learn about the African tree frog." I'm like, "Okkkkaay." So now we're doing research on Instagram and Tik Tok. And they're so about it. And I just would never have even considered that they would even sit down in front of a computer and go to many websites and like be willing to write more than a sentence because God forbid they have to use their pencils. I don't know why that is so hard for middle schoolers to write. They're like, "No, just give me a multiple choice and I'll fill in a bubble. I don't care if it's right or not." I'm like, "Oh my God, okay, fine."

But I think it's really cool to see that. And then also one thing my mentor teacher has that's so cool is she gives them multiple different options to understand something. So if they need to watch a video, they can watch a video. If they need to read something that's provided for them because that's just how their brain works. That's cool too. If they want to find something else on their own, that's cool too. If they need to listen to a song about it, she will find it or she will make it. And I love that because then every single kid comes out learning something. Sometimes it's not necessarily what you wanted them to learn, but that's okay. They learned something that they got something out of it. And it helped them in some shape or form. And I love that.

I think these options are an example of equity in teaching. So like station work is good, but then also I know I did something, it was an absolute disaster. But I think if I fine tune it'll work well. Giving them the option on what stations they go to. Just because I know some students aren't going to vibe with communicating with others in a very like minimal structure way, but some students are, that's where their like highest learning is going to take place. So giving them the opportunity and the options to choose the best learning path for them is the best.

So I know we did learning about different poets and some people learn very differently so some people need to watch a video, some people need to get a timeline and write out the history of the poet and where some people need to do what they did in their life and look at that compared to others or even just read their poetry and guess. Some people, how they need to understand poetry is completely different than the person they're sitting next to.

And so I think it's hard to plan because it takes awhile. But it's also really rewarding. I didn't realize that if you just watch a video versus somebody who's just reading the poetry and guessing at their life, how similar their learning experiences end up being at the end and they end up getting what you wanted them to get by doing completely different activities because that's where their brain needed to go at that moment. So I like giving the kids options.

The hard part is is getting them to a place where they're mature enough to choose the correct option for themselves. Because I don't want to choose for them. I can definitely not at the beginning of the year, but at this point and how well I know the kids? I could place them and I'd probably have like one or two that I need to switch just behavioral wise, just everything. But I want to figure out how to get to a place in classroom management. I'm sure it's going to take years, but just to get them to a place where they can choose what they need to learn. And it's not a social thing. However, some kids do need to be with their friends to learn. That's okay too. I was that kid. So just understanding that, I like options. I liked options as a student. So I know that options probably are going to stress out some kids, but if they want to come to me and ask what I should do, I just need to be prepared to give them that answer and that structure for themselves.

When we were writing the essay, it was an argumentative essay and this is their first big essay they've ever written. So it was controlled chaos. The essays are about two pages typed. Which is pretty good. I set up MLA for them because first of all, some of them are writing in like size 28, in cursive. And I was like, "Okay, we're going to wrap this up." I was like, "You have to do this because they'll make you do this." Then they were like, "Okay."

We provided them with a story and we provided them with their claim because quite honestly the claim is the hardest part and they don't truly need to fully know how to do that until like sophomore year of high school. But we didn't give them their claim straight up. We allowed them to talk about it or and research it. Watch videos. Also, we gave them example essays with different claims and they seriously, every single kid—there was one kid who didn't and we let him write a different essay, but he's like so beyond intelligent that this was below his like grade level, which his essay was beautiful and very fun to read. But we gave them opportunities to understand the essay in different ways so they could read *Tell-tale Heart*, they could watch a video on *Tell-tale Heart*. There was like Socratic seminars that you can watch online. They could have a Socratic seminar, they can read other poetry by Edgar Allen Poe and see how that ties in.

Trying to think of what else we did. It was a big lead up. We had a whole month before writing the essay, working with Edgar Allen Poe, which was cool because once we got to the actual essay part, they were like, for the most part really confident going in because they felt like they understood it. But we just had a month of them exploring the essay from different perspectives. We did a cool activity where they were detectives and they had to figure out, with what tools could you have caught Edgar Allen Poe, or the narrator I guess, murdering the man. What around the story in *Tell-tale Heart*? And some kids loved it. Some kids were like, "I don't

want to be a police. I don't want to get him caught. I'm not snitch." And I'm like, "Oh my God. It's a story." And then some of them were like, "Oh my God, I bet Edgar Allen Poe actually did kill somebody. Look! I found this in another poem and this connects!" And I'm like, "Okay, cool. Wow. You really were able to get a lot from that." So I liked that. I liked options.

I also, I never realized how much I like working with one thing for a really long time. Because you can do so many things with just one thing. And oh God, I hated when every week I showed up and we had to read something different and I had to know it and then do something with it. And then as soon as I finally got mildly comfortable with it, they would switch. And I know that some kids that would just really, really benefit them. So I know that's why we gave them a lot of other options for Edgar Allen Poe. We did, we threw in some Emily Dickinson in there too cause a lot of the girls were like, "We need females!" And I was like, "Yes you do!" But I like that. And I also like the confidence level of the kiddos, especially when you are pulling examples and proof because they had to do that independently. That's a big deal. I liked that they were confident enough to understand the story enough and understand the writing style and tone and mood enough to get there.

I think that's so cool because you know I had very few teachers do that, but those are the teachers who stand out, who I loved it when they were like, "We're not doing the final exam but we're doing a project." I was like, "Yes, cool, fun!" Because it makes it less scary. Like they're supposed to do a book report and everyone was like, "Oh my God!" And my mentor teacher was like, "Yeah, no, we're doing a book talk. Read a book that's over 250 pages and we're going to talk about it. And that's it." And they thrive. Because they're like, "Oh my God, thank God I don't

have to write." But then they also get really like into the books and I love that because it's giving them an opportunity to succeed.

When I first sat down and I was like, "Okay, like what is this year going to be about?" My mentor teacher was like, "Well, you need to understand my values as a educator first." And I was like, "Oh my God, okay, we're going big. I didn't realize we were going big." And she said, "I'm not here to trick them or make them feel stupid. I'm here to just make sure they feel safe in the classroom. They have a good time and we learned something." I'm like, "Okay. Okay, I can do that." And so I very much enjoy that. She doesn't ever try to trick them. She tries to give them things that everybody has a really high chance of doing very well on. And it's not that they're not learning either.

