Investigating the Emotional Impact of Narrative Dialogue on Struggling Readers’ Discovery of Learning Potential

Sharon M. Moukperian

Department of Graduate and Undergraduate Studies in Education

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Faculty of Education, Brock University

St. Catharines, Ontario

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Abstract

I investigated the cognitive, emotional and embodied responses to reading of four children/youth who experienced struggles with reading using phenomenology of embodiment (Husserl, 1913/2012; Taipale, 2014) as a theoretical framework and taking the role of an interpretive phenomenological approach (IPA) researcher (Smith & Osborne, 2007; Van Manen, 1997). Narrative theory (Bal, 2009; Chase, 2005; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Denison, 2016; White, 2007) supported the primary methodological and research approach complemented by the use of arts-based inquiry (Campbell, 1949/2008; Doherty, 1990; Gladwin, 2014; O’Donoghue, 2006) to probe stories about how participants thought and felt about their reading struggles and through dialogue individual learning strengths were discovered. The narrative approach provided an opportunity to ask how emotions and embodiment played a role in the reading process. I explored children and youths’ embodied experiences through narratives around reading and reading challenges, as they experienced reading difficulties and discovered learning strength during interview conversations about a reading challenge. Life narratives can change as emotions are evoked and described (Angus & Greenberg, 2011; White, 2007, 2011). As a listener, questioner, and recorder of these stories, I was not neutral and my own reflexivity played a role in the data collection [i.e., I was aware that I needed to evaluate my relationship with my participants because I had an influence on them by the observations and dialogues we had (Goldstein, 2017)]. This research focused on: (a) the emotional impact of reading deficits and children/youths’ discovery of cognitive learning strengths; (b) the influence of emotions on the children/youths’ and parents’ perceptions of the struggling reader lived experience; and (c) children/youths’ awareness of their own
emotional experiences and cognitive processes when reading leading to connections between the embodied reaction and cognitive processes signaling that this phenomenon related to realizing a learning strength. Implications for future research involve exploring further the dialogic approach to discovering learning strengths and how to apply them to reading challenges that trigger a visceral emotional response. This research contributes to a theory that emotional meta-awareness maybe necessary to guide metacognitive reading strategies. There is a connection between embodied-emotional responses, reading challenges, and the discovery of learning strengths. Metacognitive awareness is heightened by being able to interpret the visceral emotional responses possibly leading children/youth to be aware when they have a learning strength that they can apply independently by listening to their body while completing a challenging reading task.
Dedication

I dedicate this research to all those who are traumatized by struggles with reading and learning. To all the children and youth who keep trying in the face of personal adversity. To those whose interpretation of their experiences, emotions, and perceptions is they are “less than”. To all parents, caregivers, teachers, educators, partners, and friends who see the learning potential in these struggling readers, and they do all that they can to support them. And to those who have given up because the struggle was too long and too much. May this writing be a source of hope and encouragement – a Call to Adventure to see ourselves as the Heroines or Heroes in our own lived-stories. Success is about perseverance…overcoming adversity…discovering learning strengths and passion. May we have Wisdom to know how to recognize the decisions we can make when we listen to both our minds and our hearts.
Acknowledgements

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CHAPTER ONE: OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM

Learning to read is both a cognitive and emotional process. If you talk to parents about their child’s reading, their focus is on the mechanics: the ability of their child to decode letters on the page of a book fluently, to comprehend what they are reading, and to write effectively using proper spelling and grammar. Parents’ memories of reading as a child may be associated with positive or less positive emotions. Strong emotions surface for both parents and children when their child struggles with the process of learning to read. These emotions escalate when children or youths’ independent reading level (i.e., the level where 99% of printed words are decoded and read fluently) are two or three more grade levels behind their peers (as identified by the school), and developmental milestones are not a factor (Horowitz-Kraus, Schmitz, Hutton, & Schumacher, 2017). My research study examined the emotional and embodied experiences of children and youth who struggled for some time with reading.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to explore a gap in the research between the phenomena of embodied emotions and the lived reading-experiences of children and youth who self-identified the reading process as a struggle. Throughout the research, this descriptor of struggling reader was used to describe the current perceptions and experiences of the children/youth with some input from their families. This research focused on struggling readers’ emotional and cognitive experiences of reading and the impact of the discovery of learning strengths during six interview-conversation sessions. In order to explore personal learning abilities, the children/youth were asked to tell stories and use visuals to describe what they did when they read and how they felt about reading
tasks, as well as their perceptions of reading abilities and reading tasks. An emoji continuum (Chen, 2017) was used to provide a concrete image that the children/youth were invited to associate with bodily reactions and feelings about those images as they related to struggling with a reading task.

Campbell’s (1949/2008) metaphor of being a heroine or hero in one’s own story was used as a creative approach to discuss struggling with reading and afforded opportunities to talk about reading challenges, cognitive abilities, and emotional impact of challenges and successes using a common story framework, which was a familiar context for participants. The potential for discovering personal learning strengths for the children/youth and the cognitive and embodied reaction to these discoveries could not be predicted, nor how realization of these strengths would impact future interactions with reading or emotional responses to reading tasks. I hoped that using the heroine or hero story model as a method would engage the struggling readers’ imagination and help to examine past emotional struggles with reading as an unfinished journey versus a traumatic event (Clark, 2007). Since there is a positive relationship between instrumental school supports (e.g., encouragement from parents and peers) and high aspirations of parents for children/youth and the children/youths’ motivation to succeed (Elbaum & Vaughn, 2001; Witkow & Fuligni, 2011), parents were invited to respond to interview questions through which they could tell their stories of their child/youths’ struggles as well.

The emotional struggle associated with perceptions of failure mirrored my own experience during my Ph.D. program, and I perceived a relationship between my struggling experience and the embodied emotions linked to children/youths’ struggles
with reading from observing children participating in the nine-week Learning Lab tutoring program associated with the literacy and reading development course that I teach. These observations do not represent a bias but were based on hearing comments from children/parents about reading struggles, assessments of sight word vocabulary, and anecdotal notes that are accepted in literacy theory (Alverman, Unrau, Sailors, & Ruddell, 2018). The impact of embodied emotions and finding individual learning strengths to help counter the potential detrimental impacts of those emotions was the focus of this research, and I used the metaphor of the Hero’s Journey (Campbell, 1949/2008) to provide a familiar context (i.e., telling a story) within which participants could use multiple lenses to deconstruct their experiences of struggling with reading. For example, the discovery of a learning strength by discussing what it is that makes a specific reading task challenging. White and Epston (1990) promoted the use of stories as a heuristic for liberation and healing when a story was problem-saturated. I chose to expand on this approach by incorporating the use of emojis, drawings, verbal metaphors, and dialogue to encourage children/youth to express thoughts and emotions during the six interview-conversation sessions. These visual, kinesthetic, and auditory interactions were encouraged to increase awareness of underlying emotions that were difficult to articulate using spoken language alone.

White (2004, 2007) found that individuals struggling with a problem needed to develop their own vocabulary to describe this problem. Perception of problems is individualistic although there may be similarities in experiences between different individuals, how their emotions are embodied, and the language they use to describe these experiences that may be unique (2004). I encouraged the children and youth in this
study to create their own words and images associated with feelings when defining the emojis that were used to help self-awareness, and to express their thoughts and emotions around reading experiences during the interview-conversation sessions. It gave them a visual image within which to voice their feelings in the moment during a struggling or successful reading experience. It required that they think about specific words to describe these experiences, and I connected White’s method of asking for specific vocabulary to meta-linguistics because each child/youth thought about similar emoji images but provided unique language that was different. Storytelling and discussion provided a method of deconstructing reading experiences and personal approaches to reading (Fisher, 2007). While completing reading tasks, new perspectives were possible through this storytelling and ensuing dialogue interspersed with emotional check-ins using emojis.

These new insights were made possible within the social context of discussing the children/youths’ approach to a reading task and skills used to deal with the challenges of a specific reading task. My research methodology emerged out of my own emotional struggles of falling behind in not meeting program benchmarks while watching my cohort move forward in the shaping of their theoretical foundations, dissertation research, and completion of the Ph.D. program. I floundered trying to find a question and focus for my research. I identified my cognitive and emotional struggles as similar to children and youth struggling with the reading process, and the emotional stress and impact on self-perception these struggles had. It was the emotional intensity of my experience that motivated this research focus.

Riquelme and Montero (2013) have described children who experienced stress, as expressing this struggle through movement, shifting attention, and seeking help from
others outside of themselves. This behaviour represents a way to release the emotions that are generated from being unsuccessful and reflects a feeling of powerlessness. Although this description related to children, I experienced a similar response to stress as I struggled to find a research focus, and I have used this description of stress in children and youth when working with undergraduate students who want to be teachers. I believe that this description of behaviour does not have an age limitation. According to Vygotsky (1933/1978), “It is only in movement that a body shows what it is” (p. 65). Regardless of age, movement is observable and communicates a stress response, and there is an association between uncontrolled emotional responses (my focus being stress specifically triggered by struggling to read for children and youth), inattention, and excessive movement with school success (American Psychiatric Association, 2013; Blair & Diamond, 2008; Burkholder, Koss, Hostinar, Johnson, & Gunnar, 2016; Martel, Nigg, & Von Eye, 2009). By asking participants to use narratives, Riquelme and Montero’s (2013) research involved seeking-support-from-others stress response became an interactive emotional regulation strategy (Zeman, Cassano, Perry-Parish, & Stegall, 2006). Similarly, I used the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale (adapted with permission from Martinovic, Burgess, Pomerleau, & Marin, 2016; see Appendix A) to evaluate children and youths’ response to stress when involved with a reading task. I asked my research participants to tell stories about reading and together we examined their experiences of struggling to read differently.

The purpose of my listening and asking questions about learning strengths that initially were not obvious in these stories of struggle was to explore an alternative storyline (White & Epston, 1990). The questioning of thoughts and emotions allowed the
children/youth an opportunity to break out of the automatic thought-process of thinking they were less than their peers when it came to reading. By observing the reading behaviour of struggling readers, the observations of behaviour became the language the children/youth used to tell the researcher about their level of engagement and stress, as Riquelme and Montero (2013) had similarly described. The listening to the children/youth involved my eyes as much as verbal communication. When I observed children and youth in my study acting as Riquelme and Montero observed—moving, shifting attention, and seeking support—I asked questions and used a concrete image (i.e., emoji) to find out what thoughts and feelings were occurring at that moment in time. The concrete images used to identify these behaviours were adapted from the Observation Scale created by Martinovic, Burgess, Pomerleau, and Marin (2016), and I associated some of the engagement descriptions in the Observation Scale to emoji visuals (i.e., small digital images that are associated with an emotion or experience; see Appendix A) from an app created by Qi Chen (2017). The children and youth were asked to describe their embodied sensations to the authentic reading task for the five visual emojis during the first interview-conversation session. Then, when the researcher observed movement as described by Riquelme and Montero, the children and youth were asked to choose an emoji that represented how they were feeling. In future interview-conversation sessions, these descriptions and visuals were revisited in order to continually track connections between movement and embodied sensations in response to a reading task.

Riquelme and Montero’s (2013) stress behaviours are concepts that I have connected to my theoretical framework. I connect movement behaviours with van
Manen’s (2014) and Holodynski’s (2013) concepts of embodied emotions and activity—a child/youth who is agitated will increase bodily movements, and affect/emotional knowledge— with Massumi’s (2015) intensity of feeling that bisects categories of subjective and objective: “Affect is simply a body movement looked at from the point of view of its potential—its capacity to come to be or better, to come to do” (p. 7); the shifting of attention behaviour to Husserl (1913/2012), Kurak (2003), and Merleau-Ponty (1992/2014) who focus on perception and interpretation of phenomena—a child/youth who is stressed will shift attention away from the stressor avoiding the emotions generated (in this case, the reading task); and seeking support from others to Vygotsky (1933/1978), White (2007, 2011), and Bruner (1960/1977) who describe the impact of social interaction and narration as sources of awareness and stress release—a child/youth seeking support from others when faced with reading challenges and how these challenges are storied through narrative can decrease negative perceptions and strong emotional reactions, as well as opportunities to find learning strengths (see Appendix B).

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the embodied phenomenon of struggling to read using a narrative and social interactive approach where the struggling readers’ embodied emotions, metacognitive approaches, and emotional knowledge related to struggles with reading were explored. To examine reading struggles, I draw on the work of White (2007) and his theorizing of narrative theory coupled with van Mannen (2014) to interpret phenomenological aspects of embodied emotions. The problem addressed in this research involved examining struggling readers’ awareness of inner reading strengths. An aspect of this awareness was impacted by a struggle to read because that struggle became a problem-saturated dominant story that was told and
experienced repeatedly creating a cycle of disappointment and emotional upheaval (White & Epston, 1990). When solutions to the challenge of struggling to read are not discovered in the early years of school, emotional blocks may develop leading to lack of engagement and motivation with reading (i.e., the Matthew Effect; see Stanovich, 2008), as well as a poor learner self-image. Research on reading struggles has focused on neuroscientific, cognitive, pedagogical, sociocultural, and technological contributions and interventions (Israel, 2017) with a scarcity of literature available on the affective impact on reading.

The breaking of emotional silence regarding the impact of struggles with reading must come before cognitive processes can be activated to analyze and synthesize solutions to learning challenges. There is abundant research that supports how positive emotions towards reading increases engagement, cognitive involvement, and persistence (Gambrell, 2011; Fisher & Frey, 2012). Discussing with children and youth their emotional responses to challenging reading tasks is important when they show stress responses as described by Riquelme and Montero (2013). In my experience observing children and youth at the Learning Lab (associated with the literacy and reading development course that I teach), this stress relates to anxiety and emotional disengagement with reading (Grills-Taquechel, Fletcher, Vaughn, & Stuebing, 2012; Yasutake & Bryan, 1995). The explanation for associating reading with a fear response comes out of recent research on the adaptive process of fear learning. This adaptive process suggests that a neutral cue (like letters in a word) when paired with an adverse outcome (i.e., the child or youth being unsuccessful with the reading task) generalizes the stimulus cue (printed word) to a threat response. This threat response has neural underpinnings and is generalized so the appearance of something (i.e., the printed page or spelling task, etc.) is perceived as a threat (Morriss, Macdonald, & van Reekum, 2016). The visual stimuli of seeing print on a page triggers an emotional reaction that affects the
level of engagement a struggling reader has with the reading process and persistence in finding a solution. Combining the theories of White (2007), Vygotsky (1933/1978), Bruner (1960/1977), van Manen (1997), Merleau-Ponty (1992/2014), and the creative approach to expressing ideas of O’Donoghue (2006) and Campbell (1949/2008) offers diversity in examining the ways in which external supports can provide guidance and theoretical insight into this inner world of emotional awareness, cognitive responses, and expression of reading and reading strengths perceptions, as well as providing a conceptual and methodological framework (see Figure 1).

Campbell’s (1949/2008) story model as a creative perspective provided an emotionally engaging approach and imaginative narrative-format for participants to share stories about reading. Because I looked at the emotions of children and youth and how to incorporate their way of being in the world, I needed a research method that allowed for multiple pathways to gathering data such as narrative and images (O’Donoghue, 2006; White, 2007). Stories with visuals provided a familiar context within which to describe and dialogue about emotions around reading struggles and personal learning strengths. For this reason, a qualitative narrative approach complemented by arts-based data collection was the most effective research method and emotionally engaging to children and youth, as emotional engagement and regulation impacts the reading process especially if the struggle to read increases frustration when progress is not experienced. Both the struggling reader and other family members share this emotional experience, and there are repercussions involving family interactions around reading that involve both positive and negative affect.
Figure 1. The Hero’s Journey. Source: Sicoe (2013). Permission granted. See Appendix D.
Late childhood and early adolescence marks emotional processing abilities and expressions that are modulated through family interactions (De Witte, Sütterlin, Braet, & Mueller, 2016). Emotional regulation is defined as “the extrinsic and intrinsic processes responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and modifying emotional reactions, especially their intensive and temporal features, to accomplish one’s goals” (Thompson, 1994, p. 27). There are three categories of emotional regulating strategies: adaptive (cognitive reappraisal; maladaptive), rumination, and external interpersonal (Riquelme & Montero, 2013). According to McRae et al. (2012), cognitive reappraisal is a well-known adaptive strategy that allows for a change in the emotional response to a perceived difficult situation through cognitive reinterpretation versus using rumination that is a maladaptive strategy where youth would have a passive and repetitive focus (Nolen-Hoeksema, Wisco, & Lyubomirsky, 2008) on the problem of struggling to read and possible causes and consequences without seeking a solution. The third category of external strategies relates to Vygotsky’s (1933/1978) theory of socially constructed knowledge and involves the struggling reader seeking external supports (Zeman et al., 2006). It also supports Riquelme and Montero’s (2013) description of stress response in young children.

There is a gap in the literature involving youth and the regulation of emotions according to a meta-analytic review conducted by Aldao, Nolen-Hoesksema, and Schweizer (2010). There is evidence that children use adaptive and maladaptive strategies to manage their emotions: cognitive reappraisal is an adaptive strategy where thinking differently about a situation changes the emotions associated with that situation; whereas a maladaptive strategy would be rumination. According to De Witte et al., (2016) youth and younger children use adaptive and maladaptive strategies to manage their emotions;
however, “…youngsters might be less able to use more demanding strategies such as problem solving.” (p. 2). More research needs to occur investigating the emotional impact on struggling to read and academic motivation for children (J. Rowsell, personal communication, April 6, 2017); although, a positive relationship with a teacher does increase an adolescent’s academic motivation (Raufelder, Scherber, & Wood, 2016). The work of Campbell (1949/2008) in applying a lived experience to the hero’s journey monomyth provides a unique inquiry approach, perhaps affording opportunities for the struggling reader and his/her family to talk about a possible emotion-laden experience by using the metaphor of a hero/heroine’s story as a model. This story approach might allow them to discuss these events differently.

Campbell’s (1949/2008) concept that each of us can examine a lived experience as a heroic journey allows struggling readers and their families to use their imagination to create an alternative view of themselves and their reading experiences. As a researcher, my observations of their behaviour and bodily movement and/or lack of movement gives insight into their emotional landscape without asking them direct questions about their emotions that may be difficult to articulate since there is not a close relationship (Riquelme & Montero, 2013; White, 2004). By allowing them to express themselves using stories and visuals, tools are provided to express or release the embodied emotions that have remained contained or silent (White, 2007). The act of listening to a story sometimes allows storytellers to acquire fresh insights because they can reflect and share their thoughts without being asked to answer a direct question about their thoughts or emotions. As White (2007) suggests, the listener “supports people…on their understanding of life (developed in the culture of their family or community and
influenced by their immediate history)” (p. 40); for my research purposes, such “immediate history” involves the struggle with reading. Thus, using the monomyth concept as a framework for story construction for struggling readers and their families, question prompts were connected to each step of the Hero’s Journey (Campbell, 1949/2008) to provide a scaffold to help the parents, children and youth to construct their stories. These stories were created separately from each other and became part of the data analyzed at the end of the research. Finally, the same structure was used to frame my own experience as an Interpretive Phenomenological Analytical (IPA)-researcher (Smith & Osborne, 2007; Van Manen, 1997) supporting the struggling reader in the interview-conversation pseudo-tutoring sessions.

**Overarching Research Questions**

According to White (2007), many individuals who seek external support for troubling thoughts, emotions, and/or behaviour believe that the problems in their lives reflect their identity:

> when this is the case, their efforts to resolve problems usually have the effect of exacerbating them. This leads people to even more solidly believe that the problems of their lives are a reflection of certain “truths” about their nature…that these problems are internal to their self. (p. 24)

A solution to this identification is to externalize the problem using dialogue where the “problem becomes the problem, not the person…when the problem becomes an entity that is separate from the person…new options for taking action…become available” (White, 2007, p. 26). White is proposing that this separation of identity does not relinquish dealing with the problem, but it changes the perception because if the individual is the problem there is not much that can be done without being self-
destructive. A narrative context allows storytellers to articulate their relationship with the problem and to deconstruct some of the negative conclusions they may have reached. In the Learning Lab, we observe children/youth who come in at the beginning of the interview-conversation program unwilling to engage with reading because they perceive themselves as poor readers; however, when they leave they have a different perspective because they have become aware of reading strategies that work with their learning strengths. In conversation with parents whose children attend the Lab and personal observations of these changes in the children is what has led to my interest in the embodied emotions of children/youth who struggle with reading, and how I can use a story model to externalize thoughts and feelings about reading, which is why I chose the Hero’s Journey (Campbell, 1949/2008) as a conceptual framework for this study. This framework allows examining children/youths’ lived experiences of external events (i.e., reading struggles) with internal interpretations and embodied sensations to those events (i.e., embodied emotions, perceptions, and realization of learning strengths) within a narrative context.

In order to examine struggling readers’ and their families’ perception of learning in this research study, the overarching research question explored four children and youths’ epiphanic moments experienced in their bodies using a dialogic approach:

- How does a dialogic approach illuminate children and youths’ struggles with learning how to read? Does this approach lead to discoveries by children/youth, parents, and IPA-researcher about emotional knowledge and learning strengths that are exhibited through embodied responses? Why or why not?
Alongside this primary research question, I also asked the following subquestions:

- How does Joseph Campbell’s Hero’s Journey as a metaphoric device elicit stories about reading struggles (from children and youth) and familial stories about reading struggles? In what ways does the metaphor create an emotional awareness of reading difficulties for children and youth and their families?

- What are the outcomes when children and youth participants create visual artifacts (e.g., digital pictures of reading spaces, diagrams of metaphors related to reading, etc.) based on their perceptions and emotional reactions to reading tasks? How are these visual artifacts used?

The aforementioned questions are structured to support or refute the following arguments in order to explore new points of view: and to persuade educators and parents involved with struggling readers to approach these individuals differently:

1. Struggling to read creates emotional trauma for the reader and his/her family.

2. Narrative and arts-based inquiry provide pathways to release emotions through storytelling and the use of visuals.

3. Observing struggling readers’ movements, focus, and supports during a reading experience allows the creation of personal strategies.

4. Struggling readers’ narrative application of the strategy changes perceptions; the struggling readers then have metacognitive and emotional awareness of their embodied sensations and start to develop more confidence.

In a series of conversational interviews incorporated into the six sessions, I provided materials or allowed the children/youth to provide materials to provoke thought and discussion, facilitate dialogue, and question emotional responses in order to support the
four learners through the critical thinking process, especially when learning strengths emerged.

