

Let's talk about books: Using student-created conversational podcasts to increase engagement and improve reading attitudes among middle schoolers

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Abstract: Middle schoolers are the most disengaged group of students in K-12 (Wigfield et al., 2006), and disengagement is the most cited reason for dropping out of school (Christenson & Thurlow, 2004). Middle schoolers also tend to hold negative attitudes toward reading. The current study implemented a project-based learning intervention designed to increase engagement and reading attitudes in an eighth grade inclusion english/language arts classroom. Thirteen students participated in the intervention, in which they selected a novel from a variety of choices and were assigned to groups based on their selections. Students created conversational podcasts centered around their choice-reading novel. The intervention did not yield significant differences in student engagement or attitudes toward reading, but students in a focus group interview indicated the intervention was an enjoyable experience and they would prefer to show their learning in a podcast compared to a multiple choice test or an essay. Further, students enjoyed the social context for reading provided through the intervention.

Introduction and Justification

In the current work, I conducted a study in which three classes of eighth grade students created conversational podcasts centered around a choice reading novel. Students were provided with prompts to guide them through their discussions, but students had autonomy in choosing what to discuss during their podcast episodes. Students chose the book they read from a collection of options with their podcast group. The creation of podcasts centered around choice-reading novels gave students the opportunity to have authentic conversations regarding literature with their peers. The goals of the current study were to increase a variety of engagement domains (behavioral, cognitive, and emotional) and improve the reading attitudes of students.

Student engagement seems to be at its lowest during the middle school years (Wigfield et al., 2006). Promoting academic, behavioral, and cognitive engagement is one of the most effective ways to prevent students from dropping out of school (Christenson & Thurlow, 2004). One pedagogical method that has been effective at increasing student

engagement is project-based learning (PBL; Carrabba & Farmer, 2018). PBL is a form of student-centered learning that allows students to engage in authentic learning with real-world applications (Kokotsaki et al., 2016). Podcasts provide students with an alternative and engaging way to interact with academic content and their peers (Morgan, 2015). Students who participated in the intervention meaningfully engaged in PBL through the creation of conversational podcasts.

Further, the creation of podcasts in this study implemented technology-mediated instruction. Based on a review of the literature relating to PBL, Kokotsaki et al. (2016) identified the integration of technology into PBL as one of seven key recommendations to teachers. Middle school students in one study also expressed a desire to engage with technology more often in the classroom due to higher levels of anticipated engagement and preparation for the future (Spires et al., 2008). The integration of technology seems to make PBL a more authentic and engaging experience for students and was incorporated in the current study through the creation of podcasts.

Like engagement, positive reading attitudes decrease throughout middle school, with eighth graders having the most negative attitudes toward reading (McKenna et al., 2012). A suggested strategy for improving attitudes toward reading is to hold students' situational interest (Springer et al., 2017). In the context of the present study, creating podcasts was a novel activity that piqued students' interests.

In the next section, I will lay out the existing research related to my topic, describe my intervention and data collection procedures, explain analyses of my results, and discuss limitations and future directions of the current study.

Literature Review

Student Engagement

Approximately one in eight students drop out of high school, with disengagement being the most commonly cited reason (Christenson & Thurlow, 2004). Students with more indicators of disengagement (e.g., grade retention, academic failure) are markedly more likely to drop out of school (Henry et al., 2012). Further, students with and without disabilities have similar predictors of school dropouts, including lack of involvement in school activities (Kemp, 2006). Students who are disengaged from school in the eighth and ninth grades are also more likely than their engaged peers to experience delinquency and substance use issues (Henry et al., 2012). This epidemic of dropouts and other negative outcomes propagated by disengagement necessitates interventions and instructional strategies designed to increase student engagement.

Students who are engaged in school are invested in their own learning and are excited to apply their learning to their lives (Newmann, 1992). Engagement can be broken down into the behavioral (participation in class and extracurricular activities and displaying positive conduct), emotional (positive interactions with teachers, peers, and

school and a sense of belonging), and cognitive (investment in one's own learning) domains (Fredricks & McColskey, 2012). Each of these domains should be addressed in order for students to reap the most benefits of engagement interventions and strategies.

Engagement is negatively correlated with grade level, such that engagement decreases as students move through the school years. Further, variance in engagement at the classroom level is highest during the middle school years (Marks, 2000). This supports the need to develop interventions to increase engagement at the classroom level, especially in middle school. Additionally, these interventions should focus on creating authentic learning experiences. As students progress through school, authentic instructional work becomes more important as authentic learning has a greater correlation to engagement and mitigates the effects of student backgrounds (e.g., socioeconomic status, prior achievement) on engagement (Marks, 2000). Interventions to increase engagement should include opportunities to engage in authentic learning experiences.

Reading Attitudes

Reading attitude declines follow a similar pattern as engagement, with seventh graders having more negative attitudes than sixth graders, and eighth graders having more negative attitudes than both sixth and seventh graders (McKenna et al., 2012). As students progress through middle school, their attitudes toward reading become increasingly more negative. In a longitudinal study, students in first through fourth grade had significantly more negative attitudes toward reading during the third year of the study compared to the first (Kush & Watkins, 1996). Overall, as students progress through their schooling, they tend to develop increasingly negative attitudes toward reading.

Evidence-Based Practices for Reading Engagement. There are several evidence based practices (EBPs) that teachers can employ to increase student engagement and improve student attitudes toward reading in the classroom. One EBP for reading engagement is to connect in- and out-of-school literacies (Brozo & Flynt, 2008). Students use literacy knowledge often outside of school (e.g., texting friends), and these uses of literacy can be leveraged in school to support learning. Another EBP identified repeatedly is increasing student choice when selecting texts (Brozo & Flynt, 2008; Fisher & Frey, 2018; Guthrie & Davis, 2003). There is often less opportunity for choice in selecting books in middle school (Guthrie & Davis, 2003). However, autonomy is more effective than control for fostering intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Allowing students to choose their own texts engages them more effectively in the process of reading compared to when they are assigned a text.

Project-Based Learning

Project Based Learning (PBL) is "...an active student-centered form of instruction which is characterized by students' autonomy, constructive investigations, goal-setting, collaboration, communication and reflection within real-world practices" (Kokatsaki et al.,

2016, p. 267). Several studies have explored the benefits of Project-Based Learning for a variety of student populations. PBL has been found to be more effective at increasing engagement among middle school students compared to direct instruction. In fact, students were more engaged compared to baseline data after PBL, whereas students were less engaged than they were at baseline when taught using direct instruction (Carrabba & Farmer, 2018). More traditional models of instruction, including direct instruction, may be ineffective for improving student engagement, and may actually lead to even more disengagement with learning. Teachers who implemented PBL in their classrooms in one study reported that they perceived their students to be highly engaged (Wurdinger et al., 2007). Further, students themselves also report feeling engaged during PBL (Virtue & Hinnant-Crawford, 2019). PBL seems to be an effective practice for improving student engagement.