I guess there's tension in the school because my mentor teacher is a phenomenal English teacher. She really is. And she listens to the kids, and then there's another English teacher who is very, I guess spoon feeds them a little more. And either way is fine. Everybody has their different teaching styles, but my mentor teacher's very much like, "I'll give you the tools to succeed, but you need to do it yourself. Like think for yourself." And I had a conversation with the principal and he was like, "Yeah, I'm really glad you're student teaching with your mentor teacher." I was all like, "Ok cool. Well, why? Like me too. I chose her." And he was like, "Well, we have one eighth grade teacher who prepares you for life in high school. And then we have another eighth grade teacher who gets you through eighth grade." And I was like, "Oh. It's like weird that you know that and she's still working here. That's fine." But I thought that was kind of cool.

Also, I love hearing the kids when they're like, "Oh Ms. McAdams' class' so hard sometimes." I'm like, "Yeah, it kind of is like we just read Edgar Allen Poe in eighth grade and you had write an essay on it." And they're like, "Yeah but it's so fun. I'm never bored. It goes by so quick." I'm like, "Oh good, good. That's what I want to hear." Because the learning process for them is very hard. They do get stressed sometimes because it's not easy. But then when the tests come around and the essays come around, their scores are so much higher because they're like, "Oh thank God I pushed myself." I think that's so fun.

I think it's cool too because I'm going through the interview process of jobs and everything. Which is cool and also a little weird. And they're like, "Oh like what do you think about students in the classroom? What do you think about how you are as a teacher?" And I get to talk about that and I think that's cool. Talk about how it is possible to give every single student an equal chance to succeed in the classroom. It just doesn't look the same. And I think people confuse equal with fair, especially when talking about equity. Because equity literally, like stem wise is from equal. Or, I don't know. I don't understand Latin verbs as much as I probably should, but that's okay. It definitely is in the standards and I just missed it. But I think fair is way better to use in the classroom than equal. Because equal, I feel like is you just teach one way, the same time and like probably 70% of the kids get it and then 30% of the kids are screwed for the rest of their life because they missed it so much that they're forever going to be so far behind. But then fair is, "Okay. So if I teach one way, I get 70% of the students, but then at the end of the lesson I need to do it this way. So the other 20% of the students. Then I need to take individual time to get those 10% caught up where we need to be." I'm like, "Ooh, okay that's a lot of work. But it's possible." I like that. I think it's cool. I also think it's really empowering as a person to be able to do that.

Because I think a lot of people are like, "Oh I really am excited to teach because I love kids." Yeah. But like I feel like nobody talks about the fact that like it is really fun to be in charge of little people, and not in a bad way. Like I would never say, "I am in charge! I am like all great and powerful and you have to listen to me!" I don't feel that's right. I would never ever treat somebody in the classroom like that, as one of my students. Like I don't care if you're younger than me or anything. I will give you the respect that you deserve as human being. But it is really cool standing in front of a classroom and having just a bunch of little humans pay attention to you and respect you in that sense. I think that's really cool and that's really empowering. And I think if you're able to harness that type of power. Well, not necessarily—I feel like power is such a negative word. I don't mean it that way. But if you're able to harness that power and be a really strong leader and allow all the students in the classroom to learn how they need to learn, I think is way, way cool.

And that's also probably why a lot of people want to be teachers is because they have those moments that they're like, "Oh my God, they learned from me! I did something!" My mom always calls them the "aha moments" and I didn't realize not a lot of people knew, cause I was like, "Oh you had an aha moment." And I said that like three days ago. And Kyle, he goes, "What?!" I was like, "Okay, I'm going to rephrase that for you because I realize now that that is so vague and you probably didn't understand what I was saying." But I think it's cool.

I like the kids. I think that's also equity and teaching, is just enjoying it too. Just being happy to be there I think is incredibly beneficial to yourself but also to the students. I think it helps more. I think it helps more in the long-term as well, because some days, I mean student teaching, you know like it's so eye-opening and you learn more than ever. In a week of student

teaching, you learn more than you ever did sitting in a classroom where you're getting told what you're going to expect. But I never realized how exhausting it is. Just constantly thinking about 30 kids at once for an hour. And then having to take the four minute break, you get to do it all over again. And then your class looks completely different and there's different learning levels.

Observing is one thing. I saw it happening but actually like doing it and committing my time and energy to making sure that I'm able to do that is like. I mean seriously, there are days that if at lunch, I could choose napping versus eating, I would choose napping. Because I'm like, "Oh my God." Cause it's so much. Also the classes are huge. My biggest class is 36. And it is a gifted class so that's more helpful because they don't need as much scaffolding or anything. If they do, it's advanced and that's when you just go into discussion because they love that and then they just guide it themselves and it's, I wouldn't say a break, but they do more of the thinking that I have to do. I swear if I had the gifted class first period, it would be so nice because they teach me more about the subject than I think I know half the time. Because they're so smart and they have such a unique way of looking at things sometimes and I'm like, "Whoa."

But even—I never know how to like say it because they call it in school, the lower kids and I'm like, that's rude. But I guess number wise like yes, they are our lower performing students—but they think of things so interestingly too. Sometimes they're not right. And I get that, because me too. But their ideas, even class to class. It doesn't matter the level, the ideas that kids bring to the table are so fascinating.

Like I was talking about Edgar Allen Poe and I think, we were reading, I don't remember what poem. Well this kid, he's a total stoner but so funny and he doesn't speak up. But when he does it's like always a little bit inappropriate but clearly very intelligent and he understood. And

he goes, "So Edgar Allen Poe probably slept with a dead person is what we're hearing." And I was like, "Yeah, like, yeah." And you always know it in the back of your mind. I love Edgar Allen Poe. I think his writing is really creepy and interesting and it always keeps me engaged. But like to have a 13 year old be like, "Yo, he slept with a corpse." I was like, "Oof, okay. So we got there." But then we had a whole conversation about how creepy he is, but because he brought that up, which I know he was trying to be funny—his intentions were not pure, but then we had a discussion about how creepy Edgar Allen Poe was, which ended up leading to understanding Edgar Allen Poe. So then we did read Telltale Heart. They had a deeper understanding of Edgar Allen Poe and then they liked it. I was like, "Interesting." That was not what I was going to expect in the classroom. Oh, so cool though.

I just, I like to watch and see where it goes, which definitely sometimes it bites me in the butt. Oh God, does it bite me in the butt. Especially when it gets really inappropriate and thank God my mentor teacher also does the same because I probably would get sent to the principal's office as a student teacher if I was with somebody else. I don't think a lot of people give credit to kids. Like their minds are really smart. And their ability to think about things is so different than adults. Because they're very, most of them, not all of them, but most of them are so impulsive. They just say things and I'm like, "Oh, okay, let's roll with it." And I like that.