**Reflexivity**

According to Goldstein (2017), reflexivity requires researchers to engage in, …a critical and conscientious evaluation of themselves in relation to the individuals or groups being researched, can substantially enhance the accuracy and ethical quality of social research by bringing awareness to influential aspects of one’s biography or positioning that might otherwise remain hidden. (p. 149)

I believe that reflexivity is circular and allows movement between challenges and making meaning of those challenges, and it is an integral part of deconstructing a personal story to make meaning of a lived experience. I have used this approach when capturing the experiences of these four children/youth and their families as they retold their hero/heroine’s journey in learning to read (i.e., the youth take on the role of hero in the story of struggling to read, which relates to White’s [2007] externalizing the reading struggle as the problem versus the child/youth being the problem).

The use of metaphor for making meaning of these experiences and reflecting on them allows youth and their families to externalize the challenges of reading by looking at that lived experience through a Campbellian lens of two worlds: The Ordinary or external *world* of developing reading skills, and the inner *ExtraOrdinary World* reaction to the reading experience involving beliefs, emotions, and perceptions (see Figure 1).

What is happening in this inner world, and how do we research this world? I hoped that youth and their families would bridge the gap between outward experiences with struggling to read and the inner beliefs, emotions, and perceptions these struggles trigger
through the creation of a personal mythical story. To look at these worlds, spaces and images played a role. The use of Vygotsky’s (2004) concept of mediating artifacts was a part of the methodology of this study, as visuals provided concrete examples of the impact of external experiences on personal values, beliefs, and emotions (Khinkanina, 2014; O’Donoghue, 2006; Stahl, 2000, 2012; Vygotsky, 2004; Yamagata-Lynch, 2010).

My interest in narrative increased with being re-introduced to Campbell’s (1949/2008) concept that our lived experiences can be storied as a hero’s journey. I realized that I was a metaphorical thinker. I use metaphor to select, eliminate, and organize the significance of two unrelated concepts/referents (Carreira, 2001), such as struggling to read with heroic action in a story in which the characteristics of the second referent—heroic action—can be applied to the first: struggling to read. Metaphor becomes a lens for examining a lived experience that creates strong emotions: the metaphor of being a hero while experiencing a struggling reading phenomenon. Van Manen (2014) would describe this as a reflection on a phenomenon with the purpose of “grasp[ing] the essential meaning of something” (p. 39)—in this case, to understand the embodied emotions created through the struggling reading experience.

The emotions I experienced as a struggling Ph.D. student created a level of understanding about struggling to learn that altered my focus to examine struggling phenomena from an emotional lens versus only a cognitive one. I had primarily focused on evidence-based learning strategies using the cognitive lens; now, I incorporated the emotional impact and connection to reading using an emotional-phenomenon lens, and my role became that of a curious observer and narrative listener. This shift in priorities occurred over time through my reading of the reflections of my education students who
did a practicum in the Brock Learning Lab. Numerous times, education students described moments about reading behaviours that involved distraction, movement, and helplessness. Generally when these behaviours were observed, the response by the education students was to recommend paying attention or sitting still. Their reflections were similar from term to term and a different interpretation of the children’s behaviour occurred. The children were showing us through their actions and moments of stillness how to work with them.

In my undergraduate lectures, I began telling my students that we need to use our eyes as well as ears to reach the children and youth where they were, and not where we wanted them to be. By listening with our eyes, we can hear what children are not able to tell us about the embodied-emotions experienced—a language that they feel. We needed to find a way into this maze of embodied emotions. First, deal with the emotion, and then there is room for the cognitive processes to function (Pekrun, Goetz, Frenzel, Barchfeld, & Perry, 2011; Reyna, Chapman, Dougherty, Confrey, & American Psychological Association, 2011). This philosophy is an operating principle that is encouraged at the Brock Learning Lab. Tutors are encouraged to engage children emotionally with reading using a fun approach with games. Dealing first with emotions related to anxiety allows for rational problem solving to occur because it is not physiologically or neurologically possible to focus when anxiety is triggered (i.e., the fight/flight/freeze response to fear).

According to Bignold and Su (2013), the use of narrative in education research allows the researcher to capture different identities of research participants in complex social settings. Reading is a social activity in the classroom, as it involves sharing ideas with others and being observed by others when reading. In my research, I discussed
reading with my participants, and I used the branch of narrative inquiry that was epistemological because I was concerned with embodied emotions and reading. Shacklock and Torp (2005) suggest that the narrative framework allows the researcher to locate lived experience and identity, and it allows the research to “introduce additional anchor points for understanding the subjective and structural as mutual informants in understanding our own and other people’s lives” (p. 156). During a dialogue in an interview-conversation style modified-tutoring situation, the researcher can introduce different ideas from observed behaviour that relate to struggling readers’ subjective experience of reading and these ideas/observations may help the struggling readers to anchor themselves in a new awareness of an inner strength that they may not have been aware of before telling their story; thus, there is a possibility that they may increase their understanding of hidden strengths they bring to the reading task.

This approach does not leave the researcher neutral but reflective. The researcher’s perception and understanding of the struggling reader’s experience with reading involves becoming a part of the story (i.e., the Magic Helper) and introducing an interactive approach to the narrative that involves mutual construction and co-construction of children/youths’ knowledge of learning strengths. White (2007) describes this interactive approach that leads to a change in knowledge as occurring because the listener is curious and keeps asking questions that leads the child/youth to an alternative perception or interpretation of the narrative. Through this co-constructive process, the struggling reader and researcher uncover a different or alternative to the obvious story of struggling with reading. This presents a challenge to the researcher in trying to capture the participant’s voice, the contextual complexities (i.e., identities the struggling readers
have in how they see themselves as learners—good at math versus struggling with reading, and how do they interpret these variations in terms of their perception of their academic self if that is based on how they or family members see them as a reader), and researcher positionality (Phoenix, 2008; Riessman, 1993).

The researcher responds to the narrative by using White’s (2007) inquiry approach of externalizing the problem that involves more involvement then just capturing the story as told. The researcher is curious about elements of the story and asks questions that may lead to insights that would not have occurred before this questioning interaction. As Bruner (1986) states,

…there must be a breakdown of previously accepted understandings, a perception that a once familiar event no longer makes sense… It is the perceived discrepancy between the previously accepted story and the new situation that leads us to discard or question the old narrative; and it is the perceived relevance of the new story to our own life situation that leads to its acceptance…Story as a model has a remarkable dual aspect—it is both linear and instantaneous. (p. 153)

The emphasis of narrative as a method to study change allows the participants to see a difference between old narratives (i.e., I am a struggling reader) to a new story of learning strengths. This change in perception and story happens in a moment and involves a metacognitive and emotional awareness of the connection between embodied emotions and cognitive processes. This moment is the instantaneous aspect that relates to the SupraOrdinary moment or moment of realization that transpires when new knowledge or awareness occurs, and there is the possibility of an embodied reaction to this new awareness.
Defining Terminology

Throughout the dissertation, I use terms that require defining and framing before I can extrapolate the process that I will be isolating in the dissertation. To begin with, the phrase “reading process” is used to describe the six stages of reading development: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and spelling (National Reading Panel, 2000). According to the Expert Panel on Literacy in Grades 4 to 6 in Ontario (2004), “Reading is an interactive, problem-solving process of making meaning from texts” (p. 61), and “…to comprehend what one reads, one must be able to identify the words contained in running text with enough accuracy and fluency to allow computation of the meanings embodied in the text within the limits of working memory” (Vellutino, Fletcher, Snowling, & Scanlon, 2004, pp. 5-6). On the other hand, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (American Psychiatric Association, 2013) describes reading challenges in terms of the diagnosis of a specific learning disorder—impairment in reading:

Difficulties learning and using academic skills, as indicated by the presence of at least one of the following symptoms that have persisted for at least 6 months, despite the provision of interventions that target those difficulties:

1. Inaccurate or slow and effortful word reading (e.g., reads single words aloud incorrectly or slowly and hesitantly, frequently guesses words, has difficulty sounding out words).

2. Difficulty understanding the meaning of what is read (e.g., may read text accurately but not understand the sequence, relationships, inferences, or deeper meanings of what is read).
3. Difficulties with spelling (e.g., may add, omit, or substitute vowels or consonants).

4. Difficulties with written expression (e.g., makes multiple grammatical or punctuation errors within sentences). (p. 66)

Further in this description, specific examples of what a reading struggle would present itself as in elementary and secondary levels of schooling are provided (see Appendix C).

An historic definition of reading struggles includes observing “reading achievement that is significantly below expectancy for both individual reading potential and for chronological age or grade level” (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 210).

Embodied reaction is another term that requires defining. There is a great deal of research on adults’ ways of knowing. Freiler (2008) has described the concept of embodied knowing based on four different approaches: objective and subjective processing of experiences; cognitive schemas developed to explain phenomena; construction of knowledge through lived experiences; and the body’s reactions to the world as the source of knowledge. Children/youth experience reactions to reading and these reactions are felt in the body as well as the mind. The bodily reactions involve sensations based on an external stimulus, such as being asked to read or complete a reading task. Theoretically, it can be associated with the lived-body paradigm that describes a physical reaction to an external interaction (Shaw, 2004). According to Barnacle (2009), there is an independence that exists between a bodily reaction to a stimulus and the mind. The phrase, embodied reaction or “The body knows” (Goldberger, Tarule, Clinchy, & Belenky, 1996, p. 355), refers to this lived experience that children/youth may have difficulty finding words to describe. However, the use of an
emoji visual (Chen, 2017) helped when children/youth were asked to associate a previously experienced embodied reaction with a specific emoji face that was incorporated into the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale (adapted with permission from Martinovic et al., 2016; see Appendix A). Then, if there is a similar bodily sensation experienced during a reading activity, children/youth may be able to identify their physical reaction and movement through applying the previous emoji visual face association and description. This approach provided insight into children/youths’ emotional knowledge or the “gut always knows what’s right” (Goldberger et al., 1996, p. 352) embodied reaction. Children/youth can describe how they feel about reading or a specific reading task without necessarily being able to deconstruct the cognitive challenges to that task.

Unfortunately, there appears to be very little literature that directly describes the impact of children/youths’ emotions towards reading. There is a gap between these descriptions of the reading process and impairment in reading in the literature. The gap involves the lack of reference to the emotional influence and impact on the reading process and struggles and development of positive and negative affect associated with success and failure with reading (Leander et al., 2017). White (2007) would describe the reading process and struggle as the dominant story that is told because it is obvious; however, the alternative storyline that this dissertation explored was the affective impact on the struggle with the reading process. For this reason, the phrase “struggling reader” was used as a descriptor and not as a label.

As a descriptor, this phrase describes a child or youth whose cognitive reading processes are impaired such that automaticity in decoding and reading fluency are
affected. Frustration with reading at an instructional/frustrational level (i.e., the level where 97% to 98% of printed words are decoded and read fluently) leads to lack of persistence and engagement with print (Fisher, 2007; Fisher & Frey, 2014; Fulmer & Frijters, 2011; Tulis & Fulmer, 2013). There is an increase in negative emotions towards reading that if sustained may create a traumatic experience (Morriss et al., 2016). Reading related traumatic experiences occur for children and youth when they are required to do an authentic reading task that is beyond their current cognitive abilities. The use of the term traumatic is accurate because the impact of struggling with this authentic reading task is both cognitive and emotional (Morriss et al., 2016). In Ontario schools, children and youth are asked to use reading skills in the context of an authentic reading text: news article, book, blogs; etc. In this research, the term ‘authentic reading task’ relates to asking children and youth to select a specific reading task from school that is emotionally stressful for them and cognitively challenging. The use of these authentic tasks allowed for a dialogue and deconstruction of both cognitive challenges and embodied-emotional reactions in order to discover a personal learning strength within a challenging reading task. In effect, this approach allowed for an experience of transcendence by exploring thoughts and affect simultaneously.

Husserl (1931/2012; n.d.) describes phenomenology of transcendence as having static and genitive phenomena. This theory provides a theoretical framework within which Campbell’s (1949/2008) Hero’s Journey is situated. Husserl defines phenomenology:

Its descriptions do not concern lived experiences – of myself or others, of lived experiences which are ‘mine’ or ‘thine’ - it knows nothing, assumes nothing.
Concerning such matters it poses no questions, attempts no definitions, makes no hypotheses. In phenomenological description one views that which, in the strongest of senses, is given, just as it is in itself. (p. 201)

Husserl distinguished phenomenology into three parts: Static phenomenology that relates to the monad (i.e., individual) as an object body interacting with the physical world [relates to Campbell’s (1948/2008) Ordinary World]; genitive phenomenology that is subjective it goes beyond consciousness to the pre-reflective and reflective self (relates to Campbell’s Extraordinary World of core beliefs and values); and transcendent phenomenology as a science of essential being that has as its focus a science of no facts but establishing a knowledge of essences (Husserl 1913/2012). Figure 2 summarizes Husserl’s theories as it relates to Campbell’s concepts and the SupraOrdinary World phenomena.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phenomenological Terminology and Methodology</th>
<th>Concepts</th>
<th>Three Worlds Campbell, Mokperian</th>
<th>Concepts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Static Phenomenology: Eidetic/images that are mental images and vivid; the person (i.e., monad) is Conscious of the External World/Objects (Husserl, 1913/2012)</td>
<td>Noema = thought to stand for the Object or content of a thought, judgement, or perception (linguistic)</td>
<td>Ordinary World OBJECT BODY</td>
<td>External objects and involvement with objects — life events, circumstances, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genetic Phenomenology: goes beyond consciousness to pre-reflective &amp; reflective self; persona — who the monad is the &quot;essence&quot; (Husserl, 1913/2012)</td>
<td>Noesis = mind intentional act an act of liking, of judging, of meaning, etc. Subjective — &quot;I&quot; (pre-linguistic affect (Massumi, 2015)</td>
<td>Extraordinary World SUBJECT BODY</td>
<td>Inner world of beliefs, core values, perceptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcendental Phenomenology apodictic (i.e., clearly established self-evidence); this is absolute subjectivity and it is hidden yet functions in this hiddenness and is brought to life through transcendent reduction that opens a new experience — intuition as a method for this phenomena (Moran &amp; Cohen, 2013).</td>
<td>Reduction - The Phenomenological OnLooker (Husserl) &quot;The Observer observing the Observed.&quot; (Krisnamurti, 2010, p. 100)</td>
<td>SupraOrdinary World PERCEPTUAL AVAILABILITY noetic - &quot;states of insight into depths of truth unplumbed by the discursive intellect. They are illuminations, revelations, full of significance and importance, all inarticulate though they remain; and as a rule they carry with them a curious sense of authority...&quot; - William James, 1902</td>
<td>Moments of Realization — learning strengths emerge that were not noticed or articulated/realized consciously “All types of intuition are as equally valid as sources of authority for knowledge” (Husserl, 2012, p. 362)</td>
</tr>
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**Figure 2.** Application of Husserl’s Transcendental Phenomenology to Campbell’s Concept of The Hero’s Journey
Theoretical Framework

Theory that supports the research study is phenomenology of embodiment (Husserl, 1931/2012; Taipale, 2014) that is used as a lens to examine emotional and embodied sensations to reading struggles through dialogue about how children and youth perceive movement in the body, which is more radical than a general observation of reading behaviour in different external settings. This approach looked at specific moments during an interview-conversation session that were Supraordinary Moments revealing a learning strength. Drawing on core phenomenological theorists such as Merleau-Ponty (1992) and van Manen (2014), a series of conversational sessions around a specific reading challenge were conducted that acted as interviews and detailed observation notes were made to capture how four children/youth felt and perceived their approach to struggles with reading tasks. Merleau-Ponty (1992/2014) describes the phenomenon of perceiving and the “unicity of the cogito” (p. 373), and he believed that it was an established foundation. Merleau-Ponty’s description of a shared perception of a lived experience can coexists between researcher and student when they are involved in a specific shared experience (i.e., working through a difficult reading task) and there is a shared moment of realization because of this unique relationship.

This perception of the relationship between the IPA-researcher and the child/youth-learner is one of the IPA-researcher being the Magic Helper for the hero/heroine child/youth-learner in discovering new personal learning abilities. This approach may not be as feasible within a classroom setting because of the student-to-teacher ratio. However, in a tutoring environment where there is a one-to-one ratio, there is an opportunity to explore in depth through dialogue unique approaches to specific
lived-experiences such as struggling with an authentic reading task. In terms of roles, I played the role of an interpretive-phenomenological analyst (Van Manen, 1997) who works with the child/youth-learner in a modified tutoring environment where my role as researcher involved interview conversations with reading strategy suggestions; however, the format of these sessions as interview conversations relating to a specific reading challenge versus a tutoring session allowed flexibility to dialogue around thoughts and emotions towards a reading task versus just focusing on increasing cognitive reading skills, and the child/youth and I were co-researchers working in partnership in the this modified tutoring space to explore cognitive and emotional responses to different reading tasks. I ensure that we work without other people around for privacy. The form of communication (visuals, words, and or movement) allowed us to describe perceptions and emotions experienced during a struggling reading phenomenon. Our mutual understanding that we are working together creates a safe space to take risks because we coexist in a space without separation and judgment, which a classroom educator and group of students being present may not be able to do:

Coexistence must be lived by each person. …I establish a pact with the other person, and I commit to living in an inter-world where I make as much room for the other as I do for myself. …Without reciprocity…one person’s world would
envelope the other’s, and one would feel alienated to the benefit of the other.

(Merleau-Ponty, 1992/2014, p. 373)

This description reflects the social interaction between IPA-researcher and child/youth-learner and the attitude of each where there is reciprocity in sharing the struggling reading experience. The IPA-researcher does not step in as an expert projecting on to the child/youth-learner evidence-based strategies. Instead, the IPA-researcher through observation, dialogue, listening, and being curious about the child/youth-learner’s thought process creates the potential for a *moment of realization* to occur, and a corresponding change in how the struggling reading task is perceived.

Merleau-Ponty (1992/2014) may not be referring to reading when he described “unicity of the cogito” (p. 373), but I interpreted that as the union of a new realization of personal learning strength that a struggling reader discovers through this coexistence world that was created between the IPA-researcher and the child/youth-learner. Merleau-Ponty speaks about the senses and how individuals experience the world through the senses. It is possible to extend Merleau-Ponty’s idea and argue that the *moment of realization* is shared by the IPA-researcher and struggling reader. As the IPA-researcher, I was in the moment with the struggling reader and being aware of how the struggling reader was responding in that moment (Heidegger, 1926/1962; Kurak, 2003), which opened the possibility to a co-experience of that moment. Before starting the research, I wondered whether there was a similar embodied-experience of emotion in the IPA-researcher observing and discussing the experience of the struggling reader. After working with the children and youth participants, I know that there is that experience. I should qualify that there is always variability in the background and subjectivity of a
tutor. For instance, a tutor can be a 3rd-year undergraduate student or an educator with 30 years of experience; however, this magic moment is possible as it is based on awareness as much as knowledge. These moments and experiences are included in chapter six where I include my own co-experiencing of *moments of realization* as part of the compilation of experiences with children and youth during the research. Originally there would have been individual stories; however, my experiences and those of the participants have been integrated to focus on the *moments of realization* within Campbell’s (1949/2008) monomyth narrative structure.

I believe that the challenge struggling readers and their families face is a lack of awareness about who the struggling reader is as a holistic learner—cognitively, behaviourally, and emotionally—and how to recognize that the struggling reader has personal strategies that can facilitate improving reading performance. These strategies are connected to self-perception and stories the struggling readers tell themselves or hear told about them from significant others (i.e., parents, siblings, teachers, etc.).

A struggling reader’s repeated failure at a reading task results in the struggling reader and family developing a dominant story about reading difficulties (White, 2007). This story is internalized by the struggling reader and may become part of her or his beliefs, values, and attitudes towards reading—the *ExtraOrdinary World* (Campbell, 1949/2008). It also limits the struggling readers’ ability to connect to hidden talents that they possess that could positively impact their reading. For example, if struggling readers use a reading strategy that works for them, they may not be able to repeat it because there was not a metacognitive connection or *moment of realization* between their ability and the reading task, their personal beliefs about themselves as a reader, and their success.
using an evidence-based strategy.

By exploring a successful moment with the struggling reader when this realization occurred allowed an alternative storyline to emerge, and if this *SupraOrdinary Moment* was repeated at home or school, then there was the potential for impact on the child/youth’s self-perception and beliefs about reading ability. I created a space for this to occur using an authentic reading task and interacting with the struggling readers by being an IPA-researcher, Listener, and Observer who was curious about their lived experience during the reading task. process, and based on observations of behaviour I asked questions to try and make explicit their thought process through discussion of their bodily sensations, as they worked through a reading task. Merleau-Ponty (1992/2014) might describe this approach as the mediation of the physical body on perception of ability. The struggling reader is experiencing two bodies that may be disconnected during the struggle to read: the physical demands of the reading task on the body (i.e., cognitive processing) as it deals with the external task—the printed page/school demands. This description of physical demands/cognitive processing represents the Object Body. While the Subject Body is the embodied-subjective-sensations-experiencing-the-reading-struggle internally, the individual has an experience but cannot articulate with words its meaning because it is felt in the body. Perceptual availability allowed the experience with the reading task (written text) using the Object Body and the Subject Body experiencing subjective sensations to be united when learning potential was discovered. A cognitive and emotional union occurs that is signaled by the uniting of thought and bodily sensations simultaneously (Husserl, 1931/2012; Massumi, 2015; Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2014; Taipale, 2014). When this occurs, these two separate experiences, the body with the
object and bodily sensations as the subject, are integrated into a *SupraOrdinary Moment* experience.

The reading task is no longer perceived as a challenge that makes the child/youth feel badly about herself or himself, but rather, it is a task to be completed. Very often the child/youth can internalize good feelings about a completed reading task because the child/youth observes herself or himself being successful and doing so independent of external support. When this experience is repeated, self-confidence develops and the child/youth takes on more challenging reading tasks (B. Rodgers and A. Abraham, personal communication regarding client choosing to decode Grade 3 sight words when started at pre-primer level, April 4, 2017). Persistence and success in decoding moderately challenging reading material will increase the positive affect (Fulmer & Frijters, 2011), as to how many repetitions of this experience is required for the internalization of positive feelings; perhaps it is subjective and involves unique individual differences in how thoughts and emotions are processed. However, this realization of learning potential opens new sensations in the body and corresponding perceptions in the mind. Through repetition, the child/youth may realize that he/she has learning strengths that he/she can apply independent of external supports. This process varies in terms of the amount of time it takes to internalize success and confidence that leads to independent reading.