Few researchers have explored the effect of PBL interventions on special education students' engagement. However, PBL has been linked to additional outcomes for special education students. In one PBL intervention, special education and general education students had similar levels of academic performance after implementation of the intervention (De La Paz & Hernandez-Ramos, 2013).

Integration of Technology in Project-Based Learning. Middle school students interviewed in one study reported that their most liked activities in school involved technology, but they felt that teachers rarely used technology in meaningful ways in the classroom (Spires et al., 2008). They also reported they believed technology use in the classroom would increase their engagement. Teachers who are experts in implementing PBL in the classroom suggest incorporating technology into PBL designs to support student learning (Mergendoller & Thomas, 2005). Technology allows students to take control of their own learning and tailor it to their own interests, making learning relevant and authentic (Project Tomorrow, 2010).

PBL assists in student acquisition of several critical 21st century skills including inquiry, collaboration, communication, problem-solving, goal setting, accountability and technology use. The incorporation of technology in PBL is highly engaging to students as it reflects their out-of-school experiences more accurately (Bell, 2010). Students who completed PBL and participated in focus groups after the fact identified real-world applications of the skills learned during the project (Virtue & Hinnant-Crawford, 2019). PBL incorporates the learning of several 21st century skills, especially when technology is a component in the process.

Podcasts as PBL

The current study employed student-centered podcasts as the "project" students created as part of a PBL intervention. Few studies have explored how student-created podcasts can support students in the classroom, but positive outcomes, including improved

literacy, engagement with learning, and collaborative efforts, have been reported (Morgan, 2015). In one study, students created podcasts in the higher education setting and 91% rated the experience as positive (Phillips, 2017). Although the higher education setting is different from a middle school setting, it is likely that middle school students would also rate the experience of creating podcasts as positive. This is supported by the idea that students express the desire for more technology related activities in the classroom (Spires et al., 2008). The present study explored how podcasts can be created through PBL to increase engagement and improve reading attitudes. Many studies have explored how PBL affects student engagement, but there is little evidence to support the extent to which PBL may improve reading attitudes, and there are no studies that explore how PBL through podcasts may improve reading attitudes, making this a novel study.

The creation of podcasts related to student reading allowed students to connect in- and out-of-school literacies, as podcasting is an increasingly popular new form of technology that is often not utilized in schools. Conversational podcasts about books are similar to book talks and literature circles, which have been used in the past to increase reading volume (Fisher & Frey, 2018) and attitudes toward reading (Pittman & Honchell, 2014). Both book talks and literature circles involve student discussion about books and are effective strategies for promoting positive experiences with reading. The podcasts students created as part of the current study are structured similarly to book talks and literature circles, so the same benefits are likely to apply. The present study considered the past research on improving reading attitudes and increasing student engagement through PBL to create an intervention that attempted to positively influence these variables through student-created conversational podcasts.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of the current study was to explore how a newer technology (i.e., podcasts) can be used as a PBL experience to increase student engagement and reading attitudes. During my internship, I noticed my students were often disengaged from instruction, even when working on collaborative activities. Further, my students were not hesitant to express their disinterest in, and sometimes outright distaste for, reading. I wanted to design an intervention to get my students engaged in instruction and to enjoy reading while also engaging in a collaborative project and experimenting with an unfamiliar form of technology. The following were the research questions for the current study -

1. How does project-based learning through the form of student-created podcasts affect students'
 - a. behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement?
 - b. attitudes toward reading?
2. What do students think of the experience of podcast creation in the ELA classroom?

Methods

Description of Sample/ Context

The participants for this study included 13 eighth grade students from a middle school English/language arts class in Southern Maryland. The class was an inclusive, co-taught class with five participants being IEP carriers. All students who participated in this study were given active consent by their parents or guardians. Any students who did not complete both pre- and post- intervention surveys were excluded from data analyses. Additionally, students who did not participate in the creation of at least two podcast episodes were excluded from quantitative data analyses. Only students who participated in creating at least three podcasts episodes (out of four) were eligible to participate in the post-intervention interview. Two students in total were excluded from post-intervention analyses. One student moved after completing pre-intervention data, but before the intervention began. The other student was excluded from the sample because he was absent for the creation of three podcasts. Four students were randomly selected from those who met the aforementioned criteria to participate in a post-intervention semi-structured group interview on the last day of the intervention, after the intervention concluded. The final sample for quantitative and analyses, after exclusions, included 13 participants. All 13 participants from the final sample were included in the pool of participants who could be selected for the interview.

Participants were given a choice of seven different books, but participants selected to read only four of the books. Four participants read *A Wrinkle in Time*, two participants read *Copper Sun*, five students read *The Giver*, and three students read *The 100*. Participants were interspersed in groups with students in the class who completed the intervention as a class project, but were not given consent to participate in the study.

Intervention (for Action Research)

The podcast creation intervention took place from January 3rd to January 25th of 2023. The intervention in this study required students to choose a book from several given options and to create conversational podcasts related to the book they choose. The intervention lasted 16 days, with a podcast created by students every fourth day of the intervention (i.e., days 4, 8, 12, and 16). By the end of the intervention, students who were present throughout all days created four podcast episodes in total. The intervention was split into four cycles consisting of four days each, with the first three days of each cycle being considered “preparation” days and the fourth day of each cycle being a recording day. During the three days before students recorded their podcasts as a group, students read their books and completed a planning template (Appendix A) to prepare for recording. During the first two days of each cycle, students read as a group to meet their reading goal. Students were also given the opportunity to listen to the audiobook instead of reading or while they read the physical copy. For the first cycle (days 1-4), students were assigned a

reading goal. Each group read the first two chapters of their chosen book on days 1 and 2 of the intervention. For the other three cycles, students collaboratively set a reading goal with their groups on the third day of each cycle before completing their planning template. For example, one group decided on day three that they would read two more chapters in their book over the next two days, while another group decided that they would read four chapters over the next two days. Students decided as a group what was a reasonable amount to read for their next podcast episode and held each other accountable for completing that reading on time. On the third day of each podcast cycle (i.e., days 3, 6, 9, and 15), students filled out a planning template created by me to guide them in their podcasts when they recorded. Students filled in the chapters they read, a summary of the chapters they read, and included up to four talking points with their individual comments. All students filled out their own template in order to include their personal comments, but students worked in their groups to complete the templates. On the fourth day of each cycle, students recorded their podcasts using one group members' cell phone. For the first podcast, students were given the goal of recording for three to five minutes. The time goal for each podcast increased in length, with the goal for the last podcast being 10-12 minutes.