I was talking to Rachel about telling my story and she was like, "I just really like talking about it." And I was like "I get that!" We have to come together like once a week and talk about it because I bore the heck out of my friends who aren't teachers talking about it. They're like, "I don't care." The people in my cohort are my best friends. We totally get together. We do. Well I'm also living with all of them next year. Mind you my cohort. Like they will all be at my

wedding because we all just got way too close. Because there were 19 of us. I mean I love them all. It's way fun.

Kathy Fuller is my site coordinator. I adore that woman so much. But she told us at the beginning, "You are going to befriend your teacher friends because nobody else will get it." And I was like "Yeah, yeah, whatever." No. I refuse to live with anybody. First of all I'm going to be so bored over the summer if I'm living with somebody who isn't teaching. Who's going to hang out with me and binge watch Netflix? But yeah no we sit and-- But also think about it cause you guys are always like, "Reflect! Reflect! Reflect!" And then all of a sudden they're like, "Lesson plan! Lesson plan! Lesson plan! Do all this! Do all this! Do all this!" So we're not having that structured time to reflect. So it's nice. It's also weird because Rachel does kindergarten, I do eighth grade but why are there so many similarities of what's happening in the classroom? And I think that's so funny. It's also such a big chunk of our lives right now and it's really positive. So it's fun to talk about.

My mentor teacher, she was like, "No, I went out all the time on Thursday nights and Fridays were really hard for me." Like she's—I love her—she's like so authentic. She's like "Nope. This is just how it is." And her husband too. He works there and he was like, because he's 25 years sober. So he's like really open about everything. So I was like, "Oh I can do it. I can, I can go out on a Thursday. We'll see." She goes, "I'll pick you up if you need it." She's supportive. Love her. And so I tried it. "Oh my God! No. No, that's a terrible idea. I don't know why I would ever do that!" I was like, "Oh my God!" Because I'm really on top of it. Like I love showing up too. So it's not hard for me to like bing! Up at 6:00 AM and I'm ready and out the door. I like it. It's fun. Yeah. And like we have 20 minutes of DMS. Do you, have you heard of DMS?

Daily math skills. So they literally have a 20 minute block in [school district] to do the timed math tests. Because [other school district] does it and they have better math scores. They don't even erase the fact that like they're using [other school district]'s, schoolwork. Imagine hating math and then waking up and every single morning you have to take a timed to math test. It's terrible. So we don't do it. We hand them out because they don't count for grades. They're just meant for practice. And the kids hate it because it's timed. Two minutes?! Two minutes?! And they're like divide like 6.6 divided by 02 and I was like, [grunting noise of disgust]. Do you know what I mean? Oh I feel for those—some of the kids are like, "Heck yeah, I can do it!" I'm like, "You go! You go geometry kid." I love it. Because I would've loved that. I loved math though. I'm tidy, I'm a genius, I can do it. But now I know that that is the scariest thing ever for kids. And I'm like, "Oh my God, you idiots!" That was the first thing I learned. They were like, "These aren't beneficial at all." And I was like, "Ooh! And we're doing them in the classroom. That's weird." But it's funny, I like that my mentor teacher was like, "I'm not making them do this. First of all, it's language arts. We don't do math here." She was like, "This is a safe zone for kids who hate math."

So, the first thing they do is they come in and there's a 20 minute block. So they're in first period for about an hour and a half. Each class is an hour, but they have an hour and a half. The first 30, 20 to 30 minutes, is DMS time. They're literally starting their day with a timed math test. Like, "Oh my God!" First of all, half of them aren't awake. Because a lot of them live an hour away and they are taking an hour and a half bus ride to school and some of them aren't eating yet. And I'm like, "Oh my God, you're gonna make them do math?!" Like, oof.

Timed math with decimals and they don't even do the division on top of each other or multiplication. So we do a lot. I taught them all lattice. That was a big deal because they hadn't learned that. I was like, "I love lattice! I don't actually know how to multiply, normally. I can only do the lattice method." And so I like that, we do that stuff. Because I mean, God, I would hate that. Also it gives them a chance to wake up and talk about their night and just decompress before they have to learn. I get that. And then on top of that you see all your friends. Without talking like, "Oh heck no." I couldn't learn. I always had to schedule my easiest class—I always have to—at first period because I'm not alive and I'm not learning. So I feel bad for first period kiddos. I actually feel worse for fifth period kiddos because they just want to leave. They don't want to be there anymore.

Oh, but back to equity and teaching. I guess my view right now for equity in teaching is changing because I finally get the chance to see and teach and it's real. It's not like statistics that I've been given in a classroom that everybody else gets to see, which is cool. Still I'm glad we have access to it, but I have it, it's there, it's mine. I contributed to it.

I always thought—well, it always starts with this Disneyland idea and I try really hard to conceptualize the fact that it is going to be difficult and there's going to be a lot of like trial and error. But I think my view of equity and teaching is changing in the fact that I thought there was going to be the sweet spot I would get to where every lesson plan is going to be perfect and flawless and lovely. And now I'm like, "Oh my God, no, there's no such thing as a perfect and flawless and lovely lesson. And it always goes to shit, but as long as they're learning, I'm cool with that." Not always goes to shit, actually. Sometimes I'm like, "Ooh, that worked a lot better than I really thought because yesterday did not go well." Also, it depends on the class period. I'm

like, "Oh my God. Okay, here we go." And now I have it in real time and it's like, "Oh my God." Four minutes later, I'm like, "Wow." But then it's also really weird too because I'm like, "Oh like first period that bombed" and I want to switch it for the next period. But then if I just kept it how it was, it would have totally benefited that. So there's a lot I guess.

I didn't realize how much like predicting I would do. I feel like a fortune teller half the time because I'm like, "Okay, this is how this is going to go, this is how this is going to go, this is how this is going to go." Sometimes I'm right, sometimes I'm so completely opposite wrong, that I'm like, "Ooh, okay, good try. We'll figure that out next time." And sometimes there isn't a next time and that's okay too. It's also weird too because my mentor teacher's about to turn 40, she's been doing this for a while. She gets it and like she'll be like, "Watch this happen" and call it exactly how it is. And I'm like, "Ooh!" Because I know I'm going to get there. I see it, it's in the near future. It's just not happening now. It's almost like, "Oh. I'm getting better. Oh. Am I getting better?" But some of the kids, they really just come out of nowhere and she's like, "Yeah, I knew that was gonna happen," and I'm like, "What? You knew they were going to tell this huge elaborate lie to get out of something." She said, "Mhm. I was watching them yesterday." And I'm like, "Oh, genius." It's cool though. I like it. It's, it keeps me awake. The constant thinking because I hate going through the day and I'm like, "Oh yes, I should be using my brain other than just to breathe." But I like that it's really funny though. I'm excited to get to that point.