This ability to perceive an object for what it is in the external world relates to a child/youth discovering that the external reading task (Object Body—cognitive interactions) can be conquered by becoming aware of bodily sensations (Subject Body—embodied subjective sensations) that signal a new awareness of learning potential.
(SupraOrdinary moment of realization). Reflective analysis (i.e., phenomenological reflection; see van Manen, 1997) allows the individual to grasp the meaning of this interaction. Children naturally are more connected to their bodies and express their bodily sensations of stress through movement (Riquelme & Montero, 2013). Reading is one task that stimulates an emotional response that the body experiences. This neglect of the embodied experiences of struggling readers represents a gap in the literature and reading intervention approaches that I addressed through my research.

My approach of using dialogue and narrative inquiry to understand how the reading task was experienced and successfully negotiated, as well as the emotions that were experienced by children/youth when the moment of realization or SupraOrdinary Moment occurred had common and unique features. In working with struggling readers, I found that individuals experiencing a realization described it differently, or in one case, as an observer, I realized that a struggling reader was unaware of personal learning strengths and used them unconsciously. She was unable to describe what she did to be successful; for example, this youth with ADHD used movement to act out a story that needed to be written, and the use of movement helped her to organize her thoughts—big movements represented big or main ideas and small movements represented details supporting the main idea (Rowsell, Maues, Moukperian, & Colquhoun, 2017). Yet, this individual remained unaware that this approach was helping her thinking even though she was the one that suggested it—no metacognitive connection. She described the difference between her movements and ideas but remained metacognitively unaware of what she was doing. Therefore, she could not repeat this success because she had not made a connection between success with the reading task and her personal learning
strength/ability. She remained unaware of what she was doing that improved her thought process, and she could not access this strength independently because for her it did not exist. By repeating this experience and talking about it, this personal strength might be recognized, and this new awareness could provide a strategy that she would independently employ. This would have required having a similar reading task to complete which did not happen during the designated interview sessions for this research.

Self-awareness during a moment of realization is like a sudden explosion: events in the Ordinary World are experienced and valued in the ExtraOrdinary World, and then this realization in the SupraOrdinary World occurs, which encompasses both other worlds. The SupraOrdinary experience could not exist without the contribution of each world, and it needs the interaction between both to be realized. The experience of this moment may differ between individuals. In conversation with my son about his experience of this moment, he described it metaphorically and physically acted out the metaphor. His description involved the image of walking a tightrope very carefully and how his walk was full of tension. Once this SupraOrdinary Moment was reached, he compared the experience to the sudden experience of going down a waterslide that to him was a complete letting go of all tension (P. Moukperian, personal communication, February 19, 2017). Eric (youth involved in the research) described a similar tension and relaxation of bodily experience when a new idea was realized. There is a caveat to experiencing a moment of realization: In both these examples these individuals had intramental awareness in order to perceive the emotional impact of these moments of realization events. This awareness involved interacting with external objects (e.g., a book) or social moments (e.g., discussion about a struggle with reading), creating a new
form of internal interaction that guided action. This internalization is not a mirror of what happened in the external interaction; however, there is a new ability to reflect on the impact of this interaction, or an intramental awareness (Hedegaard, 1998; Vygotsky, 1986). If this internal intramental awareness occurs, then experiencing a realization creates a new inner space that combines the ordinary and extraordinary experiences and becomes a SupraOrdinary phenomenon. The difference between the definition that Vygotsky and Hedegaard use and my description of the SupraOrdinary phenomenon involves Husserl’s (1931/2012) embodied sensations creating a knowing experience, which is part of this intramental awareness. My definition of the SupraOrdinary World moment incorporates all three theorists.

**Conceptual Framework**

Miles and Huberman (1994) described a conceptual framework as a visual graphic or narrative that “explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied—the key factors, concepts, or variables—and the presumed relationships among them” (p. 18). Further, Robson (2011) describes it as a system of concepts, beliefs, ideas, and assumptions that inform the research. I chose to use Campbell’s (1949/2008) model of the Hero’s Journey because this narrative served two purposes: it allowed for a dialogue about cognitive processes, emotions and embodied sensations associated with struggling with reading skills, and it provided a framework to situate the emotional experience of struggling to read: resistance, fear, frustration, engagement, motivation, and attribution. Campbell’s work provided specific steps/foci within which to ask participants questions during the interview-conversation sessions involving a reading challenge, and it served to illustrate the iterative and rhizomatic nature of four
children/youths’ reading processes. The themes that emerged during the interview-conversation sessions storied-journey shared common features; however, the expression of each child/youth’s experience and the language and visuals created were unique. Throughout the research, I drew on the work of Campbell (1949/2008) and his storied concepts of meaning making as a creative approach to guide my thinking. I did not apply Campbell as a dominant theory; rather, I applied his work metaphorically because I saw it as a metaphor for the struggles related to the process of reading and learning about personal learning strengths.

According to Campbell (1949/2008), we live in two mythical worlds: the outer world of visible phenomena (the Ordinary World) and the inner world of thought, emotion, and bodily sensations—the ExtraOrdinary World (see Figure 1). Emotions and thoughts cannot be neatly separated into binaries; rather, they are entangled and dynamic connecting between reactions to visible phenomena, thoughts and bodily sensations. Upon reflection, I incorporated a tertiary worldview within the binary interactions of the Ordinary and ExtraOrdinary Worlds because it allows this interaction of phenomena to create the experience of epiphanies; Thus, I have expanded that viewpoint to allow for the SupraOrdinary World, and I label and describe new awareness of learning strengths that involves embodied sensations and thoughts as a moment of realization. Massumi’s (2015) description of abduction is the closest to my concept of this experience for children/youth because I am trying to label an experience that goes beyond thought by connecting a new thought with embodied sensations creating an affective-knowing reality (Husserl, 1931/2012; Kurak, 2003; van Manen, 2014) that is more than an emotional-reaction phenomenon. This moment of realization is visceral (Gregg & Seigworth, 2010;
Massumi, 2002, 2015), and I connect the term “visceral” to the stress response of children that Riquelme and Montero (2013) describe because it is not a passing emotion but an intense reaction to a stimulus (a challenging reading task) that is observable by the physical and behavioral response of children (i.e., attention shifting, movement, and seeking outside help). I propose that this response emerges out of, as well as, encompasses, the interactions between the *Ordinary* and *ExtraOrdinary Worlds* where external events in the *Ordinary World* (being asked to complete a reading task) impact inner values, beliefs, and perceptions described as the *ExtraOrdinary World* (the child/youth’s ability and motivation to persist with the reading task). However, the difference in my description of a *moment of realization* and the stress response of Riquelme and Montero is the positive embodied response to the child/youth’s new awareness of using a learning strength that results in success. This experience is associated with this third worldview that I label.

It is at this moment that this tertiary world emerges—the *SupraOrdinary World* with its *moment of realization*, which may be accompanied by sensations in the body, as well as a cognitive enlightenment. It was this experience, or moment that I wanted to explore with children/youth in my research study through dialogue. I used the metaphor of being a hero or heroine in a journey to invite the children/youth to become aware of the process involved in finding personal learning strengths because their lived experiences can be interpreted as following the hero/heroines path outlined by Campbell’s (1949/2008; see Figure 1) monomyth, as well as having emotional and imaginative appeal.

Campbell (1949/2008) used the monomyth as a framework for describing events. The purpose of Campbell’s Hero’s Journey was to answer the call to face challenges that
resulted in failures and eventual successes that then changed inner beliefs and perceptions of that Hero. I saw a parallel experience of the hero to children and youth who struggled with reading, and if they discovered personal learning strengths there could be a similar change as occurred in the monomyth (see Figure 1—Discarding Old Self). For this reason, I chose to call the experience of learning about a personal strength a moment of realization, and I situate these moments in the interaction between the Ordinary and ExtraOrdinary World experiences that create an awareness of something new, involving (a) cognitive awareness, (b) affective embodied response, and (c) change in perception (See Figure 1 for the steps in this process). Initially, I overlooked this implicit experience embedded in the two Worlds, and I struggled to describe it until reading about the Buddhist concept of knowing.

Kurak (2003) described a “conditioned co-arising” (p. 342), a term from Buddhist philosophy. This term describes this experienced knowing that is beyond words; yet, if you ask an individual about how they experienced knowledge that they are confident about they respond, “I just know.” This knowing is easily missed if our minds keep moving and are not fully present in the moment, and if we ignore bodily sensations as irrelevant as Descartes (1984) would suggest. If this happens, we miss an opportunity to incorporate a way of knowing beyond cognitive processes. I suggest that this experience is part of the Third World: the SupraOrdinary World. This world is experienced cognitively, emotionally, and bodily with sensations requiring deconstruction. The stimulus for this experience occurs when the Ordinary and the ExtraOrdinary Worlds collide, connect, or interact in a way that new knowing-awareness occurs. This moment of realization experience may be sudden, but the process leading up to that moment may be extensive and laborious, as in the case of the struggling reader and the metaphor within
the Hero’s Journey model (Campbell, 1949/2008). This embodied reaction is different from a critical incident or cognitive dissonance because the reaction happens on a bodily level, heavily reliant on affect and emotions, and creating a visceral response.

The closest reference to what I have named as the *moment of realization* would be Massumi (2015) describing an anger response as,

> a kind of thought that is taking place in the body, through a kind of instantaneous assessment of affect, an assessment of potential directions and situational outcomes that isn’t separate from our immediate, physical acting-out or our implication in the situation. (p. 10)

Massumi credits the philosopher C. S. Pierce with labeling this experience as abduction—a thought surrounded by sensations in the body. I felt my phrase supported my description of how knowing or self-awareness is experienced by a child/youth, and it shared some similarities with abduction (Massumi, 2015).

In the case of adult experiences of abduction, there are many different titles associated with new awareness: epiphany as experience (Joyce, 1914/1996; McDonald, 2008; Scholes, 1964), enlightenment (Hua, 2009), Aha! (Kizilirmak, Galvao Gomes da Silva, Imamoglu, & Richardson-Klavehn, 2016; Kounios & Beeman, 2009), transformation (Cranton, 2006), pivotal moment (Duvall & Béres, 2011), abduction (Massumi, 2015), and *cogito*—experiencing the self by oneself (Merleau-Ponty, 1992/2014). My definition of a *moment of realization* incorporates a visceral response, and a process where this experience of self occurred in a way that children/youth described through feelings and bodily sensations and/or thoughts and bodily sensations, as these related to reading tasks and awareness of learning strengths. It shares attributes
of these other descriptors, but it has a unique difference, as I connected it to key concepts that are part of my research and associated it with an inner knowing or self-awareness occurring amidst reading struggles, and the intensity of the response can be visceral and goes beyond affect because of the intense embodied reaction.

I represented this moment of realization visually as a point on a spiral that swirls out from that point of contact. Embedded within the spiral are experiences that occur for the struggling reader when a realization occurs. These experiences did not occur in the order listed, but through narrative inquiry methods with participants (Appendix E). I wanted to find out if it was possible for a moment of realization to occur, and if so, would that moment be experienced in the following way: physiological change, as an awareness of a physical sensation in the body; metacognitive change, as an awareness of learning strengths in reading that effect self-perception; and an increase in emotional knowledge or change—as self-perception changes does it alter the emotions associated with previous failures in reading? As the spiral expands further from the moment of realization, there is a possibility for an alternative story emerging that is different from the dominant one of the struggling reader (see Appendix E). Through practicing this newly realized learning strength, a new experience may occur and a different observable phenomenon emerges: more autonomy in reading and increased confidence. In addition, does the struggling reader who acquires new skills in dealing with reading challenges experience external validation by significant others, such as parents and teachers, whose perception of their ability and conversations around this ability becomes more positive?

Campbell’s (1949/2008) model involves 14 steps, each of which guided me in developing questions to ask about a particular experience (see Figure 1). I wanted to be
able to guide children and youth to tell their own hero/heroine’s story based on their lived experiences during the interview-conversation sessions; however, not all children and youth were able to do that type of narrative. Instead, I used parts of this model throughout the description of my method as it served two purposes: it provided an artifact that represents the Hero’s Journey stages, and it provided specific moments for exploring chronological experiences and gathering the backstory of where the children and youth have been in their struggling reader experience, what happened in the present during interview-conversation sessions, and predicting what may happen in the future as the children/youth take new knowledge back to school.

In addition, Campbell’s (1949/2008) model allowed me to ask questions that related to some of the 14 steps and to listen for an alternative story within the dominant story and to thicken descriptions (Freedman & Combs, 1996). Campbell’s (1949/2008) premise was true about experiences in life following the monomyth. I heard narratives about struggles, reactions to successes, and triumphs that occurred throughout the interview-conversation sessions. However, I was unable to use all the 14 steps with all the children/youth. Two of the children/youth did experience most of these steps and were able to use what they learned in their school environments. I have tried to provide a visual summary of their journey metaphor and the research methodology by using Campbell’s template (see Figure 1).

The story of this moment of realization was captured in Campbell’s (1949/2008) metaphor of the Hero’s Journey. Time did not permit to deconstruct with all children and youth in the study the impact of the hard work of struggling with reading and the trauma experienced during that struggle as having a positive outcome through the moment of
realization. Instead, there were moments of realization that opened a discussion into the emotions and embodied responses to discovering something new in learning ability that I have metaphorically identified as belonging to the SupraOrdinary World, where the trials, failures, and successes become relevant when the struggling reader internally perceives that she is her own Magic Helper (i.e., she becomes her own support through realizing personal learning strengths and strategies that she can access independently when challenged by a reading task). In the research study, three of the four participants became aware of learning strengths that they could use independently, but we did not go further to explicitly link them to Campbell’s model. However, I observed the events unfolding as Campbell described. For example, the shift from an external Magic Helper (e.g., IPA-researcher/tutor) to an internal one occurred for three of the four children and youth because of revealed learning strengths. Although these realizations happened in specific moments of time, they encompassed numerous chronological events that became meaningful through dialogue.

These benchmarks as illustrated in the Hero’s Journey story model (see Figure 1) provided an opportunity for many specific moments of realization that took hard work and failure before occurring. In Albert’s case (a child participant in the study), several different strategies (such as visualization and manipulation) were attempted but they failed. However, Albert suggested playing a game of charades to aid new vocabulary learning, and this game was adapted to incorporate elaboration, movement, and discussion of the meaning of the words (evidence-based strategies) within the game, which proved successful for Albert (see description in chapter four). The experience of the moment of realization was spontaneously triggered in this instance because the game
format was emotionally engaging and increased persistence with the struggling to read task (i.e., new vocabulary learning). Persistence on the part of Albert in maintaining focus, and the use of strategies embedded within the charade game contributed to his success (Berkun, 2010; Woloshyn, Elliott, & Kaicho, 2001). As Tulis and Fulmer (2013) state, there is a level of challenge that encourages persistence and positive affect. In this instance, it involved providing reading materials that were just beyond the current ability of the reader. Albert chose the reading task, and the new vocabulary that he was learning was beyond his current decoding abilities. My role as the IPA-researcher was to act as a mediating influence and the external Magic Helper by providing a scaffold support through verbal and physical prompts that helped Albert associate meaning with the printed symbols/words (Vygotsky, 1933/1978).

The research method involved social interaction as the catalyst for change through asking questions about prior experiences with reading tasks that encouraged participants to tell stories about their experiences. This storying through social interaction between the IPA-researcher acting as Questioner, Listener, and Observer (i.e., Magic Helper; see Campbell, 1949/2008) and the struggling reader during the successful completion of a reading-related task lead to new discoveries and awareness of learning potential for the children and youth. This approach worked on the premise that if the struggling reader entered into a dialogue regarding her/his experience of a reading task, the potential for discovering a learning strength by either or both the child/youth or IPA-researcher was there (Vygotsky, 1933/1978). The curiosity of the IPA-researcher prompted questions about the struggling reader’s approach to the authentic reading task and became a stimulus for the struggling reader to think about the task differently, which became the

The premise of taking a curious and questioning approach towards reading struggles facilitated a change in emotions around a specific traumatic reading event through dialogue, and that dialogue lead to change in the previous dominant story that the struggling reader told: “I hate reading/I’m not a good reader because I can’t read fast/Reading is boring.” There was the possibility of an inner realization of a learning strength emerging from this social context. As the IPA-researcher, the questions around what was being experienced shifted the focus to an absent but implicit storyline of ableness made possible through a dialogue regarding observed learning strengths (White, 2011). Berkun (2010) suggests that an epiphany is an occasional result of working on a difficult challenge. The struggling reader working with an IPA-researcher who acted as an observer and asked questions about the struggling reader’s thought processes while providing support in the form of suggesting different evidence-based reading strategies did lead to an epiphanic experience and change in storyline (Vygotsky, 1933/1978, p. 86; White, 2011). However, if the experience of struggling to read with no positive results continued, then the dominant storyline of being a poor reader could have continued. The social interaction prevented the struggling reader from losing emotional energy to continue “working on the tough problem” (Berkun, 2010, p. 11); therefore, the possibility of an epiphany or moment of realization remained possible. Without persistence in continuing to read (Fulmer & Frijters, 2011; Tulis & Fulmer, 2013) and receiving support (Vygotsky, 1933/1978), the possibility of an alternative story may not develop. Using a dialogical narrative-research approach connects this philosophical heuristic to an
individual’s relationship with learning to read. This approach made possible the discovery of personal hidden reading-strengths that when discussed and practiced yielded a different self-perception of the child/youth’s struggle to read and an alternative storying of the experience.

**White’s Theory of Narrative Inquiry**

I was drawn to the work of Michael White (2007, 2011) because I saw a connection between his inquiry approach to narrative as a device to help individuals with problems change their perspective on the source of their problem. According to Chase (2005), narrative researchers approach the material they study using an interdisciplinary amalgamation of analytical lenses and traditional and innovative approaches that allow for flexibility in meaning making. For the purposes of this study, the narrative was oral and visual in terms of stories and artifacts that the struggling readers and their families provided to express thoughts and emotions. The phrase “struggling reader” was used as a description of the emotions associated with a reading impairment. According to Denzin (1989), the interpretive/reflective interview approach (i.e., I used a combination of narrative inquiry combined with my reflexivity) lends itself to an epiphanal event or moment considered a turning point, or as Campbell (1949/2008) would describe, *The Grand Trial, Revelation, and Insight* (see Figure 1). White (2007) would describe this as a moment when the dominant storyline is superseded by a realization that there is an alternative or subordinate story that needs to be explored.

From White’s (2007) perspective, the dominant storyline and subordinate storyline become juxtaposed; suddenly, the exploration of a subordinate story (i.e., the children/youth realize they have learning strengths that will help them be a good reader)
takes a dominant position and changes the thoughts, emotions, and experiences of a specific phenomenon either in the past or in the moment (White, 2011). This moment occurs when the storyteller realizes that the subordinate storyline, that was mostly ignored, supersedes the dominant storyline that has been told and retold. The moment when this realization occurs creates awareness, or it opens this SupraOrdinary experience with the thoughts, emotions, and bodily experiences that occur in that world. It is a spontaneous “fusion” (Falconer, 2002, p. 55) or epiphanal event (Denzin, 1989) where the experience in the Ordinary World interacting with the ExtraOrdinary World opens ways of perceiving this SupraOrdinary experience as something instantaneous when it may have taken years of preparation for this to occur. Imagine a visual that represents the interconnection and movement of Campbell’s (1949/2008) two worlds. These two worlds are floating in a larger sphere of lived experience that contains the SupraOrdinary. When a moment of realization occurs, it is as if these floating worlds suddenly touch the boundaries of the SupraOrdinary creating an awareness of a new way of being (see Appendix F). This new awareness through a moment of realization is personally significant and may be associated with bodily sensations as embodied emotions are released (Denham, 2007; Riquelme & Montero, 2013).

**Describing the Embodied Reading Process**

Building on White’s (2011) theories on storying, I explored with children/youth and their families the experience of struggling to read, embedded emotions within the body while struggling, an altered perception of ability using images to express ideas and emotional states, and social interactions that perpetuated a dominant storyline of poor reading ability. The original ideas started from a metaphor of the struggling reader as a heroine /hero in her/his own life on a journey working through experiences of reading
challenges. In Appendix G, I present a visual-artifact metaphor of the Matryoska Nesting-Doll to depict the contributions and inter-actions of theorists and concepts that frame my research methodology (i.e., the concepts are not isolated but represent a whole, and each theorist is associated with a specific part of that whole nesting-doll image). This image is the closest representation of interdependence of one theorist with another to create a whole, as well as how each part is interrelated or codependent (see Appendix G). Each theorist contributes specific knowledge to the narrative but when and how these various concepts emerge depends on the children/youths’ lived experiences and it is not a linear process.

The largest doll represents the *Overarching Framework and Inter-Actionist Approach* because all the theorist work within Campbell’s (1949/2008) Hero’s Journey story model, which provides a concrete framework to support the research, while Vygotsky’s (1933/1978) social constructivist principles focuses on the importance of the construction of new knowledge through a social dialogue about struggling with reading. The second doll represents White’s (2007), Doherty’s (1990), and O’Donoghue’s (2006) contributions to the inquiry approach, data collection, how the researcher and participants will interact, and the process that allows for the *Externalizing the Problem and Image Representation* using a narrative inquiry dialogue and the use of O’Donoghue and Doherty’s digital and drawn images to represent ideas and emotions. The third doll represents the *Perceptions of the Struggling Reader and Family Phenomena* that emerge from the dialogue and involve the work of Husserl (1931/2012), Kurak (2003), and Merleau-Ponty (1992/2014). Finally, the fourth doll represents the *Embodied-Emotions Lived Experience* that are felt during the struggling-reading lived experience and described by van Manen (1997) and Holodynski (2013). Thus, the Matryoska Nesting-
Doll imagery expresses the contributions of each of the theorists and the interconnectedness of their concepts within the narrative research approach.

The process that lead to these theorists’ interconnections started with Campbell’s (1949/2008) monomyth as a creative approach to externalize emotions around reading struggles by telling stories. This lead to the work of White (2007) who focused on asking questions and listening to narratives in order to externalize the problem—the struggle with reading. White described his approach as externalizing conversations by moving through four stages or categories during a dialogue. This approach was adapted to focus on the problem of struggling with reading: (a) Describe an experience with reading and state the struggle/problem; (b) create a visual to represent the effects of the problem; (c) evaluate the effects of the problem on thoughts, perceptions, and emotions; and (d) gain insights by describing, creating, and evaluating the struggle. These steps are presented in a specific order and provide guidance for dialogues about struggling to read and possible new knowledge gained through the struggle when the IPA-researcher is working with children and youth. This structure and approach opened a dialogue about perceptions around the struggling reading phenomenon and embodied emotions associated with the struggling and successful experiences. Appendix H summarizes the specific contributions that each theorist makes to the theoretical framework, whereas Appendix G represents the interactive and interdependence of these theories in the research approach.