There were certain days throughout the intervention where additional tasks were required. On the first day of the intervention, students were introduced to the podcasting project. Students watched a video about podcasting and had a discussion about what podcasts are. This was meant to familiarize students with the concept of podcasting as some of them stated they did not have previous exposure to podcasts. Also on day one, students completed a Google Form with descriptions of each book and selected their first, second, and third choice books. Students were provided with the choice of seven books. Students were placed in groups based on their responses on the Google Form. There were a total of seven groups, with three to five students in each group. Every student in the class received their first or second option. I checked out books for each student after school on day one of the intervention in order to give students all of day two to read the first two chapters in their book. On day two, I passed out books to students, and they started reading. On day four of the intervention, students were given a demonstration of how to record their podcast on their phones and how to upload the recording to an email to send to me. Throughout the intervention, students were able to access guiding questions (Appendix B) for each chapter in their books to help guide their comprehension and to use as talking points on their templates, and ultimately, when recording their podcasts.

There were no interruptions to the schedule or tasks during the course of the intervention. Several students missed days of school, but they caught up on reading and filling out their template and were able to record with their group.

Accommodations. Special education students received accommodations in accordance with their IEPs throughout the intervention. Students were provided with chapter summaries when they struggled to comprehend the text on their own. Students

were also given the option to listen to an audio version of the text instead of or in addition to reading the book with their eyes. One student with selective mutism used assistive technology to allow him to participate in the intervention. The student typed his answers, and the computer read the text aloud. This allowed the student to contribute to his group's podcasts.

Type of Methods

The current study employed a mixed-methods design. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. Quantitative data was collected prior to the intervention and at the conclusion of the intervention. Qualitative data was collected after the intervention was completed through a semi-structured interview.

Materials. To measure students' behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement before and after the intervention, students completed a modified version of the *Student Engagement Measure (SEM)* (Fredricks et al., 2005). The *SEM* is a 19-item likert-type survey, but 13 items were included for the purposes of this study. Students were asked to rate their agreement with each of the statements on a scale from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*always*). An example item is, "I like being at school." The survey is made up of three subscales, each with a differing number of items. The subscales are behavioral engagement (5 items), emotional engagement (4 items), and cognitive engagement (4 items). The internal reliability of the full survey (i.e., all 19 items) ranges from $\alpha = .55$ to .86, depending on the subscale.

To measure students' attitudes toward reading before and after the intervention, students completed an adapted version of the *Survey of Adolescent Reading Attitudes (SARA)* (Conradi et al., 2013). For the purposes of this study, seven items from the original survey were used. The items used were related to students' attitudes toward reading for recreational and academic purposes. For example, one of the items was "How do you feel about reading a book for fun on a rainy Saturday?" Students were asked to rate their feelings toward the statement on a scale from 1 (*very bad*) to 6 (*very good*).

Both full surveys are included in Appendix C.

Interview Questions. Four students were randomly selected from those eligible based on the specified criteria to participate in a semi-structured, group interview. This allowed students to build on each others' responses and either agree or disagree with their peers. The questions listed in Appendix D served as a guide for the interview, but are not an exhaustive list of questions that were asked in the interview. Additional questions arose organically in the context of conversation and student responses.

Books & Podcast Equipment. Students were able to choose from seven book choices listed below. Each of the books is on the approved reading list given by the school district and were checked out from the school library. Each student was given a copy of the book they chose for the duration of the intervention. Students chose their top three choices and were ultimately assigned one of the books based on their selections.

1. *Copper Sun* by Sharon M. Draper

2. *The Giver* by Lois Lowry
3. *Enchanted Air* by Margarita Engle
4. *The 100* by Kass Morgan
5. *Found* by Margaret Peterson Haddix
6. *The War of The Worlds* by HG Wells
7. *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle

To record their podcasts, students used the recording app that comes pre-installed on their phones. At least one student per group had a phone with recording capabilities. Only one student from each group recorded the podcast, so not every student in the group was required to have a phone. This allowed students without phones to participate. There were enough students in the class who had cell phones that other podcasting equipment was not needed for the intervention.

Data Collection

Pre-Intervention. Initial data was collected prior to the intervention in mid-December before students left for winter break. Students who received parental consent to participate in the study were pulled during homeroom to complete the pre-intervention surveys. They were given the SARA and the SEM at the same time. Students were instructed not to write their names on their surveys in order to protect anonymity. However, special education students received surveys with some type of identifying mark to ensure that data could be attributed to a special education student, but not to a specific student. This was necessary for comparing the results between general and special education students. Any students who were absent on the day of data collection were asked to complete it another day, up to the first day of the intervention. After the intervention began, any students who had not filled out either of the surveys were excluded from participation in the study. Survey responses were not attributable to specific students, but a checklist was kept to keep track of which students completed the surveys in order to identify which students needed to be excluded from quantitative analyses at the end of the study.

During Intervention. No formal data was collected during the intervention; however, I kept track of student attendance for exclusionary purposes on a Google Sheet. As stated, students must have participated in the creation of at least two podcast episodes in order to have their data included in quantitative analyses and at least three episodes to be eligible for participating in interviews.

Post-Intervention. Students completed the SARA and SEM (Appendix C) for a second time on the last day of the intervention after all intervention activities concluded. Any students who did not complete the surveys on this day were asked to complete them the next day during homeroom. After this, all students who had not completed the post-intervention surveys were excluded from quantitative analyses. A semi-structured interview was conducted the day after the intervention concluded. Four students who had

not been excluded based on stated criteria were randomly selected and interviewed as a group in a separate classroom. These students were asked the interview questions listed in Appendix D. I recorded the interview for the purposes of transcription and qualitative data analysis. Any other identifying information was redacted from the transcript. After the interview was transcribed, the recording of the interview was deleted to protect student anonymity.

Table 1:

Research Questions and Data Sources

	Data source	Pre-intervention	Post-intervention
How does project-based learning through the form of student-created podcasts affect students' behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement?	Student Engagement Measure-Modified (Fredricks et al., 2005).	x	x
How does project-based learning through the form of student-created podcasts affect students' attitudes toward reading?	Survey of Adolescent Reading Attitudes-Modified (SARA; Conradi et al., 2013).	x	x
What do students think of the experience of podcast creation in the ELA classroom?	Interview		x

Results

Behavioral, Cognitive, and Emotional Engagement

I conducted three two-sample T-tests (one for each subscale) to determine whether, and to what extent, engagement domains changed from before the intervention to after. There were no significant changes in behavioral engagement ($p = .31$), cognitive

engagement ($p = .92$), or emotional engagement ($p = .26$) from before the intervention to after. There were 16 students included in the pre-intervention data sample and 13 students included in the post-intervention data sample. Survey responses for students who did not complete post-intervention surveys remained as part of the pre-intervention sample due to the inability to match responses to specific students as part of confidentiality measures.