Equity and teaching is very hard. It's not something somebody who's lazy could do it. It's something you're constantly thinking about and probably are dreaming about because I've seriously, I think I have the teacher sleeps. Because I swear at least one of my students is always in my dreams. And I wake up and I'm like, "Oh crap." But I didn't realize how hard it was going

to be. I knew it was going to be hard. They told me it was going to be hard. I could kind of conceptualize it. But I get why teachers are able to leave kids behind or are able to just like give the gifted kids the easy way out or like favor those who just get it. So you don't really have to work with them as much because it's hard. And it's draining.

But on the other hand, I think I would literally be sick to my stomach with guilt if I just did that. There's always a moment where I'm like, "I could just sit down." I've sat at the desk I've been provided twice in the past two months. Which is fine. Now the students have taken it over and they did break the computer. That's okay. That's okay. We roll with that. We don't need a computer. But at the end of the day when I finally get to sit down, I'm like, "I did my part that's what I can do now they need to do the rest." It's like way better than like, "Oh my God, I can't believe I failed a kid." And mind you, I am new and so I will put all the effort in also because I have a mentor teacher looking in on me and then I have observations and my supervisor and like all these eyes on me that if I mess up it will be corrected and it will be brought to my attention but I don't have that next year. You know, in the classroom. Like I'll have moments they obviously have a mentor for you that you meet with—what three times a year or something like that. But I hope I don't lose that because I think that would suck for me, because I think that would take my love of teaching and love of education out of the equation.

But also, I would feel like crap if I failed a student. And not fail student as in like literally get an F. Like they could have an A in the class. But if I didn't harness their knowledge and understanding of the world to as full potential as I possibly could in the classroom, I'd feel like crap because that's my job. I don't know. That would suck. And I don't think I could do that for the rest of my life and enjoy teaching if I just like did it the easy way. And you know, just

continued with the same lesson plans that I had prepared like five years ago and just did it, never changed anything. Even though all my students were changing and the world was changing around me. I would be so bored. I'd rather put more effort into something. And work a little harder than take the easy way out.

I feel like I'll be able to tell when I'm failing a kid because, and this is so like broad for it, but I feel like you can kinda like see it in how they start walking into your classroom and their willingness to do work for you, in their attitude. Because if you're not working with what they know and making connections just as a human, but also academically, their motivation just starts sinking and their willingness just to be in your classroom and enjoy your classroom, it's just completely decreasing and even in their posture, they don't want to be there anymore and they don't really care. They'd stopped talking to you as a whole. I feel like that's a dead giveaway. But also even when grading, I see a lot of kids, especially like eighth graders right now because they just really want to be in high school. So they're in that really crappy stage of behavioral problems. And their work they turn in is very habitual. So it's like they're not really moving anywhere and they're giving the same answers over and over again. And it's almost as if they've kind of stopped learning. They've plateaued in their knowledge in the classroom. And I always found that really interesting because I never realized that that's something kids do when they just need to move on. It's like, "Yes. Okay. You're like kind of grasping things in the classroom. But like quite honestly when you're turning in work, it's the same level. It's like the same." I mean even sometimes verbatim they are the same answers from like the week prior and so I think that's also a dead giveaway.

And if that happened, I'd talk to them. Not necessarily in the, "Hi, why aren't you doing well in class?" Because I think that's just so crappy to bring up. But, "How's life going? What's going on in your life? What's interesting, What's fun? Are you doing anything? How's home? Okay, how are you liking class? How are you liking school?" Kind of starting there, picking at their brain and understanding what they like and then molding lesson plans to something that just interests them. Like how we're doing like the Instagram thing right now. They, the eighth graders, don't want to be in middle school anymore. I get it. I remember doing that. I remember just wanting to be in high school. I wanted that freedom. I shouldn't have had it. I was 14. But I wanted it. And so I get it. And just getting them somewhere that's interesting, that they have the life return to them, is easier.

But mind you, I also have somebody who's bringing all of this to my attention so I get nervous—I had a little crisis two weeks ago. I was like, "I'm going to suck at teaching! Because I'm not going to have Ms. McAdams to tell me what to do!" She was like, "No, do you not see that you're doing it on your own now?" And I was like, "No. No, I don't." I mean but I get it because I just don't ever want to get to that point because I see it. They always, they warned me they were like, "Two weeks before spring break, after rodeo break, everything goes to shit." I was like, "What do you mean by that?" No, I see it now. Everything's going to shit. The attitudes, the behavior, the willingness to work in the classroom. I get it. They had a break, they saw freedom, they want it back. And I don't ever want to be like, "I don't know what to do with that." I want to be like, "I know this is going to happen and I'm going to plan my damnedest to make sure that they aren't bored in the classroom."

Bored is like a big thing cause I remember being bored. I remember just being like, "I don't care to be here." I remember what it feels like to be failed as a student. And I had A's in those classes. It wasn't like I was failing academically. So my teachers weren't necessarily worried about me because I had an A. But it's an attitude thing too. I mean I know I told you early I was literally on an attendance contract because I literally hated going to school because I was like, "Who cares, if I'm going to college? I got into college. What are they going to do, not accept me? It's [state university]." You know what I mean though? I was like, "I'll just go to [another state university] if all else fails." That's was literally my mentality. Which is so pathetic. The life left my eyes. I didn't love learning. Because everybody loves learning. No one, especially middle schoolers will never admit that. But when you get something and it clicks, it is such a cool feeling, regardless of who you are. And you can see it—those kids who are sitting there like this, I'm like, "Ok so I'm failing you today. I'm failing you today." But then the kids who can't sit still because they're talking to everybody about it, which is so cool to watch. Heck yeah. I love that.

Friday, we completely stopped class and we are now two days behind because we're reading about Louis Zamparini and we needed to talk about the Holocaust and I was like, "Yes, this is important that we shall have a discussion." Because then the kids were engaged again. I'm like, "Okay cool, we're two days behind" and that's fine. But now they want to read more. Now they want to learn more. And I'm cool with taking a day. They asked a question, they were like, "Why did Hitler hate the Jews?" And I was like, "I don't know." I literally did not know. And I was like, "Oh my God. The Holocaust is my favorite subject to learn about." And I really had no idea. So we researched it. I thought that was so cool. I'm like, "Oh my God, they're interested. Let's, we're going to roll with that."