Phenomenology contributes to the story because reading struggles create a phenomenon through repetition of struggling to read experiences at home and school (Merleau-Ponty, 1992/2014). Reflection on this phenomenon allows the struggling reader to make meaning of the struggle (i.e., “phenomenological reflection”; see van Manen, 2014, p. 77), which leads to feelings that become embodied. Although the phenomenon
begins as a cognitive challenge, it generates intense emotions that are felt in the body and when repeated for long periods of time take on characteristics of a traumatic experience. This traumatic experience involves social interaction with others who help to dissipate the feelings of trauma or heighten them. The concept of intense embodied emotions being the result of prolonged struggles to read being traumatic was based on observing children and youth struggling with reading skills, as well as conversations with parents in the Learning Lab. Using narrative as a method to study these emotions seems an oxymoron: Storying becomes an approach to help release emotions around reading struggles that are created out of the need for struggling readers to read stories.

**Combining Narrative Theory With Arts-Based Data Collection**

I used narrative theory (Bal, 2009; Chase, 2005; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Denison, 2016) within a phenomenology tradition of qualitative inquiry (Creswell, 1998, 2007), as a technique to zoom in and out like a camera lens on the moments where the dominant storyline changes through the telling of the story. This approach allowed for hyper-focus on this *moment of realization* and lead to exploring other past moments that become meaningful because of a familiarity in embodied feeling that previously has been ignored. I worked with the premise that there was the possibility that a metacognitive moment of epiphany during the interview-conversation sessions could be discussed to make explicit a detailed description of embodied knowing that increased emotional knowledge for children and youth. This connection involved asking questions about previous embodied experiences to create an awareness of a positive connection between present and previous experiences of bodily sensations that seemed disconnected.

According to Falconer (2002), the recognition of this embodied emotion fuses a
present experience to previous experiences. I call this experience a *SupraOrdinary Moment* of realizing that previous learning challenges may not be detrimental, but the impetus for the development of personal learning strengths that changes self-perception. This moment Campbell (1949/2008) describes as the “Grand Trial, Revelation, and Insight” (see Figure 1). From this moment of awareness forward, the dominant storyline must be altered or discarded because this experience defines a new way of being in the *Ordinary World*, and the beginning of the alternative storyline and perception of self as able. This transformation must come from within and narrative becomes the medium or pathway to this *moment of realization*. This revelation and insight may create a different emotion or sensation in the body, and the memory of this sensation may be carried forward creating an opportunity for a metacognitive and emotional awareness of learning strength that can be applied to future experiences when they occur (Dewey, 1938/1997).

These moment-of-realization experiences and metacognitive and embodied-emotional awareness of these moments through a combination of thoughts and embodied sensations is a phenomenon that I describe as occurring in the *SupraOrdinary World* (see Appendix F). These experiences are on a continuum and interrelated, although they may occur on a linear timeline; their influence and impact represents overlapping spheres/worlds/spaces (e.g., the epiphany is in the realm of the *SupraOrdinary* sphere, which is interrelated to the *Ordinary* and *ExtraOrdinary* spheres).

My research focused on these moments or phenomena that coexist within different spaces: the outer space of the physical environment where I can observe an individual struggling with reading (e.g., working with children/youth in the Learning Lab), and the inner space of thoughts, emotions (using the Emoji Emotional Engagement
Observation Scale, adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016), and embodied experience generated by this interaction and captured through narrative inquiry (e.g., being curious about the struggling to read experience and asking children/youth questions about the struggle), and the space of the SupraOrdinary World that encompasses and intertwines with the other two worlds when a moment of realization occurs (e.g., children/youth realize a personal strength and apply it to the reading task leading to an experience of struggling less with a reading task). I use spheres/worlds/spaces interchangeably to describe a metaphorical image of these spheres/worlds/spaces interconnecting.

The metaphor of three worlds or spheres as interconnected physical and emotional spaces came out of my interest in Doherty’s (1990) use of visual space in his art installation involving attitudes and perceptions of Donna McGuire, a Northern Ireland terrorist. His installation presented a binary view of Ms. McGuire as both heroine and terrorist depending on what group was describing her: IRA or British government. Doherty described his use of spaces as “a fusion of two knowledges: a participant’s awareness of detail and specificity, and an observer’s feelings for connotations” (as cited in Falconer, 2002, p. 55). I see a parallel between this description and the embodied phenomena of struggling to read for children/youth. I have adapted Doherty’s space concept to Campbell’s (1949/2008) framework of two worlds, which represent both external physical events and internal psychological and emotional processes—two spaces. Where these two worlds interconnect is Doherty’s image of the “fusion of two knowledges” (Falconer, 2002, p. 55) and I describe this “fusion” as the SupraOrdinary World where new awareness of learning strengths emerge. Doherty’s contribution to the concepts in my research involves his modeling in this art installation of Donna McGuire
and how to use visuals to make concrete things that cannot be seen like embodied emotions, inner thoughts, and personal beliefs. Doherty created a physical space that when entered required inner-space emotional engagement.

According to Doherty (1990), there needs to be awareness of what is going on in the external space, as well as feelings that are triggered and the personal meaning of those feelings in one’s inner space which was a theme that emerged in my research: children and youth increased their emotional knowledge through metacognitive and embodied-emotional awareness of learning strengths that was connected to interactions during the interview-conversation sessions. I was aware of this occurring through dialogue and using the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale, adapted from Martinovic et al., (2016). External events (i.e., reading task) follow a linear timeline; however, the inner world of embodied experience involves processing the impact, change, and revelations triggered by the interaction of external events and inner ethics, values, beliefs, and emotional knowledge (Massumi, 2015) which was a theme that emerged during my research. This inner processing is not necessarily linear. For example, if a perception of ability changes (e.g., personal reading ability) because of realization of personal strengths, then as White (2011) describes, identifying “initiatives (personal reading strategies)…” might provide a point of entry to rich story development that brings more positive identity conclusions and new options for action in the world” (p. 29; emphasis mine). This refers to the subordinate storyline that I described earlier that can magnify a specific part of an experience with reading. This capturing of experience with the story model of a Hero’s Journey (Campbell, 1949/2008) captures the imagination of children and youth. I used the concept of being heroic in a personal story as a device to
deconstruct stories of reading struggles that have strong emotional associations.
Campbell’s belief that the monomyth can be a lens to view our own experiences of struggle helped externalize the problem of struggling to read for children and youth in this study. It provided, as White described, a way of externalizing the problem of reading and making it a problem and not an identity. This depersonalizing of reading struggles is key to lessen the emotions triggered by failures with the reading process.

Choosing the monomyth of the Hero’s Journey introduces the possibility of a different perception of an emotionally laden and traumatizing experience with reading struggles. Focusing on the phenomena of a moment of realization allows the reframing of the stories of individuals and their families who struggle with reading from that of victim to valiant protagonist, or as White (2011) describes, a richer development of personal story (i.e., development of an alternative storyline) that has a positive impact on identity. This SupraOrdinary moment of realization cannot be manipulated like a dependent variable. It is not tangible and it is an unpredictable phenomenon. It involves a way of being that requires that the researcher be a part of the experience with the research participant and this experience is framed within a dialogue between the questioner or listener (researcher) and story teller (research participant). There is a shared experience where both the children/youth and the researcher are like the Observer observing the Observed or “the Observer is the Observed” (Krishnamurti, 2010, p. 100). For this observer experience to occur, the children/youth need support in the “creation of a new language” (Duvall & Béres, 2011, p. 8) to help in describing their personal revelation or phenomenon of observation, so that the researcher can share in this observation experience or SupraOrdinary moment. This SupraOrdinary experience occurs at the
moment of this epiphany or thought/belief transformation.

**Visual Artifacts**

I have been able to articulate the narrative aspect of the research; however, there is an arts-based element used as both a data collection method and as an opportunity to capture thoughts and emotions using visuals. During the interview-conversation sessions, children/youth were given an opportunity to draw pictures to represent cognitive processes. Eisner (2004) takes a multiple intelligences approach to knowing the world and how individuals represent their ideas of the world that influences what they can say about their experiences. In education, Eisner suggests that educational inquiry expands in how the world of education is described, interpreted and evaluated. Individuals who struggle with decoding printed words has shown that they will rely on top-down skills of reading: prior knowledge on the reading content, use of video or websites to provide meaning, and/or use of the illustrations in the books to create the gist of the story. These top-down skills involve meaning making using problem-solving skills because the bottom-up skills of decoding are weak (Nevills & Wolfe, 2009). They compensate by finding ways of creating meaning that does not involve print. This approach to reading needs to be explored further because it indicates an area of strength that may not be obvious to struggling readers or their families.

According to Gray (2006), “Drawings can often clarify matters where written words would be cumbersome” (p. 228) and the use of a story framework to explore with children and youth their lived experiences with struggling to read provides a familiar context. By combining visuals with narratives about emotional experiences, I created a
learning space that allowed my participants to tell their stories using both words and images.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to extend conceptual framings of research, chapter two outlines key literature that I drew upon to inform the research and interpret my data. Campbell’s (1949/2008) story model provided the conceptual framework and White (2007) the inquiry method that incorporated dialogue, imagination, and externalizes the struggle to read as a journey, so it is not the struggling reader who is the problem but the process of reading. I believed capturing these stories helped reveal the emotional and cognitive impact of experiences with reading. In chapter one, I described a binary view of experiences with reading based on Campbell’s monomyth (see Figure 1). These two viewpoints are described as two spaces; however, I researched a third viewpoint or third space where the child/youth described a personal insight and/or bodily sensation(s) that occurred through the process of narrating external experiences about reading and the feelings these experiences generate. In particular, I listened for descriptions of both thoughts and bodily sensations associated with emotions. Descartes (1984) and Husserl (1931/2012) are two philosophers with opposing philosophies of the importance of thought and bodily sensations that I combined as theoretical foundations within which I built my research approach.

Descartes (1984) believed that our thinking mind and bodily sensations are separate from each other and that certainty can only be achieved through thinking and the ability of the mind to doubt sensations experienced in the body (Hamilton & Hamilton, 2015). On the other hand, Husserl (1931/2012) speaks of the phenomenological reduction, which I relate to the Buddhist philosophy of taking a step back and observing one’s actions as, “An observer, observing the observed” (Krishnamurti, 2010, p. 100). While Husserl (1931/2012) speaks of a critical distance from one’s assumptions of
interrupting and validating lived experiences, or subjective consciousness, Descartes (1984) would suggest that thinking is primary in creating certainty by ignoring messages received through bodily sensations. Husserl invites us to be curious in exploring how the world exists for the individual in the body and interpretation of bodily experiences, which leans towards a grey, holistic, view versus a black and white dualism that Descartes advocates.

I mention these two philosophers’ positions because their arguments parallel a conflict, even antagonism, that exists within individuals who experience critical self-thoughts and agitated bodily-emotions. These thoughts and emotions create a profound inner tension and personal identity-crisis associated with struggling to read, not to mention a stigma as a literacy learner. This struggle can be perceived as traumatic because reading is a critical aspect of all areas of the school curriculum, and students who struggle can never escape the cognitive demands of reading; yet, they are left to cope with the emotional impact of struggling to read on their own.

By combining phenomenology with Campbell’s (1949/2008) monomyth concept and White’s (2007) storying narrative approach, a process is provided that will allow struggling readers and their families to unpack these experiences. The rationale for applying Campbell’s monomyth as a metaphorical concept is that the journey is detailed enough to anchor stages of the research process and loose enough to apply different stories to its heuristic. Narrative theory (Bal, 2009; Chase, 2005; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Denison, 2016) is a natural fit for Campbell’s framework because it allows struggling readers to examine phenomenon and embedded bodily-emotion through critical thinking and attention to bodily phenomenon that is triggered by reading demands and impacts self-perceptions and personal beliefs and provides a vehicle to describe it.
Thoughts are language-based and are dependent on the individual’s command of language. There is a relationship between thought and language proficiency (Vygotsky, 1986). White (2007) describes dominant and alternative storylines when listening to a client telling a story of a lived experience. White points out that sometimes the storyteller is only aware of the main story and misses another story that is embedded within the dominant one. By applying his principles of dominant and alternative storylines, I am equating cognitive processing to the dominant story because language involves critical thinking and the use of specific vocabulary to communicate knowledge and the subordinate storyline to bodily sensations that are not as obvious.

I am connecting these two storylines to Descartes (1984) and Husserl’s (1931/2012) philosophies where Descartes’s perspective disallows placing importance on embodied emotions while logic is considered the only reliable language. On the other hand, Husserl advocates for listening to a less obvious language expressed through bodily sensations and the need to interpret these sensations. I equate Husserl’s focus on interpreting sensations with White’s (2007) description of the subordinate storyline in a narrative because it may be less conspicuous in a lived experience.

The limbic system has a method of communication or alternative storyline, but it is not language-based and is not as easy to interpret. This communication method is based on sensations and the perception and meaning associated or attributed to experiences and moments of sensation (Husserl, 1931/2012); for example, the motivation to persist in reading when there are severe decoding challenges may decrease if associated with sensations of discomfort and the perception that the task is too difficult (Fulmer & Frijters, 2011; Tulis & Fulmer, 2013). However, if an individual continues to
struggle, yet starts to experience improvement through that struggle by becoming aware of personal learning strengths that relate to reading strategies, then the eventual success has an impact on self-image, self-perception, and persistence (Fisher & Frey, 2014; Tulis & Fulmer, 2013). This realization of learning strength may translate into bodily sensations that are associated with positive affect, and the more positive the experience the greater the motivation to persist, as in the use of the Close Reading strategy where engaging in a challenging reading task that is supported (i.e., requiring the reader to work at a cognitive level that is manageable) leads to persistence. The fostering of persistence is important if new skills related to reading are to be discovered (Fisher & Frey, 2014).

Applying Reading Theory to the Struggling Reader

Struggling readers use personal strategies; however, these strategies are not always effective and lead to emotions and perceptions of self that lessen motivation to persist with a difficult reading task (Stanovich, 2008). The Close Reading strategy (Fisher & Frey, 2012) is a strategy that lowers working memory and is socially mediated supporting readers cognitively and emotionally. This strategy incorporates concepts associated with my key theorists, as well as principles of reading theory. For these reasons, I use it as a practical example of how theory and practice are incorporated because I have used elements of this approach in my research study. Close Reading uses small complex passages and repeated readings with a focus on comprehension versus decoding to help students acquire meaning from printed text. The students are supported through this process by the teacher and each other, which involves both cognitive and emotional phenomena: the cognitive relates to the reading task that is required, and the emotional relates to the metacognitive discoveries of ways of being with the text or
approaching the challenge embedded in the reading task. Students are reading materials that their peers are reading but with supports. The level of engagement increases and using a strategy that provides a scaffold while encouraging repetition allows for more opportunity to process complex vocabulary, concepts, and use analytic skills that are meaning focused (Fisher & Frey, 2014). Persistence is built into this approach.

A struggling reader, as a concept, describes a child or youth whose cognitive reading processes are impaired such that automaticity in decoding and reading fluency are affected. Frustration with reading at an instructional/frustrational level (i.e., the level where 97% to 98% of printed words are decoded and read fluently) leads to lack of persistence and engagement with print (Fisher, 2007; Fisher & Frey, 2014; Fulmer & Frijters, 2011; Tulis & Fulmer, 2013). There is an increase in negative emotions towards reading that if sustained may create a traumatic experience (D’Mello & Graesser, 2012). This is a technical definition, but I do not want to imply a deficit framing of such a reader. The children/youths’ experience of reading difficulties, in some cases, has created emotional trauma because struggles with learning to read has dramatically affected their persistence and without persistence reading development is impaired. The children/youth in this research study had unique ways of creating meaning from print. They had alternative ways of making meaning using multimodal texts and technology.

**Using Narrative Inquiry to Draw Out Reader Stories**

The process of telling the stories of connection and disconnection creates a baseline and becomes a tool for evaluating subsequent experiences with print. If a struggling reader realizes that there is a connection between the cognitive discovery of personal learning strengths and bodily sensations, then the possibility exists of using this lived experience to find a solution to reading challenges through awareness of this body
and mind connection. This moment of discovery is what is described as a *SupraOrdinary Moment*, and the ability to recognize this moment when it is repeated in a new learning situation then allows that lived experience, or as Husserl (1931/2012) would describe, a phenomenological epoch where the body is located within the middle of a transcendental moment or field. The mind (thought process) validates this transcendental experience as real and in that moment there is a shift in mental awareness that incorporates both thought and bodily sensations making them one experience. I believe this awareness represents a union of Descartes’s and Husserl’s philosophies towards experienced phenomenon or Transcendental Phenomenology, a descriptive and analytical method of describing how things come into conscious awareness and how they are experienced (van Manen, 1997). It goes beyond believing that every bodily sensation is true, but this *SupraOrdinary Moment* incorporates thought and bodily sensations and represents a phenomenon of mind-body oneness/knowing that becomes part of the individual’s knowledge and belief foundation; or, as Campbell would describe, a *Crossing the Threshold* or *Grand Trial and Insight and Discarding of the Old Self* experience. This lived experience becomes powerful when repetition occurs and metacognitive and emotional awareness increases as occurred for some of the children/youth.

Personal insight and effective interpretation of lived experiences can have a moment of connection between Descartian and Husserlian perspectives. This is a tertiary world moment because it needs both theoretical perspectives and the individual’s thoughts, emotions and embodied awareness to connect simultaneously in order to exist. The monomyth concept as a metaphor tells the story of how this tertiary world comes into existence, and the alternative storyline that White (2007) describes combines the two
philosophical positions into a different story that is experienced in the body and connected to the mind. It is for this reason that I incorporate Campbell’s (1949/2008) monomyth theory as a metaphor for the four readers’ journeys.

The struggle to read creates disequilibrium. The challenge is for the struggling reader to untangle conflicting thoughts and bodily emotions to create a new SupraOrdinary inner connection and viewpoint. This involves altering previously held beliefs and assumptions about what is a valid experience in the world (Taipale, 2014). Struggle becomes an ally to freedom and not an enemy of learning to read. The difference involves a change in perception. The moment of this change and the embodied emotions associated with this moment of realization is the focus of this research.

Most educators who research achievement in education use Weiner’s (1985, 2010) system of achievement attribution. Weiner’s theory focuses on ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck. Three causal dimensions (i.e., locus, stability, and controllability) are measured from internal-external, stable-unstable, and controllable-uncontrollable where ability and effort are stable internal causes because they are perceived as relating to the person and not the situation. The externals relate to luck and task difficulty and are considered unstable. Effort is considered controllable, and luck and task difficulty are uncontrollable. Weiner’s explanation of the achievement domain where success is equated with high ability and hard work while failure is attributed to the opposite is a perception of struggling readers because effort is equated with greater success. However, there are several struggling readers whose experience of great effort do not translate into being rewarded with success. Yet, it is not because they were not trying. In terms of controllability, if struggling readers learn about personal learning strengths and can apply
these to a reading task independent of other external supports, the sense of uncontrollable variables lessens. Luck is not involved because struggling readers increased their metacognitive awareness of their own abilities and may take on a more challenging reading task as confidence builds, as in the case of Albert (pseudonym) who started at a pre-primer sight word level and chose to push himself to read Grade 3 sight words at the end of the tutoring sessions at the Learning Lab. The external task did not seem uncontrollable for him.

**Embodied Emotions**

Within literacy studies, there has been an affect turn that relates strongly with this research study. The affect turn posits that contemporary literacy practices rely heavily on more modalities (Kress, 2010) and more embodied and indeed emotional interactions with texts (Leander & Boldt, 2013; Lewis & Tierney, 2013). Theorists like Lewis (Lewis & Tierney, 2013) and Massumi (2015) analyze how emotion is often separated from the mind and from disciplines like semiotics, linguistics, and ultimately fields like multimodality because emotion is so laden with felt sensibilities and perhaps more intangible aspects as feelings, beliefs, and embodiment. For instance, Lewis and Tierney (2013) focused on emotion in an ethnically diverse urban school and how emotive interactions in race-related discussions were mediated by texts and visuals. These researchers compel others to think about the role of affect, embodiment, and perception.

Affect theorists reject constructivist assumptions that thinking and knowledge exist outside of experience (St. Pierre, 2016) and that people think through engagement in the world. Massumi (2015) asserts that affect is registered through sensation, “the passing awareness of being at a threshold—and that affect is thinking, bodily—consciously…that is not yet a fully formed thought” (p. 10). He describes it as “movement of thought, or a
thinking movement” (p. 10) and associates it within the logical category of abduction. According to Massumi, C. S. Peirce (1931-1958) was responsible for the term abduction: Bodily sensations that occur prior to conscious reflection where those sensations are then translated into thought language. Peirce (1931-1958) relates this term to the logic of discovery. This description supports the experience of moments of realization that were experienced by children, youth and myself during this study. The logic of discovery relates to Riquelme and Montero’s (2013) findings, which indicate that studying the use of different emotion regulation strategies among preschoolers in stressful situations… show that some older participants use private speech, whereas most of the preschool children use movements, attention shifting, and searching for adult help as strategies to cope with unsettling emotions. (p. 228) These behaviours relate to Massumi’s (2015) description of abduction as “thought that is still couched in bodily feeling, that is still fully bound up with unfolding sensation as it goes into action” (p. 9).

During my process of asking the children/youth to describe emotions associated with a specific emoji in the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale (adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016), I realized the descriptions that were given were examples of Massumi’s statement, as the observation scale descriptions of emojis the children/youth related to sensations and actions. These descriptions exemplified the extent of affect knowledge that three of the four children/youth possessed. This “unfolding sensation as it goes into action” (Massumi, 2015, p. 9) response to feelings particularly of stress were patterns that were described by both children and older youth. Also, there was the seeking of outside help of turning to family (e.g., Jessica’s parents’ guidance in studying strategies) and peers for help in negotiating stressful learning tasks
that arise at school (Pekrun et al., 2011; Reyna et al., 2011).

The expression of emotional distress is observable because it occurs in the outer world (Campbell, 1949/2008) as movement, attention shifting, and seeking help. Parents and educators respond by making suggestions to focus more attention on the reading task, such as telling students to sit still, pay attention, and try harder (referring to task persistence as a strategy). However, these children and youth are not asking us for cognitive support; they are expressing their emotional reaction to a challenging cognitive task. The stress response to challenging reading tasks was the starting point for my research. Narrative inquiry was the method that allowed me to explore these lived experiences and embodied emotions triggered by struggles with reading. These regulatory, almost punitive moments that students experience can leave a strong imprint and even imbue trauma. Making meaning of the emotions experienced and deconstructing them can identify the cognitive challenges related to reading identified from a feeling perspective and not just as a psychometric measure of reading level.