I also analyzed the responses to engagement domains for any changes among special education students. There were no significant changes in behavioral engagement ($p = .59$), cognitive engagement ($p = .77$), or emotional engagement ($p = .53$) from before the intervention to after. There were five special education students included in the pre-intervention data sample and four students included in the post-intervention data sample.

There were no significant differences in any of the three engagement domains from pre-intervention to post-intervention for both general and special education students combined and for special education students only.

Table 2:

Results - Engagement

Engagement Domain	Pre-Intervention Mean	Post-intervention Mean	p -value
Behavioral	4.02	3.73	.31
Cognitive	2.92	2.88	.92
Emotional	2.96	2.49	.26

Reading Attitudes

I conducted a two-sample T-test to determine whether, and to what extent, reading attitudes changed from before the intervention to after. Like the analyses for engagement domains, the pre-intervention data set includes responses from 16 students, whereas the post-intervention data set includes responses from 13 students. There was no significant difference in reading attitudes from before to after the intervention ($p = .26$).

I analyzed the responses to the SARA for changes among special education students. There were five special education students included in the pre-intervention data sample and four students included in the post-intervention data sample. There was no significant

difference in reading attitudes for special education students from pre-intervention to post-intervention ($p = .63$).

Reading attitudes were not significantly different from pre-intervention to post-intervention for the sample as a whole or for special education students only.

Table 3:

Results - Reading Attitudes

	Pre-Intervention Mean	Post-intervention Mean	p -value
Reading Attitudes	3.43	2.98	.26

Student Thoughts about Podcast Project

An interview was conducted with four randomly selected students on the last day of the intervention after students recorded their fourth and final podcast. Students were asked a series of questions. Their responses are included in the table below.

Table 4:

Interview Questions & Responses

Interview Questions	Student Responses
"How did you feel about creating podcasts as a class project?"	"It was interesting to record what we were learning about." "It was something new. I never did that before."
"Was there anything you really liked about [the project]?"	"We were able to put in our own music and editing like how we wanted to."
"Was there anything you did not like about it?"	"The recording part. I feel like when you have a mandatory time it like... like I feel like if we didn't have a time it would've went way longer."

"Did you feel engaged in the project?"

"Yes." (x4)

"What parts were engaging?"

"I feel like a lot of the communication because we were reading by ourselves but we were talking about the book with our group."

"Were there any parts that were not engaging to you?"

"The reading part. Very boring. If we read with the whole group I feel like we would've been on the same track."

"I feel like some of the people in the group were behind and some were ahead so we weren't on the same page."

"Was any part of the project particularly challenging?"

"No." (x4)

"How did you feel about having to read a book for the project?"

"It wasn't that bad. It was okay."

"In the past you'd probably have to write an essay on it"

"What did you think of the book choices at the beginning of the project?"

"I feel like there was a good genre of books that you could have chosen from."

"Why did you choose the book you read?"

"Cause I've already read the book. I've already read it twice."

"Because I read it in 6th grade."

"I chose it because I saw the show [the 100] and I thought it was interesting how they're

experimenting if it's safe to go on Earth."
"I thought it looked interesting."

"What did you think of the book you read?"

"It was pretty good. I think it's more of a different book. It's an original idea."
"I thought it was pretty cool."
"It was very different from the show. It had some of the same events but it changed the characters and the plot I guess."

"How did you feel about talking about books with your classmates?"

"Pretty good."
"I'd rather talk about the book that I read than, like, do an essay."

"Do you think your attitude toward reading changed as a result of the project?"

"Yeah."
"I didn't like reading before. It's not my favorite thing but it's easier to read."
"I still don't like reading, but it's better when you talk to someone about reading a book instead of just reading the book and then having it to yourself."

"How was using technology for this project similar or different to using technology in the past for school?"

"It made it quicker and easier. It's easier to talk about something than write it down."
"Basically we just go on our laptops."

"Do you wish anything about the project had been different?"

"Maybe the time. It was hard to talk about 3 chapters in 10 minutes."
"I feel like with the timing it was supposed to be like 10 minutes. People were stressed because their recordings were maybe 5 minutes at most."

Overall, students indicated they enjoyed the project of creating podcasts centered around a choice-reading novel as part of the intervention. Students expressed that it was easier to record a podcast to show their learning and thoughts about the book compared to writing an essay which is what they have been asked to do often in the past. Students thought it was easier to have an informal conversation to express their learning compared to writing an essay, which is more formal. Students also mentioned multiple times throughout the interview that reading was more enjoyable in the social context compared to reading independently. Students also offered insights that could be incorporated into a future project similar to the one in this intervention. For example, timing requirements were stressful to students, so future projects may not include a time requirement, but ensure students are meeting all required criteria instead. The students interviewed explained they felt rushed to complete a certain number of chapters and the time requirement for the podcasts caused stress. All students in the interview agreed they would much rather record a podcast to show their learning as opposed to writing an essay or taking a test on a book.

Discussion of Results

There were no significant differences in any of the three engagement domains (i.e., cognitive, behavioral, emotional) or in reading attitudes from pre-intervention to post-intervention in the current study. The PBL intervention of creating podcasts centered around a choice-reading novel did not appear to affect engagement or reading attitudes of the students included in the current study. There are several potential reasons for the insignificant results from the quantitative data but overall positive comments from the student interview. One reason may be that students did not find the reading choices meaningful or relevant to them. The plot of the novels did not reflect the lived experiences of the diverse group of students included in this sample. Novel choices were limited by the requirement that they be on the district-approved reading list. Another reason may be that the surveys did not accurately measure student engagement or reading attitudes. The surveys were indicated by their developers to be reliable (Conradi et al., 2013; Fredricks et al., 2005), however, the adaptations of surveys for the current study may have led to unreliable findings. The surveys were adapted to include only some of the original items. This was done at the request of the school's principal out of concern that students may be overwhelmed by too many survey items. Students were able to express any opinions in the interview and were not limited in what they wanted to discuss about the project. Students made several comments about the podcast-creation experience itself and the social-context for reading, neither of which were addressed on the surveys. Students' may have held positive attitudes toward reading in a social-context, but this was not measured by the survey. In terms of engagement, students may have experienced an increase in engagement in ELA, but were still as disengaged in other classes. In hindsight, more specific results

could have been obtained had the survey questions been specifically worded to ask students about their engagement in ELA class only. This would be supported by the existing literature that engagement varies the most by classroom level during the middle school years (Marks, 2000). One or a combination of these possible explanations may have contributed to the conflicting results between quantitative and qualitative results.

Despite no results indicated by the quantitative data, student responses in qualitative analyses suggest the intervention was an enjoyable and worthwhile experience for students. Limitations of the current study and future directions are discussed below.