That came up because we're reading an article on Louis Zamparini. He like, I swear to God, he's not human. He just survived so many things. So he was an Olympic runner. And then in 1936 he went to the Olympics. Then 1940s, obviously the Olympics had to get canceled because of World War II. So he enlisted and he was a pilot and he crashed into the ocean and was stranded with two other people for 47 days. And then they washed up on Japanese land and were captured and tortured for two years. And they were thought dead and then were able to get rescued. And then he battled with like PTSD and everything and all these people he hated. And then went the religious route and kind of was able to forgive himself but also these people who did these horrible things. And his life is just incredible. So we were reading about that, but then they were like, "We don't understand--" Cause at some point, because he was so good in the Olympics and it was in Germany, he met Hitler. And he talked about like in the video how cool that was for him. And the kids were like, "It was cool to meet Hitler?" And I was like, "I see what you mean. But think about it. He didn't know. Imagine not knowing." And so that's kind of where we went with it, which was so cool. I loved it because they were all like, "Umm, I have questions about this. This is like contradicting everything I've learned about the Holocaust." And I was like, "Me too. Let's look into it." So it's a phenomenal story but also shows a lot about history that not a lot of people talk about.

My English teacher in high school, I had her for three years in a row. She's the most incredible lady I've ever met and she was like, "We're going to talk about things that nobody talks about because you guys are smart enough and quite honestly deserve to know like what's happening there." She was like, "Everything has a bias. Everything has a perspective regardless if it's like 'This is nonfiction and just based off stats.' Well stats are also off bias." And we were like, "What?!" And I love that. And so I always—I call it unfolding the truth, which is not

necessarily really what's happening, it's just looking through a different lens. I thought that was cool because most people don't give eighth graders credit for being able to look at different perspectives, which I get developmentally that's really hard for them, but they also have the ability to understand things and conceptualize things that I didn't necessarily think they would be able to do. So I think that's really cool, especially with something like the Holocaust that everybody knows was a big deal, but doesn't really know why it was such a big deal. I was like, "Yes, let's talk about it." So I was cool with it and my mentor teacher was too. She always is though, she's really cool.

Appendix B: Ellie's Story

Recently when I hear equity, there was this one class here at [University], and I just remember this visual of equality and equity. And on the equality side, everybody got the same—equal. So they all got the same box to stand on to view over a fence. And they were all still the same height as they would've been. But equity, each individual student or person needs to fill their needs. So in this scenario, the tallest person didn't get anything. The middle height got a medium sized box and then the shortest person got a taller box and they were now all at the same height. So it's what you get in order to achieve at the same level. It might be like your differentiation in classrooms. Um, but how I, that's just how it's such a broad question. That is when I see, hear equity.

I always thought equity and equality were the same until I had this one class. It was for education. But that picture is just like burned in my mind now of how, that's how I remember equity.

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But with friends and personally I was just talking about this with my mom, how my roommates stay up super late and of course, this semester and the past few, I have to get up way early. So it's like the equity of when they're up late and I'm in bed, I want them—or I would hope they—would be quiet. They're not so much. But when I'm up in the morning and they're sleeping and they still have like five hours of sleep and I'm up at the crack of dawn, I try to be as quiet and respectful as I can. So that's how I see equity in my living at home. But they're not as equitable as I'd say. Like I feel like if I'm quiet then they should be and since they're loud I'm

like, "Well maybe I'll be loud in the morning." My mom was like, "Don't do that. You gotta be nice."

So for equity, I would say in that situation it's getting what each person needs to succeed at the same level. So in this situation, if it's sleep, then I would expect that when I go to bed, even if it's like at nine, okay, I know that's early. I'm an early bird. But if I go to bed at nine and they're out in the living room, maybe turn the TV down just a little because my room's next to the TV and then not make a smoothie at 11 o'clock at night. So when I wake up now, starting tomorrow, last semester, it was like 6:30 I'd wake up. And I would literally get dressed in my room, put my makeup on in the bathroom and leave. And I would just put my coffee from the fridge and out I go. I'm not loud. Now starting tomorrow I'm going to make a smoothie—but nobody's home. It's like for them to get adequate sleep, I need to be quiet. For me to get adequate sleep, they need to be quiet, would be the equity part. Because we're both giving here and there. But I guess equality is the same thing for everybody. And obviously when I go to bed they're way louder than when I wake up. So equality would be me being able to make the smoothie in the morning while they make the smoothie at night. Or like me watching TV in the morning and microwaving a bunch of stuff while they're doing the same thing while I go to bed. Because that's the same thing when equity would be me, what I need to get dressed and what they need. Not what I need in the morning versus what they need at night. Would be, the equity part is different, but it's still, we're still trying to figure out the sleep. That's how I would see the equity. I had to really break that down to figure it out.

Or another thing, like familial wise—my parents are divorced. Divorced legally for a year but separated for seven. (Just money management to be legally separated for six years.) But my

dad makes a substantial amount more than my mom, yet they still split everything 50/50 for the kids, when I think that it should be like a percentage. Like a percentage—if it was $500 and my dad was able to give, it's not fair if my mom pays $250, if that's like her weekly rent or check, even though I know that it's not. But I always have an ongoing thing with my mom and be like, "Oh well like maybe you just ask them to split it equitable and what your percentage is and he makes more." My dad sees it as, "No we're both parents were split 50/50." So I've always told my boyfriend, we've been dating for about over a year now, and I've told him in the future, as a teacher, I know I'll be making less than him and that I want to split stuff percentage wise. Like 25% of my paycheck goes to a down payment, 25% of his, even though his might be more. I don't know if that's equitable or not, but that's how I see that.

My grandma was always like, "Ellie, are you sure you want to be a teacher?" Like, "Grandma, you married, wealthy. Just because I'm going to be a teacher doesn't mean I can't find somebody." I'm like, "I'm going to be okay. I've known what it's like to be not okay." And I'm like, "You've forgotten that in the past 50 years." I wish I could say that to her, but I could not, we all say it behind her back.

Let's see, happened in the world? To be honest with you, I don't watch the news.

And another is, I also think, that with friendships, if I'm not getting anything in return, then I kinda just like drop them. I don't want to be putting in all the effort. And my mom, this is where my mom and I butt heads. Because with a lot of her relationships and friendships, she's always putting in more and she's just accepted that. But I've come to terms that that just kind of pulls me down. And I'd rather, if I'm not getting—so that, I don't know if it'd be equity or equality—but I want the same in that I'm getting out of it. I want to be viewed as, I don't want to

be that one friend that they come to me for everything, but if I want to go to them, they dropped me. So like through the past year or two, I've come to terms, with my roommates, that they're not good roommates. And so I've lost my friendship with them. But I want to be like what I put in, get out. So if they're not putting in the same effort, then I don't want to be putting in effort anymore or equity.