Struggling readers are expressing emotions around sustained cognitive challenges of decoding print through their speech, motivation, and bodies (Riquelme & Montero, 2013; van Manen, 1997; Vygotsky, 1933/1978). When a learning task is continuously difficult, and this difficulty is sustained over an extended period (i.e., throughout the school day), there is an emotional reaction that if unaddressed leads to trauma. Denham (2007) uses the term *emotional competence* as an attribute that is important in affecting school performance, academic success, and positive peer relations. This competence is defined as the ability to express and regulate emotions that are socially appropriate, and to perceive these emotions and decode them in others as well (Halberstadt, Denham, &
Dunsmore, 2001). Teachers and parents can observe this competency particularly when children are reading.

Reading is an emotional activity. When asked about their reading abilities as a meta-cognitive exercise, children have an opinion, and it is based on experience. Children who struggle with reading may enter school with emotional competence, however, struggling with the reading process when sustained over an extended period has a profound emotional effect and can be traumatizing (D’Mello & Graesser, 2012). Learning to read can be traumatic and almost every subject in school requires this skill. This experience of struggle and trauma is compounded by the social interactions that occur in school with teachers and other children. The child struggling with reading not only experiences inner emotions of frustration and anger, but also needs to deal with the knowledge that other children are aware of their “failure to read” (Dressman, Wilder, & Connor, 2005; Wood & Jocius, 2013). Children who come to school with a positive affect and attitude can change dramatically in their demeanor under this constant struggle to acquire proficient reading skills. Denham (2007) associates emotional competency with mental health and with children who are victimized by their peers, are angry and aggressive and do not adjust well to school, and are at risk for problems with social interactions and school performance. Children use a different language to communicate their distress, and if identified and listened to, parents and educators could find ways to release emotions that become embodied and acted out when these children struggle to read. Riquelme and Montero (2013) describe this language: movement, attention shifting, and seeking help. I am using these observable behaviours as a lens that educators can use to examine and interpret reading behaviour.
Emotions create energy and that energy needs to be released. Children are wonderful examples of expressing emotional energy through speech and movement. Many parents and teachers have asked children to, “Please sit still” or “Sit in your seat.” I propose that children who struggle with reading are more active because of the pent-up emotions that are generated through the external stimulus of the printed page. The work of Riquelme and Montero (2013) relates to stress but it has a specific application to reading struggles. I have observed that children who struggle with reading exhibit stress reactions like those described by Riquelme and Montero.

**A Narrative and Listening Approach to Understand Reading Struggles**

Narrative is an approach that helps facilitate new awareness through the telling of reading experiences or struggles. White (2007) describes a process of allowing individuals under stress to create their own vocabulary to describe their experiences. This vocabulary is linked to personal meaning and in describing this vocabulary in detail new realizations are possible—SupraOrdinary moments. Riggs, Greenberg, Kusche, and Pentz (2006) also connect verbal labeling to perception and emotions:

Children’s verbal abilities have been hypothesized to play a key role in their behavioural development. For example, verbal labeling aids in the accurate perception of emotional experiences and in the retrieval of associated memories. In addition, the ability to verbally represent and internally assess behaviour allows children to inhibit problem actions…self-control becomes less dependent upon the mediation of external caregivers and increasingly regulated via internal forms of mediation such as *internal verbal representation*. (p. 92; emphasis mine)
Struggling with reading could be one of the “problem actions” (Riggs et al., 2006, p. 92) that are inhibited by creating a dialogue that allows children to articulate their cognitive challenges and emotional reactions to reading tasks. This dialogue and verbal labeling relates to the Language Experience Approach that educators use to ascertain the receptive and expressive vocabulary of children. Children/youth will not use a word when they do not understand its meaning. Once a vocabulary is used to describe struggling reading experiences, the unpacking of the main storyline of struggling with reading can occur.

There is the possibility of exploring an alternative storyline by utilizing the children/youths’ own vocabulary, which can provide an alternative emotional experience with reading; especially, as the children/youth realize that they have learning strengths that they can apply independently to help themselves—that is, they become their own Magic Helper (Campbell, 1949/2008).

**Phenomenology of Embodiment**

I became interested in the phenomenon of embodied emotions after O’Donoghue’s (2006) use of visual images to capture the emotional impact of experienced good and bad learning spaces as described by children in an old Irish boys’ school. This research approach created a positive change in this school. It used images and stories about those images to allow the children to talk about their feelings. This method was engaging. In 2007, when I was reintroduced to Campbell’s (1949/2008) monomyth of the Hero’s Journey as a metaphor for stories of personal struggle and revelation of personal strengths through those struggles, I had the foundation on which to build my research method. I saw a connection between Campbell’s description of Two Worlds with my addition of a *SupraOrdinary World* experience to Husserl’s (1931/2012)
movement towards a transcendent phenomenology that includes both Static and Genetic Phenomenology. Husserl makes a statement that an intuitional experience or Campbell’s Grand Trial Revelation and Insight/Moments of Realization follows a rule in trying to describe consciousness in relationship to external objects and subjective changes to interacting with these objects:

it is only after protracted inquiries [i.e., my trying different learning strategies with children/youth to determine personal learning strengths] that they can be finally cleared up and determined [i.e., children/youths’ intuitional experience/Moments of Realization]: it is indispensable to make use of a set of speech forms which group together in an orderly way a number of current expressions bearing closely equivalent meanings [this connects to White’s (2007) method where the researcher asks children/youth to create their own vocabulary to describe an experience that is meaningful to them]. (Husserl, 1931/2012, p. 6)

Husserl (1931/2012) presents his position on phenomenology by defining it in relationship to psychology where psychology is the science of experience …a science of facts of “matters of facts” …a science of realities…[and] phenomena which are real events…in so far as they have real existence, take their place with the real Subjects to which they belong in the spacio-temporal world. (p. 4; emphasis mine)

I am connecting this description to Campbell’s (1949/2008) Ordinary World, which Descartes (1984) would describe as thinking-versus feeling-world phenomenology, while Husserl (1931/2012) focuses on the bodily sensations: “pure or transcendental phenomenology will be established not as a science of facts, but as a science of essential
Being (as ‘eidetic’ Science); a science which aims exclusively at establishing ‘knowledge of essences…and absolutely no facts’” (p. 4). I see a connection between White’s (2007) emphasis on the importance of individuals creating their own vocabulary and Husserl’s emphasis on terminology related to phenomenology that may involve grouping words that have similar meanings associated with them: “It is often indispensable to make use of a set of speech forms which group together in an orderly way a number of current expressions bearing closely equivalent meanings” (Husserl, 1931/2012, p. 6). It is this common terminology that exists between Husserl’s phenomenology lens, Buddhist theory of dependent co-origination, and cognitive science that connects to Campbell’s and White’s approaches to storied lived-experiences. These disciplines and associated theoretical perspectives are connected by the common terminology/vocabulary or a lexicon used and I see it as describing the same phenomenon. I am choosing to ground it in Campbell’s Hero’s Journey monomyth. Although these are three distinct lenses, their language describes the same phenomenon, and that is why I relate these theoretical perspectives to my concept and description of a SupraOrdinary moment and the emotional impact that is created when Campbell’s Ordinary World and ExtraOrdinary World connect during the process of struggling to read.

Cognitive Approaches Versus Embodied, Phenomenological Approaches to Reading

Struggling readers perceiving themselves as effective learners (self-efficacy) through their own efforts and inner strengths leads to persistence and increased self-awareness. Once they recognize and apply their strengths to a challenging reading skill and are successful, then they are enlightened and free from the emotional outflow of previous negative feelings towards that reading task. Their bodies relax and experience a
different way of being in the “world of reading.” Krishnamurti (1969/2010) describes this as an explosion from the center when an individual becomes self-aware of attributes that are unique and may not follow traditional approaches; the individual’s choice to reject traditional approaches opens the individual: “Nobody and nothing can answer the question but you yourself and that is why you must know yourself. Immaturity lies only in total ignorance of self. To understand yourself is the beginning of wisdom” (p. 4).

This enlightenment and outflow is possible for children/youth. They have the capacity for metacognitive and emotional awareness of themselves. The solution the emotions elicited by a reading challenge involves both the metacognitive and embodied emotional awareness that occurs as an inner learning strength, and knowledge of how to apply this strength to the reading task, is experienced (Klingner, Morrison, & Eppolito, 2011; Shanahan et al., 2010). The struggling reader was enlightened, or she experienced a SupraOrdinary moment when she made a connection between her existing strength, such as recognizing a pictures-in-her-head or movie experience that aids reading comprehension as a strategy, and the innovative application of that strategy to an existing problem. Buddhist philosophy of dependent co-origination translates this moment-by-moment awareness as interacting in each moment with an object external to the individual. A movie film frame-by-frame analogy is used by Kurak (2003) to explain this Buddhist moment-by-moment experience, and I see a connection to my description of a SupraOrdinary experience in this description. An individual whose thought process allows her to see a movie playing in her when reading, but also has an inner experience of each moment of her being a part of that movie as an “I” (subject) with the book/printed page (object) is where cognitive science and Buddhist philosophy connect.
The Buddhists’ perspective involves six cognitive groups (i.e., sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and “states of thought or feeling” [Kurak, 2003, p. 343]). Cognitive science can explain the sensations in the body that arise based on the interpretation of the sensory input, combined with previous memories of interactions and ensuing sensations created by the external objects. The sensory information about the external object (in this case print material) triggers system memory and recall is communicated through the neural processes of the brain. Prior interpretation of sensations that the object triggers is what Buddhists describe as a desire to indicate an appetitive drive or craving for something of which one may or may not be conscious, or craving…or something of which we may or may not be conscious. This is a critical point in the processing stream because it is here that an opportunity arises to moderate the effects of the largely unconscious processes that have come before [the application of a new strategy to change an experience such as improved reading comprehension]. After this point, the self that we commonly sense to be accompanying our experience becomes fully present in the context of appropriating, or clinging to (upâdâna) the resulting “facts.” By means of this process of appropriation, those emotional memory systems that were required earlier in the series are altered in a manner consistent with the determined significance of the object. (Kurak, 2003, p. 344)

My interpretation of Kurak’s description is that previous failure to be a proficient reader when exposed to the object (the printed page) creates embodied feelings associated with that object. This quote explains the Buddhist perception of how emotions become “attached” to external experiences with an object—in this case reading. The analogy of
the frame-by-frame picture, or in Buddhist terms “microstates,” or in cognitive terms neural synaptic connections are an opportunity to change the previous emotions associated with reading comprehension (Khanna, Pascual-Leone, Michel, & Farzan, 2015; Lehmann, Strik, Henggeler, Koenig, & Koukkou, 1998).

My role as a Magic Helper (see Figure 1) is to hold up a figurative mirror of previous experience (i.e., the retelling of an observed learning strength), and ask questions that reveal this strength to the child/youth (i.e., the movie in her head or Campbell [1949/2008] might describe it as Growth of New Skills born out of the First Trial—not being able to remember what was previously read before using the movie strategy).

Descartes (1984) would only focus on the child/youth making cognitive connections between her ability to see pictures in her head and using it as a comprehension strategy; however, the moment that the child/youth realizes that she has this inner ability another phenomenon occurs that I have described using the Buddhist perspective of co-origination and cognitive science of neural activity. Husserl’s (1931/2012) transcendental moment or phenomenon epoch applies here as the child/youth knows what to do immediately based on connecting a strength that she has to a challenge around reading comprehension—the child/youth’s lived experiences culminate in this realization and are an example of a SupraOrdinary moment.

In exploring various literature that support my dissertation focus and methodology, the philosophy regarding thinking and being has been considered to look at the question of how an esoteric discussion of the philosophy of the “self” in relation to the “experience” of the external reading environment could be meaningful for families experiencing struggles with reading. Bandura (1982) provides a response, as he believes
that self-efficacy has emotional dimensions. An individual’s interpretation of an experienced emotional-state can affect belief about one’s efficacy. There is a tendency to interpret experiences that result in stressful reactions as making the individual feel vulnerable to performing well at a difficult task like reading (Gredler, 1997). In the case of children/youth who struggle with reading, if the stress is reduced, it may alter personal efficacy and the associated negative emotional tendencies stimulated by the reading task. Recent developments in the field of neuroscience and neural imaging of the brain supports, at a micro-physical level, changes that occur in the brain based on interpretations of experiences and the emotions those experiences create (Pessoa, 2013). I have applied the description of the Buddhist theory of co-origination and the connection it has to cognitive science to my concept of the SupraOrdinary moment in the example of the child/youth who realizes that having a movie in their head when reading is a strength that improves her reading comprehension. The child/youth’s experience of self (subject) to an object (reading) and the internal and external interactions lead to success and alleviated a reading struggle. The answer to the challenge came from within, and Campbell (1949/2008) would describe that as a change that allows the child/youth to Take a New Place in the Old World or school setting (see Figure 1).

Creating Visual Artifacts to Tell Stories

Doherty (1990) used an art installation to make a statement. He focused on “conflict, representation and identity” (O’Donoghue, 2006, n.p.). My research focus of working with children/youth and their families is similar. It involves the inner conflict of struggling with reading and the effect it has on struggling readers’ perceptions of themselves as learners. I am using an arts-based data collection with narrative to allow
the children/youth to be inventors of new identities through the process of representing their ideas through both language and images, “who actively combines fragments of texts to recreate ‘some-thing different than what was intended’” (Rowsell & Harwood, 2015, p. 138). Although youth as novice writers may not have the intention of making political statements or being activists, I hope through participation in the research these “inventors” (Rowsell & Harwood, 2015, p. 138) will be activists in reinterpreting their reading experiences as they follow the Hero’s Journey model in their writing. Youth should have the opportunity to explore “the unfamiliar in the familiar and the familiar in the unfamiliar” (O’Donoghue, 2006, n.p.), as we co-create their language experience stories using the prompts I provide, and the final product becomes a type of projection on their self-identity walls (Campbell, 1949/2008) that allows them to “accept the new role…as a personage of exceptional gifts…has come to know who he/she is and therewith has entered into his/her true power” (Campbell, 1949/2008, pp. 29, 31). This discovery takes place through the process of telling stories and taking pictures of reading spaces that are meaningful to them. Just like Doherty’s art installation, these children/youth will work through personal conflicts, representations, and identities to redefine who they will be at the end of their Hero’s Journey.

I used art, pictures, and movement, “as a researcher’s dialect for discussing complexities that cannot be sufficiently captured in oral or written language” (Capello & Hollingsworth, 2008, p. 444). By using art as well as narrative, I created opportunities for transmediation (the process of switching between different communication systems/sign systems) to occur where participants can use different sign systems (i.e., visual pictures, movement, and abstract spoken language and written symbols). These different
communication systems “increase opportunities to engage in generative and reflective thinking because learners must invent a connection between the two sign systems” (Siegel, 1995, p. 455). Generating ideas and reflecting on experiences using art, pictures, and/or movement not only used cognitive processes for expression but also became a tool for expressing embodied emotions especially when visuals were used as a sign system. According to Siegel (2006), the ability to move between different sign systems for generating and reflecting on new ideas relates to the authoring cycle that is currently used in language arts curricula. It is a practice based on Vygotskian principles of learning through social interactions, and authoring acts as a metaphor, “for children’s intentional acts of generating, organizing, and reflecting on texts in social contexts in/through multiple sign systems” (Siegel, 2006, p. 67). Initially, I chose to use Campbell’s (1949/2008) monomyth as a framework within which my participants could author stories of reading struggles using multimodal communication signs because it provided opportunities for diverse expressions of ideas and emotions. The visual and digital data were analyzed to search for themes and used in some instances as visual artefacts of thought processes (see chapter four).

**Summary**

My journey of discovering a research approach and theoretical foundation began with my focus on children’s struggles to read, the emotions generated out of those struggles, and the possibility of using narrative and dialogue in a Vygotskian application to discover implicit learning potential. I have brought disparate theories together using the metaphor of the Hero’s Journey as an overarching principle that allows participants to express through stories their hidden learning potential by examining the interplay
between cognitive and emotional responses to reading struggles. I am looking at something that is complicated because emotions cannot be quantified, but they have a major influence on children’s engagement with the reading process. There is a gap in reading theory because of the focus on evidence-based strategies as the main solution to reading challenges. Emotions are entangled with the reading process, and in order to explore their influence, different approaches from different disciplines need to be employed; hence, the necessity to combine phenomenology with reading theory, narrative with social interaction, and cognitive processes with embodied emotions.

In summary, the evolution of my research method required finding an approach that could explore with participants the emotional impact of struggling to read and the opportunities to discover learning strengths through the process of this struggle. The realization of these learning strengths involves changes in perception, new cognitive neural connections, and bodily sensations that need to be understood and trusted. I believe that this SupraOrdinary moment occurs when individuals face a reading struggle and are supported to persist in finding a strategy that works with their implicit learning potential. A method needs to be developed that helps these individuals to know when and how to access these inner strengths. In order to access these strengths, they need to be aware of their existence and how they experience that awareness in a challenging reading situation. This means that they need to understand their emotions and bodily sensations that occur when there is a cognitive challenge. The SupraOrdinary moment experience is that moment when the mind and body are in sync, and this magical Knowing-What-to-Do occurs. Once this experience occurs and is deconstructed and incorporated as a personal learning strategy, then practice allows for consolidation and the building of inner trust,
which can result in the reader who struggles becoming her own Magic Helper. The Hero’s Journey monomyth provides a strong story model that allows participants to use their imagination when telling their struggling reader stories and responses to these struggles.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

The dissertation research project used narrative theory combined with phenomenology of embodiment (Husserl, 1931/2012; Taipale, 2014) to uncover reading-skill-learning strengths of four children/youth. The research explored what would happen if emotion and embodied experiences were discussed during a challenging reading task, and would those discussions lead to finding learning strengths that would involve embodied sensations?

Campbell’s Hero’s Journey was adopted as a narrative framework (i.e., Call to Action—the school assigned reading task; Trial and First Failure—trying an evidence-based reading strategy that was unsuccessful; and First Success, Grand Trial and Revelation—the discovery of a learning strength coupled with an evidence-based reading strategy) to structure steps in the research inquiry. According to Lyons (1999), emotions play as great a role in facilitating or hindering reading proficiency as cognitive ability. The challenge in developing a research method was to develop a method that worked with who children and youth are. Robson’s (2011) definition of a conceptual framework about emotions and use of stories to explore lived experiences of children and youth who struggle with the reading process fit my beliefs. It was starting with my beliefs that lead to the concepts and the theoretical framework to support these concepts. The main concepts involved using narratives, observing emotional expressions, and use of images.

The research method of narrative inquiry emerged as the three concepts involving narrative using Campbell’s, 1949/2008, Hero’s Journey; embodied emotions through awareness of sensations, and use of images to identify metacognitive processes were incorporated with an emoji measurement scale that allowed children and youth to
emotionally engage in finding out more about their reactions to reading struggles and possible learning strengths that could emerge from these struggles. By giving concrete images (i.e., emojis) that the children/youth associated with their personal descriptions of their embodied emotions, their reactions to different reading strategies were tracked. These images were used to indicate their awareness of embodied responses to discovering learning strengths through dialogue and observations during an authentic reading task. In particular, the dialogue and observations were used to help interpret their behaviour and level of stress or comfort being experienced (Riquelme & Montero, 2013). If there was an increase in movement, attention shifting, or asking for help, they were asked to reflect on what they were feeling while using the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale (adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016). By framing the research as a creative story that included visuals captured their imagination and externalized personal learning challenges related to reading making the struggles less about their identity (White, 2007, externalizing the problem of reading) while allowing them to talk about their experiences as a story grammar (Campbell, 1949/2008).

**Applying Campbell’s Heroes Journey**

Campbell’s (1949/2008) monomyth was used as the central concept of the research because it explained how interactions between outer-world experiences and inner-world beliefs could produce a different lived-experience space/world that was labelled as a *SupraOrdinary World*. Initially, the narrative approach was used to explore the children/youths’ experiences with reading and moments of discovering personal learning strengths. However, what happened during the research were epiphanic or *moments of realization* that were shared between the children, youth, and the IPA-
researcher. These moments were unexpected additional experiences because my embodied reaction to the child/youths’ embodied reaction occurred simultaneously, as I realized what was happening and how what we had done was the stimulus for this discovery. I had not expected to experience with the children/youths’ moments of living a *SupraOrdinary World* experience. These experiences emerged from using the narrative inquiry approach where children and youth were asked to tell the IPA-researcher what was happening for them during an authentic reading task. The use of the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale (adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016) allowed the children and youth to check in emotionally through the embodied sensations experienced, and they were encouraged to use metaphors, stories, and visuals to explain what was being experienced within their minds and bodies. The interactions of questions being asked and the use of the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale to capture embodied experiences provided data.

The narrative approach was introduced to the struggling readers and their families using the monomyth to create a timeline regarding their history with reading (Creswell, 2015). During this introduction, the researcher talked about how their thoughts and feelings were experienced in their bodies, and the connections between reading struggles and emotions. What was the relationship between how they think about something and the associated emotions or sensations experienced in the body around these thoughts? To create a frame of reference, children and youth were asked if they could tell a story of how they experienced a pleasant activity like playing a game, sport or hobby: How did they experience this in their mind and body? What did it feel like? What and how were they thinking at that moment of enjoying the activity, and what sensations were
experienced in their body during that moment? The answer to these questions provided an embodied starting point within which to ask them to tell two stories involving decisions they needed to make and how these decisions were experienced. The first story would involve them recalling a time when their thoughts around a decision conflicted with how they felt in their body about that decision. What was the result of following their cognitive process versus the bodily sensation? Next, I asked them to tell me a story of a conflict between their thoughts and bodily sensations when they decided to listen to what the sensations in their body were telling them to do: What happened? What was the result? What meaning did they make out of this experience?

**Methods**

The design of this research involved using narrative inquiry and a story model to explore perceptions and emotional and embodied feelings about reading struggles. The descriptions of these lived reading experiences were shared with family as well as the struggling reader. Emotions related to struggles are complicated to explore and narrative provided an approach that was familiar because it involved telling a personal story. Using a specific story model like the Hero’s Journey (Campbell, 1949/2008) was a familiar story grammar, and it situated the struggling reader as a hero/heroine versus a victim in his/her struggle to read story. Children/youth participants may have experiences with stories but be inexperienced thinking about their own story. In order to help children/youth participants to access memories related to reading, concrete questions were framed from three perspectives: What does it look like when...[insert specific question prompt related to the story model]? What does it feel like when... [insert specific
question prompt related to the story model]? What does it sound like when... [insert specific question prompt related to the story model]?