Conclusions and Implications

Limitations and Implications

One limitation of the current study was the small sample size. Sixteen students were included in the pre-intervention data set, whereas only 13 were included in the post-intervention data set. Three students were not eligible or able to complete post-intervention surveys and their pre-intervention responses could not be removed due to surveys not being associated with specific students. I implemented this intervention with one of three groups of my students. If I had included all three classes, a larger data set may have generated different results. Generally, a sample of 30 participants is desirable for reaching 80% power (i.e., the likelihood of rejecting the null hypothesis; VanVoorhis & Morgan, 2007). The sample size for the current study was not adequate to achieve 80% power (i.e., the minimum suggested power). Future studies should include a large sample size based on the results of a power analysis conducted before beginning the study.

Another limitation of the current study was the amount of time dedicated in the classroom to completing this intervention. Students had approximately 45-minutes for 16 class days to complete this intervention. The end of the intervention overlapped with the end of the second marking period, and for a few days, students were self-managing completing their podcast work with completing missing assignments due at the end of the marking period. During the last two to three days of the intervention, students did not have formal work time to complete the intervention due to unstructured time to complete all assignments for ELA class. In total, students participated in the intervention for less than four weeks. In the past, when PBL has been found to produce positive outcomes, the time dedicated to project completion ranged from six weeks to multiple marking periods (Kokotsaki et al., 2016). The intervention in the present study would have been best conducted over a longer period of time, preferably an entire marking period. Students were somewhat rushed to complete the project, and most students were not able to finish their books in the allocated time. Had students been able to complete their books and have more time to discuss with their peers, engagement and attitudes toward reading may have

increased compared to the current results in which there were no significant differences pre-to-post intervention.

Several aspects of successful PBL, as identified in a literature review by Kokotsaki et al. (2016), were included in the current study. Six evidence-based principles for effective PBL are student support, teacher support, effective group work, balancing direct instruction with inquiry learning, emphasis on reflection and self/peer evaluation, and student choice. Several of these principles were incorporated in the current study. Students were supported throughout the intervention through scaffolded materials (e.g., planning templates, guiding questions), individual accommodations (e.g., text-to-speech, chapter summaries), whole-group accommodations (e.g., audiobooks), and check-ins from teachers throughout the intervention. Teacher support was included through the collaboration between myself, my mentor teacher, and the general education ELA teacher. Effective group work could have been facilitated more effectively in this intervention. Some students did not take accountability and the majority of the work was completed by one or two group members. Groups were designed by the teachers for maximum collaboration, however, some groups still had difficulties with effectiveness. In the future, if I were to complete a project like this again, I would have groups, at the beginning of the intervention, create a set of norms they expect each other to follow. Further, I would build time into the intervention to have groups check in with each other regarding the extent to which all members are following the established norms. This would increase peer- and self-accountability. Due to the time constraints, students did not have time to reflect on their performance or learning throughout the intervention. It would have been beneficial for students to listen to their podcasts with their group and identify areas for improvement. This is something that could be included in future work to increase the salience and effectiveness of PBL strategies.

Lastly, student choice was a main component of this intervention. Students were given a choice of what book to read from seven different options. Students completed a Google Form and were put into groups based on their selected book choices. All students read either their first or second choice book. However, all book choices for this intervention were pre-approved by the school district and were not particularly relevant to students' lives. Even though students were given choice, choice was limited to pre-selected and approved books. The most recently published book from the choices was published in 2015. Given the changes in the social and political landscape over the past eight years, these books do not reflect the current issues and worldviews of many of the students in the classroom. Schools "need to recognise that a diverse range of reading materials will encourage students to read..." (Clark & Rumbold, 2006, p. 27). Future studies should incorporate more relevant reading choices and broader opportunities for student choice of reading materials.

Conclusion

Although there were no significant changes in engagement or reading attitudes based on quantitative analyses, students indicated they enjoyed creating podcasts as part of the current intervention. Students expressed they would rather record a podcast to show their learning than take a test or write an essay. Teachers can offer students the opportunity to show their learning through recording a podcast as part of differentiated instruction. Students also expressed that they enjoyed reading and discussing books with their peers, rather than reading novels independently. Giving students the opportunity to discuss what they are reading, whether through literature circles or through podcasts, is important for creating a social context for learning. Lastly, student choice is one of the most critical aspects of PBL, and when students are confined to choosing books from a pre-approved list, choice becomes restricted. Students should be given the opportunity to read and discuss books that are relevant and meaningful to them and should have more opportunities to choose what they read in school.

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Appendix A: Podcast Planning Template

Intro

1. Introduce yourselves (don't use your real names - make something up)
2. Title and author of book
3. Which chapters you read
4. Give a summary of the chapters you read (setting, characters, main events)

Title of Book:

Author:

Chapters read:

Main points to include in your summary

<p>Setting:</p> <p>Characters:</p> <p>Events:</p> 	
<p>Transition to talking about the chapters you read in more detail. <u>This should take up the most time!</u></p>	
<p>Talking Point 1:</p>	<p>My comments:</p>
<p>Talking Point 2:</p>	<p>My comments:</p>

Talking Point 3:	My comments:
Talking Point 4:	My comments:
<p style="text-align: center;">Outro</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give final thoughts about the chapters you read. 2. Tell your listeners what chapters you will be discussing next week. 3. Thank your audience for listening. 	
<p style="text-align: center;">Roles</p> <p>Who will be recording?</p> <p>Who will do any sound effects or music?</p> <p>Who will introduce the talking points? (Can be multiple people).</p>	
<p>Additional Materials: If you are going to add music (intro/outro) or sound effects, list here when you will play them. Make sure they are appropriate!</p>	

Appendix B: Guiding Questions

A Wrinkle in Time

Chapter 1

- What is so unique about Charles Wallace?
- How are each of the Murray siblings different? Which one do you relate to most?
- What did Mrs. Whatsit say that made Mrs. Murray so upset?
- What do you think a tesseract might be?

Chapter 2

- Does Mr. Jenkins treat Meg fairly?
- Do you think Meg should believe that her father is never coming home? What would you believe?
- What new characters are introduced in this chapter? Describe them.

Chapter 3

- When Meg tells Mrs. Murry about all the things she doesn't understand, her mother says, "But you see, Meg, just because we don't understand doesn't mean an explanation doesn't exist." What are some examples of things in our world that people don't understand yet?
- Should we accept people's differences even if we can't understand them, like Meg does with Charles Wallace?

- What do most people (other than the Murrays and Calvin) think happened to Meg's father?
- Where does Charles Wallace explain the group is going?

Chapter 4

- Why do you think Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Who, and Mrs. Which went to Charles Wallace first instead of Meg or any of the other Murrays?
- Where does the group end up?
- What does Mrs. Whatsit say Meg's father is doing?
 - What do you think she means?
- What do the Mrs. Ws turn into?

Chapter 5

- What is a tesseract, according to Charles Wallace?
- Mrs. Who says, "Experience is the mother of knowledge." Do you agree with the quote? Why or why not?
- Do you think we will ever be able to reach the 4th and 5th dimensions?
- What do the children have to fight?
- Where does Mrs. Whatsit say Mr. Murray is?