I'm starting to talk to somebody and I'm learning that it's best for me to be okay with it because I don't like the constant of me trying to be like, "Okay, let's do this. Let's do this, let's do this." And then nothing back. And recently, one of my roommates started dating her boyfriend the same time I did like a month before. And he would stay over at the house every single night. Like he basically lived there. And second semester of junior year, I would go between, my boyfriend James, James's house and my house, so we'd split it equally enough. So we were still at his house with his roommate, still at my house with my roommates. And John, my roommate's boyfriend was always there. Like, I would never see her without him. Like I'd be at my house, without James, just there. And so that kind of got into a tiff the end of like sophomore year. And she's like, "You know, you're always at James' and he's here." I'm like, "Well, John's always here. So like, what's the difference?" And I wasn't 21 at the time and all of my, well a new one moved in this year. But, my two roommates last year both turned 21, both in January and I'm an August birthday. So I was like, "I can't go out like what you want me to do," or "It's not gonna work," you know, and so they started doing that together and then I started feeling excluded but then we were better by the end of the year. And this year I thought with a roommate that I had previously lived with would be great. Moving into our fourth bedroom. And again, she's a January birthday. So then she started going out with them and I'm like, "Okay good. They're all kind of good friends, you know, like this will be good."

But then this last semester, they started to do stuff—and because I got more into planning lessons with my mentor, I started doing more and more of real schoolwork and they never really understood me being gone from like 7 to 3:30, when one would go to class (the one with the boyfriend) at like four. And I'm like, "I've literally been slaving all day." And I come home exhausted and I'm the person that comes home immediately does my work so then I can just chill, and I can't sit at the table. So I'd sit in my room and I started leaving it cracked and there would just be times when I'd like walk out of my room and all three of them would like go somewhere and do stuff without me. So then I would start to just go to Brian's more when they were gone and I didn't want to see them when they got home. And I don't want to be the four Musketeers with them, but I want to be included. Not like I have to. Because the one with the boyfriend, her name's Danielle always is like, "Well when we asked to do stuff you say no." I'm like, "You're also asking on like a Wednesday and I have school on Thursday and it's my fieldwork or you ask on a Thursday night when I sub and that's even longer than my like regular day." And that's one thing I can not show up like wacky. So Thursdays typically I'm sure you know, [University], you go out and I'd rather go sit down at a dinner table and get a drink. I'm not the one to get, I mean I love getting dressed up in like jeans and something nice but not like go dressed up and go to the bars. And so they started all doing that and I feel like we've just like lost touch.

So then I started being, not stiff, but like I guess in a way. And just like, "Hi," and "Bye." And they also have another friend that I introduced them to, she would always to me be like, "Oh, your parents do so much for you. My parents never did that." And like hold it over me and I'm like, "We didn't grow up in the same area, you're from the East coast in a small town and like I'm from Scottsdale," not to say that, I mean Scottsdale is very judgy and stuff. But that's my

mom—her parents never did that for her, so she always wanted to be able to for like me and my sister. So it's just always something that she wanted. She wanted to make sure, no matter what it was, Janie and I, even if that means she eats cereal for dinner, she's the one that will like do that. And this one friend was always like, "You look and like act and dress like you're from this like enormous house." And I'm like "My mom lives in a two bedroom apartment. Janie and I share a room. That stuff you see me in is me buying, it's with my money, it's not my parents. They give me stuff to support me but not like take me out on a shopping spree." So that kind of with a few friends I've had that come in the way of them being like, "Your parents do stuff for you" and I don't see it. And all of my friends now maybe except for my roommates, their parents also, they understand where I'm coming from. And even if their parents don't, they're not putting it down on me and being like, "Well your parents did this for you and mine don't." Those comments started to be like, "Well if you don't see it as a good thing that I'm just going to slowly ease my way out." It's not like I dropped dead. My roommates are a very big issue in my life right now.

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I'm just trying to think of like more things. Like back to like the beginning with like the baseball analogy. Most of my students down in [School District], they're a lot of my class, well my whole class is below for math. There's maybe one that's on level, but my teacher, my mentor still differentiates it for, she tries to, for each student and she'll put them in groups. So that's providing each individual student with what they need to get to the success of how to pass. It might not be the same for each student, but it doesn't have to be in order for them to make it to the same point. They just need to see.

I have more examples for reading actually. Reading and writing. At [Elementary School], they do this thing called Walk to Reading. And my mentor teaches the higher level, the other, one second grade teaches on level, and one teacher's below. And then there's also, they're not the sped kids, but the lower than lows, like intensive, they go to either the reading lab or they have another instructional aid that they go to for the Walk to Reading time. But when they come back from that, my mentor also has for their comprehension times the lower students, the intense low students have packets that have the letters that they can then cut out and make a word and then they circle it and highlight it and all this stuff. And then just the lows have a different packet, but it's a little higher than that. So she has them in certain groups, but she doesn't call them all over in one group at a time. She calls each one over during the lit station times and she'll go through that. And then the higher students have obviously the higher reading, the more cognitive, higher level thinking and stuff. And she meets with them. She tries to once to twice a week with each student.

She just got married, had lice. It was wacko semester. The class got lice and then she got it two days before the wedding. I had full take over the classroom and I was like, "I don't know what to do." It was whack. So it's been busy two days. Before I went home, itching and shampooed my head myself. Luckily I don't dye mind. But she dyes hers and so she, I felt so bad. I love her to death, but I was like, "I'm, I don't know what to do, but that's okay. Can you tell?"

She has, she tries to meet with them as often as she can. She says there's never enough hours in the day, which there really isn't. And I've soon come to realize. And she'll ask the students, "Based off of your work, I see something but I want you to know or I want you to tell

me what you think. And if you need to go higher or lower." And one example is we had this one student who is on grade level in his reading and it has comp book and stuff and he said, "I think I need to go lower." And so she showed him the lower one and he goes, "Oh, this is too low." And so he's like, "I'm good." So she allows them and then if they do say they need to go lower and she really thinks they need to go back to low, then she'll adjust it. Or if they need to go higher and she doesn't think they do, she'll keep them.