The rationale for this approach was twofold. First, it was intended to connect descriptive language of an experience to perceptions of reading and associated bodily reactions (if they occurred), especially when the lived experience was stressful. Generally, children and youth respond at a concrete level and relate to sensations in their bodies more than to abstract cognitive concepts that relate to the physiology and neural development of cognitive function (Thompson & Varela, 2001). Thompson and Varela (2001) argue that experiences take place within the whole body as a result of sensory and somatic systems; this process encompasses the relationship between neural dynamics and conscious and situated agents “involving...cycles of inter-subjective interaction which is the recognition of the intentional meaning of actions and linguistic communication” (p. 424). This kind of knowing is shaped by the way an individual interprets sensations within the body, both from interacting with a social system and perception of the self within that system. By providing question prompts that relate to sensations in the body, I tried to make the story model questions concrete.

Second, I used somatic responses paired with thoughts to minimize demands on children/youths’ memories because sensations are paired with information and retrieval of emotionally charged experiences placed less demand on the information processing system (Dehn, 2010; Kizilirmak et al., 2016). Question prompts that helped children/youth connect with their feelings and body responses to the reading process were easier to answer than questions that ask them to analyze their responses to struggling to read. Connecting to feelings and body sensations related to the therapeutic aspect of
narrative theory as White (2007) outlines in his inquiry approach. When children/youth tell stories, they can tell what they feel or how they acted because these are tangible events with a stimulus: sight, bodily sensation, and sound. These senses are reactive to stimuli (e.g., difficulty decoding print) and consequentially their response/reaction to that stimuli (Cranton, 1994). Adults, on the other hand, have a greater cognitive capacity to reflect critically, so their stories have a concrete expression and the possibility of an abstract interpretation.

**Conducting Interviews with Children/Youth**

Based on participant stories, I conducted a series of dialogues within the context of six interview-conversation sessions around a reading challenge with participants regarding whether these embodied experiences were meaningful or could be used when learning occurred. I chose to have the children/youth associate these stories with the emojis associated with the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale (adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016). I wondered if children/youth could discern the bodily sensations and attribute specific meanings to these sensations from prior experience, this self-knowledge could increase confidence in their ability to recognize learning strengths from both cognitive and embodied perspectives. The concept that rational thought and embodied sensations represent languages that communicate knowledge required that I integrate the theories of Descartes (1984) and Husserl (1931/2012).

Narrative inquiry was an effective methodological approach because children/youth participants located their feelings and emotions within stories. The developed question prompts using Campbell’s (1949/2008) Hero’s Journey as a conceptual framework helped me to initially engage children/youth participants in telling
their stories. This framework was complemented by White’s (2007) narrative inquiry approach that facilitated the recollection of memories related to struggles with reading by talking about them within a context of new reading task (Call to Action), frustration when difficulties arose (Trial and First Failure), and success (First Success, Grand Trial, and Revelation). Children and youth participants had the opportunity to tell their stories in a particular way for a particular purpose. As a phenomenological researcher, I documented these narratives as data: digital recordings used to capture the dialogue; Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scales (adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016) for child/youth participants’ emotional reactions; artifacts created within and brought from outside the interview-conversation sessions; and observation notes of children/youths’ movements, gestures, non-representational responses, as they experienced and recounted their stories. In observing these subtle bodily and facial cues, I made observational notes on how they experienced their struggles and the deficit framings that they experienced of their reading processes and practices. Since there can be no truly definitive telling of a story because people experience events and recall memories in diverse, subjective ways, informed by histories, backgrounds, cultures, et cetera, Campbell’s (1949/2008) story framework was the constant in analyzing the stories. The use of dialogue during the telling of the stories allowed for the possibility of alternative stories (White, 2007) to emerge of hidden learning strengths that were embedded in the dominant story of struggle, as participants recounted their lived experiences.

When recounting stories of the past, stories were told from multiple perspectives and in a range of styles. The aim of the research was to help children and youth identify their emotional embodied responses and any awareness that was significant in terms of
their self-perceptions and realization of learning strengths. I used narrative theory as a lens to examine the phenomena of embodiment (Bal, 2009; Chase, 2005; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Denison, 2016), story model to gather stories (Campbell 1949/2008), narrative-inquiry method to thicken descriptions of experiences (Freedman & Combs, 1996; White, 2007), digital recordings of children/youths’ interview-conversation sessions for transcription to capture the steps in modeling of strategies, such as visualizing the thinking process, and asking participants to create or digitally capture images or arts-based artifacts as data (Doherty, 1990; O’Donoghue, 2006). These elements were described in the previous two chapters. The research design applied narrative techniques and visuals to describe a phenomenon—the story of struggling to read and attendant embodied, sensory-laden memories.

The elements of phenomenology and embodiment were drawn on (Husserl, 1931/2012; Merleau-Ponty, 1992/2014; Taipale, 2014) capturing these phenomena through digital recordings of the interview-conversation sessions, making observation notes, using an Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale (adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016) for feelings, and dialogic-based interviews to access emotional and embodied responses to reading struggles for both child/youth during the interview-conversation sessions and parent participants through informal conversations after the sessions with their children/youth and formal interviews apart from the six interview-conversation sessions. Phenomenology of embodiment and a transcendent phenomenology lens served as secondary theories. They complement narrative theory because I have connected the description of lived experience to the three worlds based on Campbell’s (1949/2008) monomyth and Husserl’s static, genitive, and transcendent
phenomenological lenses. Since I am studying one specific phenomenon of embodied emotions of reading in a learning context versus observing reading behaviour in all reading environments, home, school, and community, phenomenology is not the informing theory of the research study, instead I am looking at the phenomenon of embodied emotions to perceived reading challenges during an interview-conversation session while exploring possible learning strengths (i.e., the phenomena of transcendence) that the child/youth participant may use implicitly.

Campbell’s (1949/2008) story model was used as a metaphorical tool/heuristic and as a guide for the question prompts, whereas White’s (2007) narrative inquiry approach was used in asking questions about statements the struggling readers and their families made about their experiences. The lived reading-experiences and embodied emotions of the research participants were explored while moving through these experiences with them using the story model of Campbell and inquiry method of White. After identifying felt emotions and embodied sensations to stories and memories of reading struggles, I asked child/youth participants to create or describe an image or multimodal text to materialize their emotional and embodied responses.

I approached this research from a poststructuralist viewpoint because it lent itself to alternative methods to evaluate emotionality, dialogues, and multi-voiced texts—language and visuals (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Metaphor allowed parents to see the child/youth and the child/youth to look at themselves as the mythical heroic figure in their own stories. It was based on an argument that Campbell made, stating that by using metaphor a life experience can be examined through the lens of the Hero’s Journey. Metaphor became a device to connect these two experiences through storytelling and use
of visual artifacts as illustrations (i.e., mythical hero/heroine with the child/youth’s lived reading experience with learning to read) where the child/youth participants could share abstract inner world of beliefs and emotions by becoming the hero/heroines in their own story.

By using the Hero’s Journey model as a story grammar framework, six interview-conversation sessions were completed. These sessions involved working on an authentic reading task using conversational interviews, taking detailed observation notes during and after the tutoring-style interview conversation sessions, and inviting the children/youth participants to create visual artifacts that depicted their thoughts and/or embodied and emotional experiences of their reading struggles. Separate interviews were conducted with the parent participants to gather the history of their child/youth’s reading experiences and to invite them to tell their story of their child/youth’s reading struggles and provide visuals. This approach allowed the four parents and children/youth participants to tell their stories their own way, and arts data collection allowed them to materialize these stories in a visual format. The phenomenon of embodiment emerged as the lived reading experiences of struggling readers along with their parents, as the family tried to find strategies to improve reading skills, and their embodied responses if solutions were challenging or not found. When the family participants discussed the emotional impact of struggling to read, data emerged that were unexpected and some parents’ perspectives were quite different then their child/youth’s perspectives around challenges. Examining embodied emotions while reading and creating a narrative about these experiences represented a gap in current literature on the impact of emotions on reading development because reading researchers have traditionally focused on
quantitative research designs that yield data that can be statistically analyzed (J. Rowsell, personal communication, July 19, 2017).

**Overarching Research Questions**

The overarching research questions involved the effect of emotion on cognitive perceptions and bodily experiences of the reading process, and how a reader who struggles (and her/his family) make meaning of this struggle through narrative. The following questions were used to examine the perceptions of reading challenges by struggling readers and their families:

**Main Research Question**

1. How does a dialogic approach to conducting research illuminate children and youths’ struggles with learning how to read? Does it lead to discoveries by children/youth, parents, and IPA-researcher about emotional knowledge and learning strengths that are exhibited through embodied responses? Why or why not?

**Subquestions**

2. How does Joseph Campbell’s Hero’s Journey as a metaphoric device elicit stories about reading struggles (from children and youth) and familial stories about reading struggles? In what ways does the metaphor create a metacognitive and embodied-emotional awareness of reading difficulties for children and youth and their families?

3. What emotions and bodily sensations do children and youth participants experience while creating visual artifacts (e.g., digital pictures of reading spaces, diagrams of metaphors related to reading, etc.) based on their perceptions and
emotional reactions to reading tasks? How are these visual artifacts used?

**Situating the Research Study**

There is a tendency in literature and reading theory to present cognitive models without an account of affective dimensions of reading (Greenspan, 1997; Jalongo & Hirsh, 2010; Lyons, 1999). This study attempted to redress this gap in literature by focusing on emotions, embodiment, and bodily-sensation experiences with reading using a dialogic approach. To do so, four families were involved by asking family members to attend an initial interview, a storytelling session where parent(s) shared their role as a Magic Helper (Campbell 1949/2008), six interview-conversation sessions, and a final interview with parent(s) where the parents talked about their experiences with their child/youth’s reading stories, emotions, and possible trauma related to learning literacy. The interview-conversation sessions involved meeting individually with the child/youth participant who struggled with the reading process to explore perceptions of reading, embodied emotions, and learning strengths while completing a school related reading task that the child/youth and parent(s) identified as challenging. These interview-conversation sessions with myself as the IPA-researcher involved modeling and then co-creating with the child/youth participant a strategy that the child/youth participant could apply independently at school when completing a reading related task. As the IPA-researcher, I was interested in gathering information about the experiences of the children/youth participants as a function of using this co-created strategy and how it impacted their perception of themselves and their reading story. I was interested in illuminating the reading story and emotions around reading, and whether the creation of a personal strategy that the struggling children/youth participants could use independently during a
reading task would change their self-stories. I was also interested in how change occurs: How do self-stories change?

Van Manen (1997) suggests collecting data through recordings and written responses to capture vicarious experiences with digital recordings, drama, poetry, and novels or reading. In my research, we did not film participants but used film/YouTube, drama, and novels to discuss learning potential and experiences. For each meeting, I digitally audio-recorded the interviews and I made chart paper, laptops, and iPads available for visual and multimodal work. The first interviews allowed family members to tell their history with reading. This initial meeting and storytelling involved hearing the separate stories of the children/youth and parents. In particular, this meeting allowed parents to talk about their perceptions, concerns, and emotions about their children/youths’ reading challenges without the children/youth listening to these stories. The interview meetings with the children/youth were integrated within the six interview-conversation sessions and involved modeling and developing a strategy that the child/youth who struggled with reading could use. These sessions required “the researcher to bring personal experiences into the study, the recording of significant statements, and the development of descriptions to arrive at the essences of the experiences” (Creswell, 2007, p. 236). A separate interview with the parents allowed them to create a narrative about their child/youth using the Magic Helper element of the Hero’s Journey story model (Campbell, 1949/2008).

The final interviews involved reviewing the stories that were created to discuss what might have changed or might not have changed based on whether personal strengths and reading strategies were created and used independently. Campbell’s (1949/2008)
mythical representation of the Hero’s Journey story model provided a creative approach to discussing emotion-laden experiences by research participants. However, I used this model more for organizing where the children/youth were in their process of awareness of learning strengths than as an actual task where the children/youth would write their story. The rational for the initial presentation of the research using a storytelling format was based on the work of White (2007), and his narrative inquiry approach, which allowed family participants to externalize the reading challenge and be more objective about their lived-experiences. In this case, children/youth and their families became mythical characters talking about a journey into learning to read and the challenges that were faced, new skills acquired through discussion of personal strengths and challenges, and reflection through discussion questions of the practice of personal strategies used to enhance reading skills. I captured the reactions to these activities through digital audio-recording of the dialogues with parents and children/youth participants and the use of the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale (adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016) to measure children/youths’ emotions during the interview-conversation sessions. The recorded interviews were a source of data on the stories and reactions of the parent participants to their child/youth’s struggles with lived reading-experiences and associated embodied emotions.

Through digital recordings, I captured the text of the children/youth and family participants and analyzed the verbal interactions within the text that was created through the interpretive phenomenological approach. This analysis was in relationship to specific elements of the mythical story model. For parents, their role as Magic Helpers (Campbell 1949/2008) mapped onto the Hero’s Journey monomyth. In discussing with all participants their reading stories, the use of Campbell’s (1949/2008) two worlds (i.e., the
inner world of emotions, beliefs, values and self-perception, and the outer world of events and social interactions) helped situate the external observable activities as belonging in the *Ordinary/Outer World* so that a distinction could be made between cognitive related reading tasks and inner emotional responses to those tasks. These two world images were used as discussion topics for how children/youth participants experienced and interpreted these reading activities. Questions emerged based on these observations: Did these activities that were related to reading trigger emotional changes and changes in self-perception? What kind of emotions and self-perceptions occurred through these lived reading-experiences? These lived reading-experiences (van Manen, 1997) provided an opportunity to explore how four children/youth identify with the struggle to read, and the impact, if any, on the children/youth when they struggle to learn to read. Metaphor allowed children/youth participants to be the mythical heroic figure in their own stories. It was based on an argument that Campbell (1949/2008) made stating that using metaphor life experiences can be examined through the lens of the Hero’s Journey. Metaphor becomes a device to connect these two experiences through storytelling (i.e., mythical hero/heroine with children/youths’ lived experience with learning to read) where the children/youth can share abstract inner-world of beliefs and emotions by becoming the hero/heroines in their own story by using the Hero’s Journey model as a story grammar framework. To document emotional and embodied feelings, I took detailed observation notes applying Wolcott’s (2009) interpretative framework whereby the left side of every journal page focuses on objective observations and the right-hand side of the page focused on embodied sensations. These observations were incorporated in Appendix L (*The Hero’s Journey Embodied-Phenomenon Theoretical-Connection*).
Summary) for the children/youth and related to Campbell’s (1949/2008) monomyth and connections to my theoretical framework through analysis of the data.

In order to investigate the research questions, White’s (2007) approach to narrative inquiry combined with aspects of phenomenology as a tool was applied. White advocates for participants to create their own vocabulary to describe a lived experience, and van Manen (1997) suggests that an interpretive approach makes it impossible for the researcher to bracket personal experience because she is part of the text (the text being created by a dialogical interaction between the researcher and participants). According to Creswell (2007), “the standard writing of qualitative text has expanded to include split-page writing… theatre…[and] drawing” (p. 179). Arts methods were used to have participants visualize images to help express their thoughts and feelings.

The Research Context

The Learning Lab provides support to numerous families who are accessing the Lab because of struggles with reading. Parents are aware that the Lab does research and that they may be invited to participate. The research took place in the Lab and in the Centre for Multiliteracies (which is connected to the Lab) because these spaces have created feelings of positive affect for these participants in the past. According to Creswell (2015), the use of the Lab fits his description of purposeful sampling: “researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand central phenomenon” (p. 205). The Lab is a location that has numerous families seeking support for reading difficulties and allows for gender and age diversity within my target population of children and youth struggling with reading.
The Participants

According to Creswell (2007), there is a challenge in the selection of participants, and the researcher’s ability to suspend (i.e., bracket) personal experiences. Participants need to be carefully chosen, so they have experienced a common phenomenon—struggling with reading in my research. The rationale for this involves the researcher being able to “forge a common understanding” (Creswell, 2007, p. 62). However, van Manen (1997) suggests that in an interpretive phenomenological approach (IPA) it is not possible to separate the researcher from the active role taken in asking questions to help the researcher make sense of a participant’s lived experience as the participant is trying to make sense of that experience (i.e., trying to complete a challenging reading task).

According to Smith and Osborn (2007), “a two-stage interpretation or a double hermeneutic is involved. The participants are trying to make sense of their world; the researcher is trying to make sense of the participants trying to make sense of their world…IPA combines an empathic hermeneutics with a questioning hermeneutics…IPA is concerned with trying to understand what it is like, from the point of view of the participants…asking critical questions of the texts from participants…” What is the person trying to achieve here? Do I have a sense of something going on here that maybe the participants themselves are less aware of?” (p. 53)

LeVasseur (2003) suggests that being present to be curious and reflective of what is happening may require a redefining of the terms “bracketing” or “epoche.” White’s (2007) approach of asking participants to use their own vocabulary to describe and interpret an embodied emotion allowed children/youth to create their own unique vocabulary using the emoji scale template was incorporated (see Appendix A), and the
questioning and being curious about children/youth descriptions of their emotions relates to this redefining (i.e., LeVasseur’s curiosity and a reflective researcher approach). Unfortunately, it did not allow for using common language for coding using a computer program.

**Child/Youth Participants**

The participants were chosen from families accessing the Brock Learning Lab reading supports, based on the following criteria: upper middle school or early high school students; students struggling with an aspect of the reading process and reading below their grade for their chronological age; and families who are willing to participate and are supportive of the struggling reader. Although it was not a selection criteria, the children/youth participants also demonstrated a reliance on visual memory (i.e., they use pictures to help create meaning when reading), and the ability to articulate their thoughts and feelings. Although this was a common attribute among the participants this was not a selection criteria for participating in the research.

The specific participants were four families who had a longstanding tutoring connection with the Brock Learning Lab. These four families were recruited to explore both learning and emotional experiences with struggling to read and included one or both parents and four children/youth (two male and two female). Previously, these struggling readers had participated in the Brock Learning Lab programs to receive tutoring support for reading. Two youth participants attended high school in Grade 9, one child participant was home schooled by his mother at a Grade 6 level, while the other child participant was a second-language learner in Grade 5 (see Table 1 for profile summaries).
### Table 1

*Children/Youth Participants’ Profiles*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonyms</th>
<th>Profile summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tasha</td>
<td>Sasha is a Grade 5 student who finds reading stressful, especially reading out loud at school. She struggles to read at her grade level. Her perception is that she is a poor reader. She describes a movie playing in her head when she reads at her independent reading level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert</td>
<td>Albert is 11 years old and home schooled at a Grade 6 level. He describes seeing a movie in his head of stories that he hears. He listens to books on tape, and enjoys it. He wants to be able to decode independently, but his independent reading level is at a Primer level based on the San Diego Assessment Tool. His perception of a good reader is someone who can decode print quickly and efficiently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric</td>
<td>Eric is in Grade 9 and is reading independently at a Grade 7 level. He likes to access the Internet and YouTube videos to gather information when reading unfamiliar text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessica</td>
<td>Jessica is in Grade 9 and works hard to achieve good grades. She is reading independently at a Grade 7 level and struggles with decoding. Her perception of a good reader is one who achieves good marks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parent Participants

Before my research was designed, I had interacted with many different parents, children and youth in my study over several years. I was the instructor for EDUC3P45, and I provided advice to my 3P45 students who had a tutoring practicum working with students who struggled with reading at the Brock Learning Lab. I provided feedback to various tutors working with the children and youth in my study on how to approach the reading challenges before they became participants in my research. In previous years, I had supervised the tutoring in the evenings which allowed me to meet the children, youth and their parents. Next, I was the Brock Learning Lab Program Manager for a year prior to the start of my research, which increased my contact and familiarity with the challenges and concerns of these families. This type of contact allowed me to build a rapport with both children/youth and their parents, which increased the comfort level for all participants when they accepted my invitation to be a part of this research initiative.

I interviewed Eric and Tasha’s mothers and both Albert’s parents about their perceptions and lived experiences with reading challenges for their children. Jessica’s mother was not available for formal interviews but conversations after the sessions with Jessica occurred. All the interviews were digitally audio recorded except the conversations with Jessica’s mother. Notes were written based on the information that was shared.

Data Collection

For my research design, I took a phenomenological perspective on data collection by documenting the essence of the lived reading-experiences by connecting the Hero’s Journey to Husserl’s (1931/2012) static, genitive, and transcendent phenomenology. These lived experiences involved perceptions and embodied emotions that related to
Husserl’s phenomenological lens. The interviewing of parent participants separately from their child/youth ensured that all participants had an opportunity to be candid in their responses. When working with the four children/youth participants over the course of six interview-conversation sessions, I acted as the IPA-researcher and worked with an authentic reading task while integrating conversational-interviews using a question-dialogue approach (i.e., the IPA-researcher being curious about what the child/youth does when faced with a reading challenge and a conversation developed out of a question that was digitally recorded for later analysis).

In order to capture these experiences, the following data collection tools were employed: (a) digital audio recorded interviews; (b) visual artifacts; (c) detailed observation notes—IPA-researcher reflection journal; and (d) Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale (adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016). During the parent and interview-conversation interviews, I took notes and digitally audio recorded our sessions; these interviews were transcribed thereafter by me. The children/youth participants were encouraged to describe or create multimodal artifacts in the format of drawings, and/or their memories of reading struggles while the parent(s) participants were interviewed and invited to provide any visuals of positive reading spaces and descriptions of reading struggles for their child/youth. Hence, the corpus of data was conversational interviews, observation notes, visual and multimodal artifacts, parent conversational informal and formal interviews, and my own reflexivity that is summarized in the Data Collection Timetable (see Table 2). Thus, this collaboration involved preliminary interviews, six interview-conversation sessions, and digital or graphics that represented experiences connected with reading.
Description of Interview Process

The participants were drawn from the Brock Learning Lab tutoring program and involved parents and their children/youth who have experienced struggles with reading. All participants knew that the focus of the interview-conversation sessions was for the research data collection with actual instructional moments added to help the children/youth to explore further learning strengths that emerged during the interview conversations. Previous experience with these children/youth and parents gave a rich background of regarding their learning needs, as we had previously worked together in a formal tutor context. In inviting these children/youth and parents to be a part of this study, I was very clear during the consent process that the parents and the children/youth knew our sessions together were in a research capacity. The following is a summary of the interviews as well as the interview-conversation sessions.