Chapter 6

- What did Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Who, and Mrs. Which used to be?
- What gifts, warnings, and hints are Meg, Charles Wallace, and Calvin given?
- Why would Charles Wallace be in the most danger?
- Describe Camazotz. What is so strange about the town?
- Why do you think the mother whose son drops the ball becomes so afraid of Meg, Charles Wallace, and Calvin?

Chapter 7

- Charles Wallace says the group cannot make decisions based on fear.
 - Do you agree or disagree with him? Why?
- What happens when Charles Wallace looks into the eyes of the "man"?

Chapter 8

- How does Calvin try to use his gift? Is he successful?
- What happens to people on Camazotz if they become ill?
- Meg says, "Maybe I don't like being different. But I don't want to be like everybody else either."
 - What does she mean?
 - Can you relate to how she feels?
- Meg says, "Maybe if you aren't unhappy sometimes you don't know how to be happy."
 - Do you agree or disagree with Meg's statement?
- Who does Meg see in the column at the end of the chapter?

Chapter 9

- What does Meg use to get into the cell with her father?
- What does Meg realize has happened to her father?
- What is IT?
- How does Meg use her faults against IT?

Chapter 10

- Why does Meg become so sick after tessering away from Camazotz?
- What are Meg's feelings toward her father and Calvin after they escape from IT? Do you think her feelings were justified?

Chapter 11

- Why do the beasts say they must take Meg?
- How does Meg know she can trust the beasts?
- Why is the name "Aunt Beast" fitting for the alien who takes care of Meg?

Chapter 12

- Why does Meg have to be the one to save Charles Wallace? Why does she have to go alone?
- Do you think Mr. Murray has failed Meg and Charles Wallace as a parent? Why or why not?
- What gift does Mrs. Whatsit give Meg before she goes back to Camazotz?
- What does Meg have that IT does not? How does it allow her to save Charles Wallace?
- What do you think Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Who, and Mrs. Which had to do?

Copper Sun

Chapter 1

- How old is Amari when you first meet her? How would you describe her personality?
- What is Amari's home like? How does she feel about her home?
- What relationship do Amari and Besa have?

Chapter 2

- Describe the visitors that come to Ziavi.
- What does Amari's culture seem to value? What is important to them? Are their culture's values similar or different to your culture's values?
- What did the strangers do to Amari's parents?
- What happens to Amari at the end of the chapters? How do you think she was feeling?

Chapter 3

- What conditions do Amari and the others face in this chapter?
- Why wouldn't Besa look at Amari?

- What happens to Tirza?

Chapter 4

- Where do the strangers take Amari and the others? Why were they brought there?
- How does the woman in the cell offer Amari comfort?

Chapter 5

- What skills does Afi teach Amari to help her survive?
- What happens to the Ashanti warriors who helped take Amari and the people from her village?
- Why are the captives fed so well on the island?

Chapter 6

- What advice does Afi give Amari about Besa? Do you agree with her advice? Why or why not?
- What does Afi say when Amari asks her why she should endure what is happening to her? (page 37)

Chapter 7

- What happens to the women who jump off the ship at the beginning of the chapter? Why would they risk their lives by jumping?
- Describe the living conditions aboard the ship.

Chapter 8

- How does the large man with orange hair show the prisoners kindness?
- What do you think makes some people do terrible things to other humans?

Chapter 9

- Why does the man who takes Amari tell her to scream?
- What does the orange haired man teach Amari when he takes her to his room?
 - Why is Amari grateful to be learning this?
- How do you think Amari will find strength from within like Afi tells her?

Chapter 10

- How is this chapter a turning point for Amari?

Chapter 11

- Why have the soldiers started treating the slaves more humanely?
- What do you think will happen to Amari once they reach land?

Chapter 12

- What does the man who comes on board say Afi will be good for?
- Where did the slaves end up?

Chapter 13

- Why do you think Bill stayed on the ship even if he doesn't agree with what is being done? Could he have stood up to the other soldiers? What would have happened to him if he had tried?

Chapter 14

- Who is Polly?
- How did Polly develop her attitude toward African American slaves?

Chapter 15

- What is the significance of Amari being given a new name by the people who bought her?
- In what ways are Polly and Amari similar?
- What responsibility does Mr. Derby give Polly when they get to Derbyshire Farms?
 - How does Polly feel about the task she has been given?

Chapter 16

- Amari refuses to call herself "Myna". Why do you think she is so adamant about this?
- What other slaves are introduced in this chapter?

Chapter 17

- Why does Amari feel resentment toward Polly? Is her resentment directed toward the right person?

Chapter 18

- What types of things does Teenie teach Amari?
- What happened to Mr. Derby's first wife?

Chapter 19

- How does Amari describe Africa to Tidbit?
- How can Amari and Polly relate to each other?

Chapter 20

- How is Mrs. Derby different from her husband?
- How is Mrs. Derby similar to a slave herself, according to Teenie?

Chapter 21

- How does Cato say Polly could get out of her indentured servitude?
- What happens to some of the slaves? Why does Mr. Derby have to keep replacing them?

Chapter 22

- How does Polly help Amari in this chapter?
- How is Amari punished for running into Mr. Derby and spilling food?

Chapter 23

- Who comes to visit Amari everyday while she is recovering?
 - Why does Mrs. Derby feel guilty for what her husband did to Amari?

Chapter 24

- What does Clay do to Tidbit with his friends?

Chapter 25

- What do Polly and Amari discover about Mrs. Derby's baby?

Chapter 26

- Why is Mrs. Derby convinced she is going to die after giving birth?

- What does Mrs. Derby ask Polly, Amari, and Teenie to tell Mr. Derby about the baby?

Chapter 27

- How does Mr. Derby punish his wife for having a baby with Noah?
- What happens to the baby?

Chapter 28

- What does Mr. Derby plan to do with Amari, Polly, and Teenie as punishment?

Chapter 29

- What is Cato's plan?
- Why does Cato tell Amari not to go North to try to escape?

Chapter 30

- What is important about the leather pouch Teenie ties around Tidbit's neck?

Chapter 31

- What does the doctor do for Polly and Amari?
 - What dangers does he warn them about?

Chapter 32

- Do you think Amari, Tidbit, and Polly should go South like Cato said or North like Dr. Hoskins said? Why?
- What strategies does Amari plan to use to lead the group to their destination?

Chapter 33

- Polly says, "Freedom is a delicate idea, like a pretty leaf in the air: It's hard to catch and may not be what you thought when you get it" (p. 213).
 - What does she mean?

Chapter 34

- Where does Hushpuppy go? What does he bring back?

Chapter 35

- Who finds the group as they are continuing their escape?
- What happened to Mr. Derby?
- How does Polly save the group?