And when they have their lit stations, she doesn't group them by level. She'll have a group with two highs two lows and two in betweens or whatever, and they're all in one group. And then she'll just call, "Okay, blue group, you come over," and she'll meet with them all and she'll talk with each student. So she'll also have like, if they're doing word work, some students will, the ones that are low, but they don't know they're low. They just, they have their extra packet, they'll work on that rather than doing the word work for the week of that week. They'll pull out their packet that has differentiated words for them, but they don't necessarily know they're low. They just know that they're getting extra help and they get really excited that they have their own notebook. It is so cute. Second grade. They're adorable. Because I've seen some teachers put all of the students with low red and high green. She does it and she'll blend them all and she'll call them all over. And so then that way they're not, and she has one book group with the higher students, but they're all in different with station groups. Like she has groups within groups, basically. So she knows the low levels throughout her class, but then she just groups them. And when she wants to talk to and when she wants to call the high group, she'll just call. "Okay, I need Bob, Joe and Phil." And they'll kind of pull that. So I like that. I think that's better than having all the high students together, all the low students together and all the on track students. I don't think that allows for, I mean, yes, there's times where that's okay, but I think that

there needs to be input from every well, depending on the task, some tasks you might walk them separated.

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Equity and teaching. So I guess with this, it builds off of that. Um, I'm still gonna go back to that baseball analogy. Of, um, how each person gets what they need in order to succeed. So like the tall guy had nothing, he didn't need anything to see over that. Um, fence when the medium size person needed just a little bit of something to see over in the shorter one, needed a much higher stand. And at this point they're all looking over and are the same height. So, and with teaching it's, I think being able to differentiate and modify. I know those words are hard to like interchange, I get scolded when I do it, but making sure that each student has what they have to succeed. I think more so as of like recently is like I did notice it last semester, but now that I'm in student teaching, in there all day every day and doing more of what a teacher does, not just observing and teaching a lesson here and there.

We have some kids that are like kinder and we're in second grade. So kinder level reading and math and to bring them up to where just we might not even be able to get them to a second grade level but just so they can exit out of kinder and maybe into some sort of first grade, maybe low second. We have a bunch of differentiated packets whether it has to do with word work, comprehension, math. With reading their comprehension, each kid is at a level where they can best read. We have our high kids that are reading at third grade. We have some kids that are just second, some grades lower second and some that are, I think we've pulled like kinder readings from them. And for math we have, I work with the low kids and my teacher works with the high kids for math review. So next week we're going to switch and I'll do high and she'll do low. But

it's just their review. We still have it. We put like the same week on it. I'm like, it's still "Week 22." But for the low kids it's, they are the star group and the high kids are the heart group. Just so they don't know like, "Oh, like I'm low" and "Oh, I'm high." And we're just going through that constant review of like your, your numbers, your base, 10 blocks, your place value, adding and subtracting, um, between zero and 10. And this week we're gonna work on zero to 20. Just stuff like that.

And I think I more so came to view that like being in the classroom all day every day. And for teaching, I just understand equity of making sure each student has what they need to succeed. Now I guess I'll change it a little from like the baseball story cause like not all of my students will exit second grade at an end of second grade level. So I wouldn't say it's to succeed at the same level. It's to succeed at the level of which they can accomplish. If that makes sense. It's to make sure that the student grows, just to make sure that each and every student grows, whether it's leaps and bounds or just little steps here and there just to see the improvement that has happened from step one to step two.

I guess I always try looking back to see like what was I doing in second grade and I was in a two three classroom and we just had this conversation this weekend. Like how do you do it? Two three classroom like second and third grade. Like that like confuses the heck out of me and I know I'd go stir crazy as a teacher. But I always think, and I had the same teacher for both second and third grade, but I'm just thinking of like how second grade, was it? I mean that was 15, 16 years ago. Did they do as much differentiating and looking at everyone, or was it just the class as a whole? This is what they needed. So I always look back and I think it's really just since I've started taking education courses and being around children all day, every day, that's what's

taught me or shown me the view of like equity and that it's not the same as equality. But I really am really curious about what, what did my second and third grade teacher do?

I guess for this semester, I know when kids need equity base more based off of my mentor and working with her. She's starting to show me more of like the data-based stuff. And we have this thing called iReady for math and reading. But what we've noticed on there, both of us together, and the second grade team as a whole, is sometimes that doesn't reflect what the students actually know. And so, also seeing as grading wise. Knowing if I break now, I do my math tests I read them. I read each problem at the rug, I send the students back to answer it, I bring them back to me just because the wording of it is awful or sometimes I have to reread it myself to figure out "What are you really asking?" And I think just seeing, like if I pull myself out of that, what can the kids do themselves? And like obviously we'd still read it to them and walk around, but would it still work?

And I think knowing like you can also tell with some students just the struggle on their face of when something comes up that is too high, they just immediately shut down. So if I see that, I'll pull them over and I'm like, "Hey, like do you need help with anything?" And they're like, "Oh, can you just read this?" So I'll read it and I'll try to, if it's math, like annunciate certain words just to like point them out. I've also noticed with some students it all depends on how they are react or engaging in questions and how well they can formulate a response. Like I had this one kid, I'm like, "Okay, if this is shorter, are we going to add or subtract?" "Multiply!" "Now we haven't learned multiplication yet. So, no." And that's my low kids. So I'm like, how did you even get that? Like how did you even get the conclusion of multiplication? The other kids were like freaking out. And I'm like, "Where's Jennifer? I need help in here!"

I think it's also like you just, you have to start to learn your students. And I know like the first week of school, you're not going to know each and every strength of every student, especially if they're coming in new to the school. But what we've been talking about is for first grade to give second grade a writing samples and we can show our first grade, like our students that come in and be like, "Look, this is what you were able to do. You could write a paragraph, a paragraph is not new." And then for us to give a final writing sample at the end of second grade to third grade, just kind of stuff along there. And then if students really stick out like within first grade, then they could just have a quick meeting with second grade to be like, "Here, this is some things we've noticed about him, this is what we've been working on." And I think it all builds on like learning the student regardless of if they are new to the school or not. And you can't just look at their test scores. Because for me, I was the most awful test taker, so I know that a test score would not represent what I was able to do in the classroom. Like all of my work would be spot on. Then you'd give me the test and I'd shut down. So I don't think it's like you can look at that for some stuff, but I don't think it's like as reliable as the people who make it think it is.

I think with just the coursework and all goes back to that [teacher preparation course] day with the baseball. And she drilled that in our head. I mean I did not like that professor. I had her twice, did not like her at all, but she drilled that into my head and everybody's head. And at first I really didn't understand. She was always like, "Okay, was this equitable or equality?" And everyone would look at each other like, "Aren't they the same?" And then it was really like she had just kept going through it and then she'd ask us, "Okay, what are you seeing in your practicum hours?" Cause at that time we weren't in our student teaching or even in our cohort yet. And it was really hard for me to pick out what they were doing. And I think that was because I was in there Monday, Wednesday or Wednesday, Friday from like 11 to three. So that's hard to

like really understand each and every student. So now being in the classroom--and I was even, even last semester being in there Monday and Thursday all day start to finish, I was able to pick up on what students needed more help and which ones I needed to go and check in on more. And just being with the students throughout the week, throughout the day, throughout a single lesson, I can tell what they need in order to succeed. Now I'm not saying that like I differentiate my entire math lesson, but I definitely know which students I need to check in on throughout it.