- Interview 1: Initial Parent-Only Interviews—this interview was no longer than 60 minutes (see Appendix M [sub-Appendix E])
- Interview 2: Initial Child/Youth-Only Interview—this interview was no longer than 60 minutes (Appendix M [sub-Appendix F])
- Six interview-conversation sessions: Child/Youth-Only—these sessions were one-on-one and each were a half hour in length (Appendix M [sub-Appendix G])
- Interview 3: Second Parent-Only Interview—Story Creation interview was no longer than 60 minutes (Appendix M [sub-Appendix H])
- Interview 4: Parent-Only Interview—Deconstruct of Story Creation and children’s Interview-Conversation Sessions was no longer than 60 minutes (Appendix M [sub-Appendix I])
- Interview 5: This interview did not occur due to lack of availability of parents.
**Interviews 1 and 2.** During Interviews 1 and 2, parent(s) and child/youth participants were asked to describe their history with reading and encouraged to think about using artifacts and images related to reading that represent specific emotions, and why these representations were considered positive/negative in terms of their associated feelings and perceptions. These visuals and descriptions provided a stimulus for dialogue about the families’ histories and relationship to the reading process. These initial interviews eased the participants into the phases of the study.

Interview 2 (occurring during the first interview-conversation session) for the child/youth prepared them for the six interview-conversation sessions during which time the child/youth participant had an opportunity to describe her/his emotions associated with the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale (adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016; Appendix A). During Interview 3 (the second interview for the parents—separate), the parents were asked to tell their narrative of their child/youth’s reading experience which focused on Campbell’s (1949/2008) Magic Helper part of his story model.
### Table 2

**Data Collection Timetable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Tools</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Submission of Ethics to Brock and Resubmission for Amendments (see Appendices K and L)</td>
<td></td>
<td>May 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Informal Recruiting of Participants</td>
<td></td>
<td>May 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Initial Interviews 1 and 2 with Parents and Child/Youth Participants held at the Centre for Research in Multiliteracies – Brock University to provide privacy for interviews (60 minutes).</td>
<td>Digital audio-recorder, paper, pen, and laptop</td>
<td>June 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Six Interview-conversation sessions (60 minutes) and researcher’s reflections about participants at the Brock Learning Lab:</td>
<td>Digital audio-recorder, flipchart paper, SMART board, iPads, laptops, digital camera, textbooks and materials from school assignment. Use of Emotion Tracker APP to check in on feelings at beginning of interview-conversation sessions and during interview-conversation sessions; Stress-Behavioral Checklist created by IPA-researcher based on Riquelme and Montero (2013): Movement, Attention Shifting, Asking for Assistance with reading task. Emoji feeling app (Chen, 2017) that was incorporated into the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale (adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016,</td>
<td>September 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step</td>
<td>Task Description</td>
<td>Equipment Required</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Third and fourth interviews with parents and child/youth participants separately (not longer than 60 minutes)</td>
<td>Digital audio-recorder, paper, pen and laptop</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Compilation of interviews and research with participants</td>
<td>Computer, laptop</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Analysis of qualitative data and writing of chapters four, five, and six: Looking for patterns in responses between children/youth and how they may change over the interview-conversation sessions; reviewing IPA-researcher journals to see if there are themes that appear; looking at the original research questions and the transcripts, visual artifacts and stories created by participants to see if patterns emerge. Look for dominant stories of participants and any alternative stories that may emerge. Used two independent coders for auditor reliability in identifying themes from transcript analysis.</td>
<td>Auditors, laptop</td>
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Interview 4 (the concluding interview with the parents) provided an opportunity to dialogue on the interview-conversation sessions. For example, we talked about the child/youth participant’s reading/learning strengths and weaknesses, which were perceived by the parent as affecting the child/youth.

During the interviews, all participants were asked to describe artifacts or images that represented their experiences with reading. For example, Albert described using digital recordings of books as his favourite way of “reading” and reading books (i.e., decoding printed text) as his least favourite. Some parents provided visual artifacts that related to their perception of their child/youth’s favourite reading space. Families were also provided with an “Information Sheet on Spaces and Places” explaining the nature of acceptable images (i.e., spaces only with no identifiable head shots or images of individuals; see Appendix M [sub-Appendix K]). These described artifacts, images, and/or spaces were used to focus a portion of the interview on emotions and perceptions of struggling to read (O’Donoghue, 2006). During the preliminary interview, I explained and modeled Campbell’s (1949/2008) story model and the rationale for using it with the children/youth.

**Parent participant interviews 1, 3, and 4.** The parents’ Interview 1 involved asking them to describe the history of the struggles their child/youth had with reading. Specific question prompts were asked when appropriate within the context of storytelling versus answering a question. This method was intended to use storying as a more comfortable approach to talk about a possible emotionally charged topic—their child/youth’s struggles with reading. During Interview 1, the parents were invited to think about artifacts related to their child/youth’s struggles and successes with reading and be
prepared to discuss them at the next session. The parents did not need a digital camera, as they had their own devices that they could use to take pictures of spaces believed to create positive and negative experiences with reading for their child/youth to discuss during Interview 3. Also, it prepared the parent participants for their second interview (i.e., Interview 3 in the research design) during which time they elaborated on their child/youth’s struggling to read experience from their perspective. The main focus of this interview was their role as Magic Helper using the Campbell (1949/2008) story model.

In Interview 4, the parents had an opportunity to talk about their perceptions of their child/youth’s approach to reading, what they do when there is a struggle, and how the parent is affected by this struggle. The data collected from the parents were from digitally audio recorded interviews and were analyzed for themes. All stories told, interview dialogue transcripts, and visuals created constituted data. A debrief of their child/youth’s interview-conversation sessions was included in Interview 4.

**Conducting Interviews with Parents**

In order to complete the parent interviews, parents were offered different formats, from face-to-face to phone interviews to email correspondence. The parent interviews provided an understanding of the participants from a familial perspective. The parent interviews provided an opportunity for parents to offer background from their perspective and experiences with their child/youth: initial reading experiences, emotions that emerged toward reading, a favourite space their child/youth chose for reading, their role as a Magic Helper, and a debrief regarding their child or youth’s experiences and emotions that occurred during the interview-conversation sessions, as well as emerging learning strengths. As the researcher, I had prepared specific questions to ask parents because I anticipated that interviews would be linear and follow a question answer
format. I organized the questions to follow the story framework of Campbell (1949/2008). However, I learned from working with the children and youth that it was important to let parents tell their stories from their lived experiences: while watching their children struggle with the reading process, trying to provide support, seeking help for their child/youth, and observing behaviours which shaped their perceptions of their child/youth’s struggles. Not all the elements of Campbell’s (1949/2008) framework were part of the stories shared, and I did not want to force the parents to talk about something that interrupted the flow of the story they wanted to share with me.

**Interview 2: Child/youth.** This initial interview (during the first interview-conversation session) involved asking the child/youth participants to tell her/his story of any struggles she/he had with reading. This initial interview was similar to the parents’ in terms of introducing the study’s purpose and asking the children/youth to talk about their story of reading. The story prompts associated with the Campbell (1949/2008) story model were also introduced. The difference between the parent interviews and children/youths’ interviews were that the children and youth were asked to describe emotions using the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale (adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016).

**Child/youth six interview-conversation sessions details.** In addition to the initial interview, the children/youth participants were asked to participate in six interview-conversation sessions where we discussed how they approached a reading task that was challenging while working on an authentic reading task. I explained before the sessions began the use of the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale (adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016) that uses five emoji facial expressions (Chen, 2017) as a
visual-prompt and emotional check-in. During the interview-conversation sessions, a discussion developed regarding how to approach the authentic reading task that varied between child/youth participants: a novelprinted text that needs to be read; a creative story to be written and studying for a test; learning spelling words and comprehension strategies for reading. The Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale was used before, during, and at the end of each interview-conversation session to allow the children/youth an opportunity to gauge feelings based on reading tasks. For each child/youth, if something occurred where the child/youth had a moment of realization, I asked her/him to report feelings using the scale as well. There were other resources available for the child/youth to use, such as the SMART board, iPads, flipchart paper, pencil and paper, and computers to capture the work that was done during the interview-conversation sessions. Throughout each interview-conversation session, I digitally audio-recorded the session and asked the child/youth about his or her thinking while doing the reading related task (i.e., metacognition) and any emotions or thoughts that the task stimulated (and if so, what they were, and how they were perceived by the child/youth?).

Before the first interview-conversation session, I asked the child/youth participant to select an authentic reading task to engage and motivate learning (Gambrell, 2011). At the beginning of the first interview-conversation session, I asked the children/youth questions about what she/he felt success would look like on this task, what the school said success would look like (this would be based on the instructions associated with the task), and what the children/youth thought parents would think success looked like? By completing an authentic reading task and having discussed the child/youth’s perception of success, there was the opportunity for the children/youth to increase metacognitive
awareness of themselves as learners in relationship to the task demands. The purpose was to explore with the child/youth through dialogue how she/he experienced emotions when facing a challenge and what strengths emerged. If these strengths emerged, I queried to find out whether the child/youth was aware of this strength and how it was experienced.

In some cases, entering into a dialogue with the child/youth about thought processes or moments where something changed in approaching a reading task, and deliberately pausing to discuss that moment of change, led the child/youth to recognize a learning strength. The questions and responses that were asked of the child/youth participant, and the results of the interview-conversation sessions were shared with the parents during Interview 4. Appendix L summarizes how the experience of discovering a learning strength occurred by following Campbell’s (1949/2008) conceptual framework of the Hero’s Journey and the complex interactions between the three different worlds and how this is supported by the theoretical framework.

There were three key stages of the research and Campbell’s (1949/2008) Hero’s Journey served as a metaphoric heuristic to depict the process visually. According to O’Donoghue (2006):

Arts-based educational research denotes a research methodology that is devoted to artistic practices and forms of research. Today, it encompasses a diverse range of theoretical and conceptual underpinnings including autobiographical inquiry, narrative inquiry, ethnodrama, performative inquiry, arts informed research, scholartistry, and a/r/tography. Likewise, it embraces multiple ways of “data collection,” “analysis,” and “representations” such as autobiography, poetry, fictional storytelling including the novel, theatrical plays, musical compositions,
and visual art to name a few. (n.p.)

My research method followed both Creswell’s (2007) and O’Donoghue’s (2006) descriptions, and the moments spent interacting with struggling readers produced learning strategies that involved drama for writing stories with Jessica; visualization and musical rhythm involving tapping as a spelling support for Tasha; and drawing/visual art to depict the Castle of the Mind for Eric. Question prompts were used to help children/youth and their parents to describe their lived reading-experiences (see Appendices H and I) using Campbell’s (1949/2008) story model divided into three sections (see Figure 1). These sections reflected story grammar elements of beginning, middle, and end and acted as an informal interview guide (see Appendices I and J). For each section, simplified question prompts were created to help structure the narrative of the participants. These prompts were based on Campbell’s segmenting of the Hero’s Journey into distinct sections. After the initial interviews, the children/youths’ narratives were not detailed enough to act as a framework for the participants to create a storybook or movie. However, they were analyzed for inductive themes that looked at “within the explicit or surface meanings of the data and the analyst is not looking for anything beyond what a participant has said or what has been written” (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 84). The first part of the research involved initial interviews with parent participants discussing the reading history of their child/youth and a second interview involving the creation of the parents’ hero/heroine’s journey story of their child/youth that focused on their role as Magic Helper, and a final interview to debrief regarding the interview-conversation sessions and learning strengths that emerged.
The research tools that I used to conduct the research were: 1) interviews that were transcribed; 2) drawings produced during interview conversations; 3) anecdotal notes written over the course of the research. These tools were used for the second part of the research involved inviting struggling readers to come to the Learning Lab to participate in six one-hour interview-conversation sessions to capture through digital recordings, drawing on paper, and arts-based data collection the experiences of possible SupraOrdinary Moments (i.e., epiphanic phenomena; see Appendix G), as they worked through an authentic reading task. This authentic reading task was an academic task that the struggling reader had chosen to work on and involved using specific reading skills to complete. For example, reading a chapter of a textbook or novel and being able to complete an assignment provided by the school using these materials, or studying a spelling list. By using tasks the children/youth had selected, there was increased motivation because it was a task that they needed to complete and that they found challenging to complete on their own (Gambrell, 2011; Vygotsky, 1933/1978, p. 86). As a IPA-researcher observing the children/youth, this authentic reading task became the source of exploring their thoughts and feelings around how they would complete the task and what learning strengths they may or may not have in relationship to the task requirements. Once again, as stated earlier, I took ethnographic-style fieldnotes in the style of Wolcott (2009), hence I need not use a formal protocol to conduct observations. Instead, I divided by researcher notes into description in one column and interpretation in the other in the style of ethnographic fieldnotes recommended by Wolcott (2009).

Reading tasks with each participant were idiosyncratic in that each participant had different types of reading styles and struggles and together, during conversations, and
engaged in arts-based activities, we talked through reading some key reading moments.

One strategy that had multiple applications and was employed was the Close Reading Strategy/Technique (Fisher & Frey, 2014) where the struggling reader initially needed to understand what was being asked by the teacher in the task. I used Close Reading principles to increase metacognitive and emotional awareness of their embodied struggles. Close Reading as an evidence-based strategy allows for using short reading tasks and working with the children/youth as they read the text, a triad relationship occurs between the IPA-researcher, the child/youth, and the text or task. This approach is an explicit strategy that is teacher-lead. I used this approach in my research by allowing children/youth to choose reading materials that they want to work with that may be beyond their current independent reading level. The Close Reading technique involves a scaffold support where the teacher works with students using dialogue to discuss and analyze text using open-ended questions to discover the meaning embedded in the text (Vygotsky, 1933/1978). This questioning approach serves a dual purpose because these questions target the specific reading task but also how the process of doing the reading task is experienced in the body of the reader. The cognitive results involve new ideas/perspectives being synthesized. In addition, the embodied emotion experienced with this new perspective creates a SupraOrdinary space where the IPA-researcher and child/youth may experience this success together. The IPA-researcher is a witness of this moment of realization leading to a new awareness of personal learning attributes. This learning strength emerges not only as cognitive connections/thoughts but as bodily sensations. To discover this new knowledge, persistence is required by the children and youth and is possible because of the social interaction with the IPA-researcher during the interview-conversation sessions.
This triad of the child/youth, the IPA-researcher, and text contributes equally to opening the possibility of a moment of realization. Metaphorically speaking, the child/youth is the Hero/Heroine, the text or task represents the journey to uncover learning strengths through the challenges of the complex text, and the IPA-researcher acts as a Magic Helper being curious and asking questions that allows the child/youth to make personal connections that creates the potential for a SupraOrdinary World/Space to open that is shared and involves bodily sensations. My role as the IPA-researcher was to ask questions, check in by using the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale (adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016) when that moment occurs, and digitally audio-record the child/youth’s narration of the experience for later transcription and analysis. This social constructivist experience of dialogue increased persistence by mediating between the continued struggle and little success, which previously lead the child/youth to be disinclined to continue because of the frustration experienced with the challenging reading process (Bernacki, Byrnes, & Cromley, 2012; Pföst, Dörfler, & Artelt, 2012). I hoped to theorize and formalize this process of dialogic intervention using narrative through this research.

Through the interview-conversation sessions, participants had to figure out what they knew that they could apply to complete a task. Dialogue was the method used as a strategy to ask questions about children/youths’ thinking and feelings during authentic reading tasks. If they discovered something new about themselves as a reader or learner, then this experience was captured through the digital recording or by using visual artifacts, and both sets of data were then revisited for themes. The dialogue captured through digital recordings and/or use of visuals about their thought process provided cognitive prompts that allowed children/youth to focus their attention on the steps related to
the authentic reading task (e.g., What is the reading task? What do you need to do first…second…third, etc.)? The research narrative involved the task and reflecting on their thinking (i.e., metacognition). I would introduce the authentic reading task by asking the child/youth to tell a story about how they usually approach this task. The use of a story to revisit a task was emotionally engaging and allowed them to describe a lived-experience that provided information on possible innate learning strengths. Given that my role in these interviews was not a formal tutor but as an interviewer having a conversation about a challenging reading task. I occupied the role as a researcher first and foremost and if instructional questions were asked, then I would offer some, very occasional tutoring help.

Narrative inquiry was the appropriate research method that helped to story perceptions and the inner processing of experienced emotions that occurred when children/youth and their families faced reading challenges. I wanted to contribute to the literature that acknowledges the role of metacognition and embodied sensations associated with emotion on literacy and perception (Leander & Boldt, 2013; Lewis & Tierney, 2013). By using an authentic reading task, I focused on children and youths’ emotions, embodied sensations, and felt/lived experiences with struggles that occurred during involvement with this task, and the impact of this struggling experience and discovery of personal strengths on their self-awareness and perceptions. A rapport with the families existed because I had worked with three of the four children/youth participants and their families as part of a year-long larger study on iPad reading and understanding embodied engagements during literacy practices (Rowsell et al., 2017; Rowsell & Wohlwend, 2016). As a researcher on the project, I conducted interviews with three of these research participants and as a result, I knew that they could articulate
affective/emotional and embodied responses to reading struggles. This background informed my work with them on this study.

Data collection therefore involved conducting interviews, collecting drawings as research artifacts, and significant attention to embodied sensations during interview conversations. In order to analyze emotions, beyond anecdotal notes and phenomenological observations, each child/youth was encouraged to create her/his own vocabulary to describe emotions relative to the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale (adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016) and embodied sensations to discovering learning strengths and how they were experienced (White, 2007). The initial transcripts were analyzed by two auditors for verification of consistency in the evaluation of emerging themes. I inductively analyzed themes that emerged in the interview data.

Five Lenses to Prepare for Data Analysis

The data collected through interviews and digital recording of sessions were analyzed based on five lenses: Children/youths’ perceptions of reading development (physiological and neural development); children/youths’ emotions related to the reading process (the emotional response to reading and engagement with the reading process); children/youths’ awareness of their cognitive processes related to memory while reading (i.e., information processing and its effects on the reading process); children/youths’ use of the four-cueing reading systems when reading (Department of Education New Brunswick, 1998; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006a, 2006b); and children/youths’ responses to social interaction during the discussion and creation of reading stories (i.e., social constructivism). The two independent auditors with cognitive and social cultural expertise independently analyzed interviews and identified or examined “the underlying
ideas, assumptions, and conceptualizations – and ideologies - that are theorized as shaping or informing the semantic content of the data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84) that helped identify and confirm two major themes and four aggregate subthemes. These themes emerged from the experiences that the children/youth shared by identifying through their language (i.e., semantic analysis) five themes or lenses. Using the five perspectives helped in the creation of the coding system.

A lean coding system was used where a few codes were assigned and reduced to three major themes or categories based on the identification of aggregates of subthemes that the children/youth described that were unique (Creswell, 2007). The major themes were:

- Metacognition and Narrative Framework—The *Ordinary World*
  - Self-awareness of Learning Style and Emotions
  - Embodied Knowing and Emotions
  - Metacognition and Strategy Usage
- Affect Knowledge—The *ExtraOrdinary World*
  - Motivation and Attribution

A phenomenological approach has permeated the inquiry environment. It is not linear and has reformed the relationships between the researcher and research participants (Lincoln, 2005). This approach is fluid and allows for the trading of roles between the researcher and the researched (Fine, Weis, Weseen, & Wong, 2000). For example, poststructuralist critical inquiry generates a relationship that allowed for a variety of paradigms, perspectives, and models. It is complex, as are the lived experiences of struggling readers and their families. According to Lincoln (2005), phenomenology
practitioners and theoreticians “deeply intuit the communitarian qualities of such inquiry [i.e., poststructural critical inquiry] from academy to the communities they see themselves serving” (p. 179). A phenomenological approach with a focus on embodied emotions allows for serving the community of the struggling reader, their family, and their school. Because of the complexities involved in my research, many theorists contributed to my conceptual framework, and I approached my research method as something occurring in the moment—vibrant and not static. I chose a methodology that aims to evict us from comfortable ways of knowing so that we might think more critically about how we do research that is open to, and attends to multiple ways of coming to know, multiple ways of re/presenting, and multiple modes of meaning making. … There is no one given truth, no one way of coming to know anything, or no one way of representing what we know. (O’Donoghue, 2006, n.p.)

Using Campbell’s (1949/2008) story model and allowing children/youth participants to describe and create visual artifacts allowed for data collection that had “multiple ways of re/presenting” (O’Donoghue, 2006, n.p.) their ways of knowing. Asking the struggling readers and their parents to tell stories about the experience of reading and its struggles and using a story model is an oxymoron: it allows participants to tell potentially intimate and emotional stories that may be unsettling by framing it as a mythical story. This changed the perspective and allowed for some distance or, as White (2007) describes, as externalizing the problem and separating individuals who struggle from seeing their struggles as part of their identity. I simultaneously was asking child/youth participants to feel their stories while observing themselves telling and re-
experiencing their stories using narrative (Hua, 2009; Krishnamurti, 1969/2010) and the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale (adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016).

White (2007) talks about individuals using specific vocabulary to describe an experience. I would listen for words or phrases that were repeated and then ask questions about those specific words or phrases. Also, I explained Campbell’s (1949/2008) story model of the Hero’s Journey and the specific steps of this journey to all participants, and I created story prompts to help guide this part of the research by using Campbell’s description of what happens at the different steps of the Hero’s Journey as a focus for creating a story around each step. For example, when the Hero/Heroine meets the Magic Helper, who does the parent/child/youth identify as having that role? What did the Magic Helper do to help? (See Appendices H and I)

**Narrativizing Reading Events**

Studies have shown that this narrative ability is linked to success in acquiring literacy skills (Catts, Hogan, & Fey, 2003; Connor, Alberto, Compton, O’Connor, & National Center for Special Education Research, 2014; Garner & Bochna, 2010; Griffin, Hemphill, Camp, & Wolf, 2004; McCardle, Scarborough, & Catts, 2001; Scarborough, 2001; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Tabors, Snow, & Dickinson, 2001). Since I was asking children and their families to create their own narratives using an approach where they tell their stories through a scribe/digital audio-recorder versus writing them, I wanted to capture data that would be analyzed for trends and semantic and latent themes.

To interpret interview, artifactual (drawings), and observational notes, the stories were organized within the framework of Campbell’s (1949/2008) monomyth using the headings outlined in Figure 1, and the story creation allowed children/youth participants
an opportunity to reflect on their reading experiences. The stories served two purposes: to provide raw qualitative data that could be analyzed and to be an artifact that could be used as a prompt for reflection and re-storying of the lived reading experience.