Chapter 36

- Who does Polly meet in the woods? Describe him.
- What does Nathan tell the group about Fort Mose?
- How does Nathan help the group escape after his father finds them hiding in the barn?

Chapter 37

- How does Fiona help the group?
- Who is Amari reunited with? How does the reunion go?

Chapter 38

- How can it be possible to hate something and like something at the same time?
- How does the Spanish soldier describe Fort Mose?

Chapter 39

- How does the group get across the river?

Chapter 40

- What does Tidbit ask Amari to be to him from now on?
- How does Amari describe freedom at the end of the chapter?

Chapter 41

- What happened to Inez's husband Jasper after they came to Fort Mose?
- Who came by Fort Mose looking for Polly?
- Captain Menendez says, "Freedom means very little if there is no knowledge to go with it."
 - What do you think he means?

Chapter 42

- Amari's condition is revealed in the chapter? What is it?
- What options are given for the baby's name? What reasoning does she give for each of the names?

The 100

Chapter 1

- Does the first sentence of the book do a good job of capturing the readers' attention? Does it make you want to keep reading? Why or why not?
- Describe Clarke. What are her character traits?
- What does it mean for a book to be dystopian? How does The 100 fit into the dystopian genre?
 - Have you read/watched anything else that could be considered dystopian?

Chapter 2

- Describe Wells. What are his character traits?
- What is the purpose of including a flashback in the chapter?

Chapter 3

- What characters are introduced in the chapter?
- Why did Bellamy punch Colton? Would you do the same for someone you cared about even if it meant you would get in serious trouble?

Chapter 4

- What new character is introduced in this chapter? Describe her.
- What does Glass do while Bellamy holds the Chancellor hostage? Would you do the same? Why or why not?
- Why do you think the government would choose to send prisoners to see if Earth is safe to live on?

Chapter 5

- Clarke describes what she did to end up in confinement as “unspeakable”, and she has only told one person, Thalia, what she did.
 - What do you think Clarke might have done to end up in confinement?
- In the flashback, what did Clarke find out about her mom and dad’s research? Do you think this might be why they were executed for treason?

Chapter 6

- Why is Wells an outcast among the prisoners?
- What role would you play if you ended up on a deserted planet with a group of people.
 - Example, Clarke is tending to the injured.

Chapter 7

- What did Octavia, Bellamy’s sister do to end up in confinement? Did she deserve to end up in confinement for what she did?
- What does Bellamy find out about his mom in the flashback? Why is his mom so upset?

Chapter 8

- How does Glass get pardoned?
- What do you think Glass will do with the information about the Earth mission?

Chapter 9

- Clarke says “We always have a choice” (p. 102).
 - Do you think her parents really had a choice?
 - Do people ever do bad things because they don’t have another option?
- Make a prediction: Will Thalia survive her injuries?

Chapter 10

- What were the guards looking for in Bellamy’s house during the flashback? What is in the closet?
 - Why would his mother be in trouble if the guards had found what was in the closet?

Chapter 11

- In what ways are the characters in the book similar to typical teenagers?

Chapter 12

- Why doesn’t Octavia like being trapped inside?

Chapter 13

- How have the 100 found ways to survive on Earth? How have they adapted to their environment?
- What happened if someone broke the one child law?
- Why do they have the one child law?

Chapter 14

- Why is it important to make mundane tasks more enjoyable?

- What has Bellamy done to keep Octavia safe on Earth and in Walden?

Chapter 15

- What friendships are forming between the 100?
- Bellamy says, "I don't think anything's unforgivable. Not if it's done for the right reasons."
 - Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Chapter 16

- Why was Glass sick in the flashback?

Chapter 17

- Who were Clarke's parents experimenting on?
- What did Wells do to betray Clarke?
- What, or who, does Wells discover when he is walking through the forest to get water with Octavia? How does he react?

Chapter 18

- What happens to the medicine? Who does Clarke accuse of stealing it? Who do you think stole it?
- What does Lilly ask Clarke to do for her in the flashback?

Chapter 19

- What do some of the 100 do to Octavia? In your opinion, were they treating her fairly or unfairly?

Chapter 20

- What happens with Carter and Glass in the flashback?
- Why did Glass lie to Luke?

Chapter 21

- What does Clarke find when she is hunting in the woods for medicinal plants? Would you have gone in?
- Do you think Clarke will be rescued? Who do you think will rescue her?

Chapter 22

- Do you think Clarke will be able to forgive Wells?

Chapter 23

- How does Bellamy plan to get back at the group for blaming and confining Octavia?
- What happens in the flashback? Why do you think Bellamy's mom did what she did?
- Why did Octavia steal the medicine? Why was she confined originally?

Chapter 24

- What happened to Glass's baby?
- Do you think something more will happen with the airlock?

Chapter 25

- If you were one of the 100, would you forgive Octavia for stealing the medicine? Why or why not?

Chapter 26

- What do you think will happen when Clarke and Wells talk? Do you think they will resolve their issues?

Chapter 27

- We finally found out why Clarke was sentenced to Confinement. Why was she sentenced?

Chapter 28

- What does Luke ask Clarke at the end of the chapter?

Chapter 29

- What happens to Bellamy and Octavia's mother in the flashback?
- Where does the comet land?

Chapter 30

- What happens to Thalia?
- What does Clarke do for Lilly in the flashback? Do you think she made the right decision?
- Did Clarke have a right to get mad at Wells? Do you think she will forgive him?

Chapter 31

- What causes Luke and Glass to be separated?
- What does Glass's mother say is happening? What does she say will happen to Luke?

Chapter 32

- Why were the 100 sent to Earth so quickly?
- What does Wells realize he has to do to save Clarke?

Chapter 33

- How does Clarke know Octavia left before the fire? Why do you think she left on her own?

Chapter 34

- How does Glass get to Luke on Walden? Would you have gone to Walden or stayed on Phoenix?
- Who does Glass tell the Chancellor her baby's father is? Why does she lie?
 - Does Luke know what Glass did?

Chapter 35

- What could the marks in the dirt mean?
- What do you think happened to Octavia?
- What do the apple trees mean? Who could have planted them?

Chapter 36

- Who caused the problem with the airlock and caused the air to start running out on Walden and Arcadia?
- What is the cliffhanger at the end of the book?

- What do you think will happen in the next book?

The Giver

Chapter 1

- What characters are introduced in this chapter?
- What have you learned about the society Jonas lives in?
- What does a Nurturer do in the society? Do we have people who do similar things in our society?
- What does “release” mean? Who gets released?

Chapter 2

- What happens during the Ceremony of Twelve?
- Who decides what Assignment each of the Twelves will have?
- What is a comfort object? At what age does it get taken away? Do you have your own comfort object?
- Do you think twelve is too young of an age for people to be told what they will do for the rest of their lives? Why or why not?