I do for like for our walk to read and on Friday we all take our quiz together. I make sure I have a quiz that is good for my class, a quiz that is good for the middle class, a quiz that is for the intensive and then a quiz that's for like reading lab all based off of the same thing. Just making sure that it is. Even with spelling, we don't score them like 11 out of 12. If they got an 11 out of 12 and that's like a 92% we put their percentage in because they were able to get that percentage of what they know correct. So we use a lot of percentages in the grade book for stuff that we differentiate like our spelling or comprehension. Same with conventions and stuff. Cause if they can't spell the same as our higher kids. We definitely got to modify their, their conventions and amount of words they're required to spell it.

So I think it starts, that I've been seeing is their spiral math reviews. So they do it in their morning. It's part of their morning work and they, every student has to get all five of their boxes each day. They have day one, it's five boxes. Um, but our star group has more so of um, "circle the odd numbers" box, the even numbers, "put the numbers in least to greatest," "put the numbers are greatest to least." Um, can you or "add these two numbers showing your work and you have to show your work," "subtract these numbers, showing your work and then when our dash just to get them to review what they know." Cause if we were to push them on to, uh, we also do the

same with the number of the day. We give them double digits instead of triple digit because they're like, "I don't know the triple digit--" and I'm like, "But you do." They just need that with guidance and this is for their independent practice. So with our heart group, they have more of triple digits adding and subtracting triple digits. Yet they still, those students still need to work on their math fact fluency of zero to 10 and zero to 20, adding and subtracting. So every day at the end of the day we, they, each student gets the same math probe just to see what they know at that second grade level.

And this week we're starting to do more of our math stations. So we're going to have some students they can choose like we have one that's going to be placed value and they can go through and work on place value. We have, um, just they're adding and subtracting. So they're, matter of fact fluency, we have them going on iReady. Um, just cause some students can't get on it at home and just to provide them that opportunity within the classroom there is a color like add up and subtract games, just stuff like that to get them, I mean, we call them games, but they're not really games. Just so they can work on building those math facts to prepare them for multiplication when they actually need it.

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Recently, cause I can't really name any prior, but as of recently I've started to notice that my dad favors my sister—she's younger than me—over me. Backstory: my dad is engaged, has a fiancé and she has a seven year old daughter. So we're a blended family now, but he favors my younger sister—my biological sister. And I guess over the past few years he's started to favor his fiancé and her daughter over my sister and I. Where I guess I really started to notice it was when he started to become more involved with his fiancé, at the time girlfriend, and her daughter. So

her daughter was maybe almost three-ish at the time. So this was four years ago. And he was just always like, "Well, like I want to do what they're doing, like let's all try."—like let's Janie and I, who's my younger sister—"let's try to do stuff with her and include it." But it was moreso like whatever Stephanie's doing (his fiancé), that he would want to do.

And, my dad at the time had lost his business and Stephanie was a hairdresser and I was like, "Okay, she can't be after him for the money" because he had just liquidated it. But then he reopened a business and is flourishing like, "Well maybe she is." And so it's always been Stephanie never paid rent. And my dad moved into a bigger house so they could move in and my dad was still the only one paying rent. But then like my sister's and my car completely died on us. That's when she graduated high school. And so it was a big ordeal to get a car for us, and we're like, "But do I need it, because I'm driving 30 minutes to school every day. I'm not going to bus down there." And my mom's always been, while the kids are in school, I'll do anything and everything for them.

And so my recent story is I went snowboarding and asked my dad for $50 for the lesson because I bought my ticket and everything. And I got altitude sickness, couldn't really complete the lesson. So I was just like, "Okay, like I'm going to ask." And he said "No. I think it's okay that you pay for stuff on your own. You're almost there." Which yes, I agree. But that day he had taken Stephanie, Mae (her daughter), and my sister Janie, and they all got mani-pedis and I'm like, my snowboarding lesson is cheaper than their mani-pedis. So that kind of frustrated me. And he called my mom and blew up on her and my mom's like, "No, like I see it in how you treat Ellie compared to Janie. And it's very noticeable." I went through a spurt, I wouldn't even like ask him for gas and grocery money. As a student that's hard because I could only work Fridays

with the schedule I had. And so I've started to see the shift, especially in how he starts to treat them over Janie and I, especially me.

And I suffer from anxiety, depression. My mom does, my sister does. And my dad kind of. But when my sister told my dad about her stuff, he was like right on it. Very, like, "Let's get you into see somebody." And he wanted her to talk to the person he talks to. And when I approached him I said, "No, I want to talk to somebody here. Like I don't want to talk on the phone." And he like blew up on me and was like, "There's no reason to have anxiety. You have a great life." But like with my sister-- or like, I just don't think he saw it. And my mom could relate. But with my sister, he was like on it and knew, wanted to help in every which way. But with me, he's like never ask his family. So I've seen that difference, I don't know is-- to me, I think that's equity because we're both trying to, my sister and I are both trying to get to the end goal of graduating. I mean I'm two years ahead of her, so obviously I'm there closer, but I see it as, she's still getting more than I did as a sophomore. Is equity and like my personal life, I guess. I mean hers is more severe, I do think hers is more severe, but the way my dad still handled it, it could have been with more love and tenderness towards me.

In my senior year of high school I really did not want to go away for college, but I knew it would be the best for me. I'm such a home body and stuff. And she kind of had that as well. But I'd say she's been on, like I have only like dealt with it recently when I guess she's dealt with it, like come to terms with it before. And I think it kicked in this year for me, like my roommate stuff and seeing that and realizing how, not bad, but just how if I were like on a medicine it would just help. Or talking to somebody. That's all I really needed. I'm trying to figure out, hers was, I would say hers was the end of senior year, so two-ish years ago. Mine was about then, but

I'd never really liked, I was just freshman year of college, just homebody, just always wanted to go home to Scottsdale, just always want to go back. And I did, I'd get anxiety about going out to the frats and I'd get dressed and then I'd immediately regret it and then change and get back in my bed. So that would happen. And then sophomore year I came out of my shell and like was fine with it. But, so if they were about the same like age wise, but I think that she dealt with it, hers was more visible. I'm trying to figure because she's been on hers for a while, but I think hers is more depression when mine's more anxiety then hers. So hers would be like depression, anxiety and mine's like anxiety, depression. I don't know if you can interchange them but I'm going to interchange them.

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