Chapter 3

- What is a birthmother? Why does Jonas and Lily's mom react negatively when Lily says she would like her Assignment to be a birthmother?
- What happens with the apple? Why do you think the story about the apple might be important to the story?
- What do you think Jonas' assignment will be at the Ceremony of Twelve?

Chapter 4

- What is the purpose of the volunteer hours?
- Why doesn't Jonas know what he wants his Assignment to be? Do you think most twelve year olds know what they want to do for the rest of their lives?
- Does a Release sound like a positive or negative experience? Explain why you think that.

Chapter 5

- How is Jonas similar to typical eleven year olds in our world?
- Why does Jonas have to start taking pills? What do the pills do?
- How does the society repress the people within it?
 - Repress means to prevent something by force.

Chapter 6

- What is the difference between Release and Loss?
- How does the author build anticipation (excitement) for the Ceremony of Twelve?
- Which of the ceremonies (which age) seems the most interesting to you? Why?

- Who matches the spouses? Does it seem fair that people get assigned to their spouse?

Chapter 7

- How are Threes disciplined for using incorrect language? Do you think this is an effective way to teach children a language?
- Of the assignments given to the Twelves in the chapter, which would you most want? Which would you least want? Why?
- What happens to Jonas at the Ceremony of Twelve?

Chapter 8

- Why is everyone confused at the end of the Ceremony of Twelve?
- What assignment does Jonas receive? How does the audience react?
- What qualities does a Receiver need to have? Do you think Jonas has all of the qualities of a Receiver?
- What do you think the Capacity to See Beyond means?

Chapter 9

- What could the previous Receiver have done to become so disgraced?
- What do you think of the rules Jonas is given with his assignment?

Chapter 10

- What does the old receiver tell Jonas he will pass on to him throughout their training?
- How does remembering the past lead to wisdom?

Chapter 11

- Describe Jonas's experience of receiving his first memory.
- What happens to the old Receiver's memories once he transfers them to Jonas?
- What does the man tell Jonas to call him?

Chapter 12

- What is the Ability to See Beyond? What is Jonas able to see that everyone else cannot?
- Why do you think people made the choice to go to Sameness and get rid of colors?

Chapter 13

- Do you think society would be better if people were protected from making the wrong choices?
 - Is there value in making wrong choices sometimes?
- Who are the only people in society with access to books?
- Why does the Giver say only one person should have the memories of all the generations?

Chapter 14

- How does the Giver end all of his lessons with Jonas? Why?

- Why did the Giver warn the Elders about increasing the population and allowing families to have more than two children?
- Why does the Giver say the rules about who keeps the memories cannot be changed?
- What happens if someone gives birth to identical twins?
- How does Jonas get Gabriel to calm down and go back to sleep?

Chapter 15

- What does Jonas experience for the first time when the Giver gives him a new memory?
 - How does the Giver feel about giving Jonas this memory?

Chapter 16

- What is the Giver's favorite memory?
 - If you had to pick a favorite memory, what would it be?
- What feeling does Jonas experience for the first time?
- Why does Jonas not take his pill?

Chapter 17

- What do you think happens to the twin who goes Elsewhere?

Chapter 18

- What happened with the girl who was selected to be the Receiver before Jonas? Why did she not become the Receiver?
 - What happened to the memories she had been given?

Chapter 19

- What does Jonas see his father do to one of the twins in the video?

Chapter 20

- How does Jonas feel after he watches the video?
 - Why do other people not feel the same way about Release as Jonas?
- What decision about the memories do Jonas and the Giver come to in this chapter?
 - How do they plan to give everyone the memories?
- What do they plan to say happened to Jonas?
- What was Rosemary's relation to the Giver?

Chapter 21

- What does Jonas find out is going to happen to Gabriel?
 - What does he do in response?
- What does Jonas do to keep them from getting caught?

Chapter 22

- Do you think Jonas made the right decision to leave? Would you have made the same decisions?

Chapter 23

- What happens to Jonas and Gabriel? Where do they end up?

- Is there a definite answer to what happens to them at the end of the story?

Appendix C: Surveys

Survey of Adolescent Reading Attitudes - Adapted
(Conradi et al., 2013)

Survey #1

DO NOT put your name on this paper.

Answer the following questions as honestly as possible, no one (except you) will know how you answer.

Rate how you feel about each of the questions below. Circle your answer.

1 = very bad 6 = very good

1. How do you feel about reading a book in your free time?

1 2 3 4 5 6

2. How do you feel about talking with friends about something you've been reading in your free time?

1 2 3 4 5 6

3. How do you feel about reading a book online for a class?

1 2 3 4 5 6

4. How do you feel about getting a book or a magazine for a present?

1 2 3 4 5 6

5. How do you feel about reading a book for fun on a rainy Saturday?

1 2 3 4 5 6

6. How do you feel about reading anything printed (book, magazine, comic book, etc.) in your free time?

1 2 3 4 5 6

7. How do you feel about reading a novel for class?

1 2 3 4 5 6

School Engagement Measure - Adapted
(Fredricks et al., 2005)

Survey #2

DO NOT put your name on this paper.

Answer the following questions as honestly as possible, no one (except you) will know how you answer.

Rate your agreement with each statement below. Circle your answer.

1 = never 5 = always

1. I like being at school.

1 2 3 4 5

2. I feel excited by my work at school.

1 2 3 4 5

3. I am interested in the work at school.

1 2 3 4 5

4. I feel happy in school.

1 2 3 4 5

5. When I am in class, I just act as if I am working.

1 2 3 4 5

6. I pay attention in class.

1 2 3 4 5

7. I feel bored in school.

1 2 3 4 5

8. I check my schoolwork for mistakes.

1 2 3 4 5

9. I get in trouble at school.

1 2 3 4 5

10. I try to watch TV shows about things we do in school.

1 2 3 4 5

11. If I don't understand what I read, I go back and read it over again.

1 2 3 4 5

12. I talk with people outside of school about what I am learning in class.

1 2 3 4 5

13. I follow the rules at school.

1 2 3 4 5

Appendix D: Interview Questions

1. How did you feel about creating podcasts as a class project?
 - a. Was there anything specific you really liked about it?
 - b. Was there anything specific you really disliked about it?
2. Did you feel engaged in the project?
 - a. What parts were engaging?
 - b. What parts were not engaging?
3. Was any part of the project particularly challenging?
4. How did you feel about having to read a book for the project?
 - a. What did you think of the book choices at the beginning of the project?
 - b. Why did you choose the book you did?
 - c. What did you think of the book you read?
5. How did you feel about talking about books with your classmates?
6. Do you think your attitude toward reading changed as a result of this project? How so?
7. How has this experience with technology in school been similar or different to past experiences with technology in school?
8. Do you feel like you were supported by the adults in the classroom?
9. Do you wish anything about the project had been different?