The research method of using narrative provides an opportunity to have the participants tell a lived reading-experience story and then revisit that experience as a reflection. During the deconstruction of the story in the debriefing section of the fourth interview for parents and sixth interview-conversation session for children/youth, there was the potential for reinterpretation of the original story from a perceived experience of emotional struggle/distress or trauma to a journey into discovering learning strengths—without the struggle this realization could not have been possible. Prompts were used that helped with this part of the story deconstruction such as asking about how it felt, or what participants were thinking at that time (see Appendices H and I).

By conducting the study with a narrative approach, I mirrored the framework of stories that parents and children/youth follow when telling a story. Also, I mirrored what was viewed differently—that relation between the events being narrated and the event of narration. A method of narrative analysis that focused on the experience of embodied emotions in terms of the emotive qualities of human experience made possible, as Guba and Lincoln (2005) describe, “the abstractions of a social science far gone with quantitative descriptions of human life and to capture those elements that make life conflictual, moving, problematic” (p. 206).

At the end of the six interview-conversation sessions and the fourth interview for the parents, a debriefing with parents about their child/youth’s experience of learning, new personal strategies occurred. Specific themes were identified and organized by
theoretical framework (see Appendix I). This identification of themes involved a bottom-up approach to coding the data where the coding involved desegregation of textual data into segments, so the text similarities and differences could be examined.

**Data Analysis**

Data analysis in a qualitative study involves systematically searching the data collected: transcripts, observation notes, and visual artifacts that have been accumulated to increase the understanding of the lived reading-experience phenomena of the struggling readers and their families (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Coding and categorizing the data collected are a key part of the qualitative data analysis process (Wong, 2008). I was interested in using a bottom-up approach to create codes when themes arose because it allowed for more reflexive intuition versus using a pre-constructed coding scheme (Wong, 2008).

I did a narrative analysis using an inductive approach because this analysis and approach focused on “the ways in which participants use stories to interpret the world” (Savin-Baden & Howell-Major, 2012, p. 444), and it worked with my own reflexivity intuition. I have used two individuals as auditors to provide cross-confirming on the themes that were identified. According to Polkinghorne (1995), this analysis approach allows for capturing the complexities of different experiences and possible contradictions. This approach to analysis relies on “stories as a way of knowing. Stories emerge as data are collected and then are framed and rendered through an analytical process that is artistic as well as rigorous” (Coulter & Smith, 2009, p. 577). It was important after each interview and each meeting to review the digital recordings and observation notes, and sort and code them as soon as possible in order to facilitate the
direction of the next interview-conversation session. As Hitchcock and Hughes (1989) advise:

The more formal process will involve the researcher in breaking down the data where a fairly inductive approach is taken—data being explored in terms of both the general and particular units of meaning displayed within them. The qualitative researcher is looking for patterns, themes, consistencies, and exceptions to the rule. Codes and categories can therefore emerge from the data and become formally identified by the researcher. (p. 296)

According to Jackson and Mazzei (2013), “the ‘I’ of the researcher is always becoming in the process of researching, listening, and writing” (p. 266). They articulate an analysis method that invites thinking about data through theory, which relates to my use of phenomenology of embodiment and Campbell’s (1949/2008) monomyth framework to examine the narrative data that was collected. The premise of this approach was to be curious and question what was heard and how the “I” listened, “questioning our own privilege and authority in listening and telling” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2013, p. 262). As part of the research, reflecting on my own experiences and analyzing how they became moments of realization becomes part of this questioning, listening and retelling, and there emerged themes that are generalized from the details in my perception of the data (Creswell, 2015).

The question prompts gave the children/youth an opportunity to reflect on specific aspects or their lived reading-experiences that affected emotions, bodily sensations, self-perception, beliefs, and values as they related to reading. While the use of separate interviews for parents and children/youth allowed the participants to speak candidly
about their perspectives on reading without concern that the child/youth participants would be affected if the discussion focused on parents’ perceived challenges. The analysis of the transcripts/stories/digital recordings allowed me to see if there were themes that were shared within and between families.

I have taken a non-realist approach to the narrative research, which makes it difficult to triangulate findings. Smith and Deemer (2000) advocate for not setting predetermined specific criteria because then there is room for flexibility and creativity within the research. This approach is in contrast with a criteriologist’s approach that requires a universal set of criteria with which any piece of qualitative research can be judged (Garratt & Hodkinson, 1998).

Finally, my theoretical position has been addressed using narrative inquiry and arts-based data collection, and I believe the congruency between the methodology and methods established rigor and a lens through which to examine data (Caelli, Ray, & Mill, 2003). Themes appeared after the data was collected and analyzed that established the impact of emotions on reading struggles and emotional responses to intervention strategies.

**Validity**

According to Creswell (2014),

Validity [in qualitative research] does not carry the same connotations as it does in quantitative research, nor is it a companion of reliability or generalizability. …Validity is used to suggest determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the readers of an account. (p. 201)
There are a number of validity strategies that researchers can access to ensure the accuracy of findings. I used member-checking with both children and parents, clarification/transparency of researcher bias (i.e., reflexivity), presenting discrepant information (i.e., Jessica never became self-aware through this research approach), peer debriefers (i.e., dissertation proposal meeting with committee feedback and one Learning Lab representative), and thick description (Creswell, 2014).

**Ethical Considerations**

In my ethics application, I have described my selection of participants, method, schedule of interviews, and interview-conversation sessions, and have clarified specific terms. I have included excerpts throughout this chapter with the full ethics in Appendix M (Note: Appendices presented in Appendix M: Approved REB Proposal are cited as sub-Appendices in the dissertation proper.)

The participants for this study were invited to participate in a creative narrative inquiry arts-based approach to explore reading and struggles with reading. The children/youth participated in interview-conversation sessions where their learning strengths when reading were examined and discussed. A letter of invitation was given to families who had participated in the Brock Learning Lab program during the 2016-2017 interview-conversation sessions by email versus in person so that there was no perceived coercion. The parents and children/youth knew both Dr. Rowsell (Ethics designated Principle Investigator, PI) as the former director of the Learning Lab, and Sharon Moukperian (Ethics designated Principle Secondary Investigator, PSI) as the former coordinator of the Learning Lab. However as of Fall 2017, neither the PI nor the PSI were in these positions, so there was not an opportunity to tutor potential participants or
to have direct contact with them.

Since my research methods involved asking questions and capturing in print and with visual images their stories about dealing with reading difficulties, there was the possibility that this research could trigger negative thoughts and emotions. Information on counseling options and educational supports were made available to participants and the risks were discussed before the research began.

**Strengths and Limitations**

I collected stories as data from interviews, interview-conversation sessions, and pictures/diagrams created by participants and digital pictures of reading spaces, and used the digital recordings and observational notes as my main data collection sources. I captured the emotions and perceptions of children/youth participants and their parents involving the struggles with reading and personal learning strengths that the children/youth participants used to help with that struggle. In addition, I hoped through the dialogue occurring during the interview-conversation sessions that participants would experience a level of independence, as they had an opportunity to tell their story and discuss learning approaches while completing an authentic reading task. Using narrative as a way of capturing specific learning moments allowed participants to explore thoughts and emotions around a struggling reading experience and possibly realize that there exists a Magic Helper (Campbell, 1949/2008) within (i.e., personal learning strengths).

**Strengths**

By using a phenomenological embodied approach, I was open to “all types of intuition as equally valid as sources of authority for knowledge” (Husserl, 1931/2012, p. 362), which was a strength of this research design. Documenting stories from a narrative
listening-perspective brought out alternative stories for some children/youth, which was another strength of a narrative methodology. Narrative allowed for researcher curiosity and the use of open-ended questions to help struggling readers and their families to thicken alternative stories (White, 2007) since the alternative story did not support or sustain the dominant story of a problem (or reading problem).

According to Freedman and Combs (1996), “As people begin to inhabit and live out the alternative stories, the results are beyond solving problems. Within the new stories, people live out new self-images, new possibilities for relationships and new futures” (p. 16). Atkinson and Delamont (2007) define this concept as cultural matters having “multiple codings that generate meanings…that is, multiple motivational frames that inform social events and actions” (p. 832). I believe that Campbell’s (1949/2008) description of the Ordinary and ExtraOrdinary Worlds map on to these descriptions: where the Ordinary World relates to the thin story of only describing visible behaviour and details; for example, who did what and when, which represents the dominant story of struggling with reading (Castree, Kitchin, & Rogers, 2013); while the thick description (Freedman & Combs, 1996) of the values and beliefs is related to the ExtraOrdinary World of perceiving an alternative story, within the family reading-stories captured through narrative and dialogue.

**Limitations**

Limitations of this study were that there was no guarantee that the struggling readers and their parents would be able to form different perspectives through the telling of their stories, or that the struggling readers would experience a moment of realization that changes their perspective on the struggles they have experienced in reading. Also,
there was an unknown involving the influence of myself as the IPA-researcher and my ability to listen and be curious in asking questions about reading skills.
CHAPTER FOUR: CHILDREN/YOUTH FINDINGS

The two main goals implicit to this dissertation were to answer the research questions in order to fill in a gap in the literature as it relates to emotions and struggling to read. These answers were obtained: (a) using a dialogic approach to explore the narratives and embodied emotions with children and youth and their parents around struggles with the reading process; and (b) using metaphor and visual artifacts as tools to explore the emergence of metacognitive and embodied-emotional awareness of perceiving learning strengths through embodied emotional reactions to reading struggles and successes. Throughout the dissertation, I have interwoven the metaphor of Campbell’s (1949/2008) monomyth of the Hero/Heroine’s Journey as a conceptual story framework and tool to engage emotions and imagination so that children and youth can look at themselves differently. Namely, they can describe their experiences with reading from the perspective of being a hero or heroine in their own lives because their reading struggles involved cognitive skills but also embodied emotional phenomena that were triggered by having to demonstrate proficiency with a reading skill (Morgan, Farkas, & Wu, 2012). In addition, children/youth and their parents were prompted with questions to tell the story from their respective perceptions of their experiences with learning to read. Chapter five is dedicated to the presentation of the parents’ experiences and findings based on their responses.

This study focused on the phenomena of embodied and lived experiences and perceptions of children and youth who were engaged in an authentic reading task of their choice. Using a narrative approach to engage the children and youth in exploring their thinking and feelings about an authentic reading task, I discovered that personal learning
strengths started to emerge, but they were not necessarily combined with an awareness and independent application of those strengths.

The challenge in describing my findings involves describing both the method and the findings together (especially in Eric’s case) because my methods are closely tied with findings. The process (i.e., a dialogic approach to interviews and conversations) was critical to a change/moment of realization (i.e., abduction/epiphany; see chapter one and Appendix F) happening. In order to understand how that change occurred, the dialogic approach needed to be part of the findings description. Through dialogues and a series of interview conversations, some of the children/youth became more confident and more cognitively aware of their reading strengths and what they needed to work on in their reading specifically and literacy generally. This cognitive awareness was paired with an embodied emotion (i.e., emotions associated with bodily sensations), as the child/youth reflected on both the knowledge of a new learning strength and the embodied-emotional response paired with that knowledge. This resulted in a change in their perception of her/his reading ability.

I opt for the term “we” for my method because I experienced my own moments of realization, which involved reflecting on the dialogic process. I have described this process as part of my findings because my moments of realization coincided with the child/youth’s discovery, and this experience was an unexpected addition to the findings. Whitehead (1928/1978) describes this experience as “how an actual entity becomes, constitutes what that actual entity is; so that the two descriptions of an actual entity are not independent. Its ‘being’ is constituted by its ‘becoming’; This is the principle of process” (p. 53). I am equating the Being as the actual discovery of a new learning
strength and the Becoming was the method/process I used that facilitated this discovery. The process or method is the foundation of Being thought of as Becoming, or as Heidegger (1926/1962) described “Dasein” (p. 27) being-there. It was the process/method of the narrative interaction that led to a change or moment of realization. Creswell (1998) supports this level of detail, as he describes encoding a qualitative narrative as providing “A level of detail that makes the work come alive (verisimilitude…) where the writing seems ‘real’ and ‘alive,’ transporting the reader directly into the world of the study” (p. 170).

Overall Research Findings

The children/youth and parents were unique in the challenges they had on their journey to becoming proficient readers. Before discussing the findings, each child/youth’s profile is presented to provide a context within which to discuss her/his data. This chapter is divided into two sections based on the theoretical framework supporting the research and the associated themes identified through the transcripts of interviews. The findings for each child/youth are discussed within these sections. The main themes are numbered and relate to the theoretical framework and the subthemes are listed underneath. These themes and subthemes emerged as the transcripts and observational notes were reviewed, and they are based on the analysis of the transcripts, images created and my reflexivity:

1. Metacognition and Narrative Theoretical Framework—The Ordinary World:
   - Metacognitive Theme 1: Self-awareness of Learning Style and Emotions
   - Metacognitive Theme 2: Embodied Knowing and Emotions
   - Metacognitive Theme 3: Metacognition and Strategy Usage
2. Affect Knowledge—The ExtraOrdinary World:

- Affect Knowledge Theme: Motivation and Attribution

Within the participant findings sections, I include data pertaining to each child/youth’s narrative during the interview-conversation sessions, whereas her/his Emoji Emotional Engagement Scale (adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016; see Appendix A) responses relating to the main theme, subthemes, and emergence of a personal learning strength were included in the Embodied Knowing and Emotions subtheme although they could also have been included under Affect Knowledge. In addition, my reflective experiences are included in chapter five and observational notes are included throughout this chapter where appropriate. The parents’ responses are reported in chapter five under three themes that emerged from the interview questions. In some cases, the beliefs and attitudes of parents towards struggling with reading complemented student data, and in others, the parents observed behaviours that their children/youth exhibited were positive towards learning, but each parent was not explicitly aware of how to support that behaviour until dialoguing with the IPA-researcher. During the process of data analysis, research questions were revisited that drew on theoretical frameworks such as affect theory (Massumi, 2002, 2015) in order to excavate themes and recurrent motifs. In addition, a detailed description of the children/youths’ description of the emojis using their vocabulary and associated lived experiences was provided.

Case Profiles

Each of the children/youth in this study had struggles with reading but were highly motivated to become proficient readers. In order to understand their individual challenges, brief profiles of each child/youth and her/his family background are provided.
Tasha

Tasha comes from a family of five and lives with both her parents and younger brother and sister. Currently, Tasha has completed Grade 5 but is not reading confidently at grade level although the San Diego Quick Assessment Tool (LaPray, 1978) placed her as being able to sight-read words close to her grade level. Also, English is her second language. Tasha can read in Arabic (right to left directionality) and English (left to right eye tracking), but her mother says she is faster reading in English, and she speaks three languages (Arabic, English, and French). Before the study began, Tasha had her eyes tested and there was no physical issue that would affect her vision.

According to Tasha’s mother, of her three children, Tasha is the child who is struggling with reading. Tasha wants to be a good reader and is highly motivated, but she misses letters, words, and sometimes lines of print when reading. Tasha’s mother shared with me that her own reading was a challenge, and she needs to use yellow paper that allows her to read what is printed on the page as it relieves the pattern glare that causes visual stress and misinterpretation of the words (Allen, Dedi, Kumar, Patel, Aloo, & Wilkins, 2012), so that she does not miss words. This condition is described as “a perceptual dysfunction related to subjective difficulties with light source, luminance, intensity, wavelength, and color contrast” (Blaskey, Sheiman, Parisi, Ciner, Gallaway, & Selznick, 1990, p. 604). Tasha’s mother believes that Tasha has a similar challenge.

During interview-conversation sessions, Tasha tried different font sizes and coloured paper to see if there was a difference in decoding print—darker colours of blue or pink caused a physical reaction in Tasha, as she would jerk away from print on that page. Tasha’s goal for the six interview-conversation sessions was to improve her reading
while my goal was to help her identify a learning strength through metacognition and then be aware if there was an embodied-emotional awareness that accompanied and/or signaled the application of this new strength. If she was aware of this connection between mind and embodied response, she may be able to apply this strength to other learning situations.

**Eric**

Eric comes from a family of four and lives with both his parents and an older sister. Eric’s mother described his development physically and mentally as normal until he was two years old. Eric experienced numerous epileptic grand mal seizures that affected his senses and neurological processes or cognitive development. Eric’s mother advocated for Eric to be held back in Senior Kindergarten because he was not starting to read. At the end of the second year, Eric was almost ready to read. Eric was in his first year of high school during the study; however, he had started coming twice a week to the Learning Lab in Grade 6. Eric’s sessions were different from the other children/youth participants. Eric had attended the Brock Learning Lab for two years, and he recently graduated elementary school and began his first year in high school.

Eric is an abstract and metaphoric thinker. His expressive vocabulary is sophisticated, and he can talk in abstract terms. For these reasons, I believed that I could engage his interest by using Campbell’s (1949/2008) monomyth as a framework for discussing his experiences with reading. The concept of doing research together as co-researchers engaged Eric intellectually and emotionally. Eric considered himself an autodidact (i.e., self-taught) although he would not use that terminology. In the previous two years at the Brock Learning Lab, Eric had demonstrated how he learned when he was curious about a new topic like herbology or poisonous animals. Eric would use the
Internet to access short articles, YouTube videos, and visual images to increase his understanding (Rowsell et al., 2017). Campbell’s (1949/2008) concept of living in two worlds that intersect made sense to Eric: the Ordinary World of authentic reading tasks and the ExtraOrdinary World of personal beliefs and values that emerge from engaging in those reading tasks. He was interested in talking about external experiences involving his learning and his personal values and beliefs about himself as a learner. Eric did not have a specific goal for the six interview-conversation sessions, so each week he would bring in an assignment that he was working on at school and that became the basis of our dialogue.

Albert

Albert was 10 years old during the study and came from a family of four. He lives with his parents and older sister, and is home schooled. There was nothing unusual in Albert’s early development except that he was not speaking at the age of 2; however, boys sometimes are delayed in language compared with girls (Tankersley, 2005). Albert’s father mentioned that they noticed this issue because he used the same sound to point to objects and would say “eeehhh…eeehhh.” When he tried to ask for something like “cereal” it would come out “eee…ooo.” At the age of six, when other children were starting to read around him, Albert was continuously asked, “Can you read this?”

Albert’s parents introduced him to listening to audiobooks because when in the car they played The Vinyl Café stories by Stuart McLean. Albert called him the Storyman. Albert’s older sister also had issues with reading and would cry when asked to read. Both Albert and his sister went through a vision therapy program related to tracking through a local optometrist. The tracking intervention helped Albert’s sister to read; however, this was not Albert’s experience. After my research was completed, Albert had
a psychoeducational assessment completed that came back with a comorbid diagnosis of ADHD Inattentive Type, language disability with executive function, visual processing, phonetic awareness, and visual memory deficits. The assessment indicated strengths in the area of listening comprehension and receptive and expressive language with scores in the 90th percentile. Albert’s parents believe that Albert’s interest in auditory books and the verbal interaction within the family contributed to this relative area of strength.

Albert’s mother is a teacher and chose to work with both children at home. Albert was identifying words at the primer level on the San Diego Quick Assessment Tool (LaPray, 1978) during our first session together; however, his ability to tell a story using story grammar and sophisticated language was superior to his decoding ability. Albert was engaged when any form of technology was incorporated into reading activities at home and during home schooling.

**Jessica**

Jessica comes from a family of four and is a twin. Jessica was in Grade 8 at the time of the research study and reads independently at a Grade 4 level. Jessica has ADHD and has been coming to the Brock Learning Lab for over four years. Jessica is highly motivated to succeed and has a strong work ethic. Her father is a teacher and both parents work with her at home to help her study and complete homework assignments.

Jessica has a strong sense of who she is as a learner and prefers rote learning and repetition as her main study strategy. During her time at the Learning Lab, she was not eager to read printed texts but by using technology like the SMART board, iPad, and computers, Jessica would increase her focus. Jessica’s parents were aware of how important it was for Jessica to be allowed to doodle if she was not actively involved in physically doing a learning task like typing or writing on the whiteboard. Movement
helped Jessica to focus. During the research sessions, Jessica was always provided with a
doodle pad and pen where she would either draw a picture or colour in squares to the
point of the ink bleeding through the paper; however, she was able to listen and respond
to questions while engaged in this doodle activity without it interfering with her ability to
respond. Jessica remarked that not all her teachers were supportive of this strategy for
focusing her attention even when her parents tried advocating for her at the school.

Specific Findings

The following presentation of the research findings includes two sections: (a) Metacognition and Narrative Theoretical Framework—The Ordinary World and (b) Affect Knowledge—The ExtraOrdinary World, each with their respective subthemes. Findings are presented for each of the four children/youth participants: Tasha, Eric, Albert, and Jessica.

Metacognitive and Narrative Theoretical Framework—The Ordinary World

A dominant finding of this research with children and youth concerns
metacognition and analyzing and excavating their narrative data. The overarching
concept of metacognition is divided into three themes: self-awareness of learning,
embodied emotions, and meta-cognition and strategy use. By using a narrative approach,
the research questions provided a focus from within which these themes emerged,
particularly for metacognition.

As a researcher, I accessed each subtheme through a dialogic approach and what emerged was meta-linguistic awareness as participants described their thoughts and experiences in their own words. White (2007) describes meta-linguistics as vocabulary
that is created by the individual and that has specific meanings that the individual
associates with it. The specific foci of the three subthemes are: self-awareness of learning style (Vygotsky, 1986; White, 2007); applying metaphors, images, and movement when discussing thoughts and emotions around a specific reading task (Doherty, 1990; O’Donoghue, 2006); and metacognition and strategy use.

**Metacognitive theme 1: Self-awareness of learning style and emotions.** This subtheme relates to findings that demonstrate the child/youth’s awareness of how she/he learns, what affects learning, and strategies that increase or detract from her/his learning potential. Starting with Tasha, she had an object that she was manipulating throughout our interview-conversation sessions. As the IPA-researcher, I was curious to ask her about the purpose of this object, and she articulated how it helped her to focus. We had a further discussion on the use of various objects and manipulating them in order to keep her attention on the learning task. Tasha could identify the difference between using something to fidget with like a fan or fidget toy and doing something like doodling. Tasha was self-aware that fidgeting increased her ability to focus on a reading task, but doodling distracted from it.

In a dialogue with Tasha about spelling, she identified that spelling was an area that she wanted to improve. Tasha was asked to describe how she would usually study for her spelling tests. Her method was to use repetition and write out the words many times then her mother would test her, and she would then focus on writing out the words that she got incorrect several times. When the IPA-researcher asked her why she found spelling difficult, her responses demonstrate an awareness of her thinking process and cognitive challenges:

Sharon: Do you like spelling?
Tasha: No. It’s not necessarily …ah how do I say this… into me because you have to know the words on top of your head…you have to know exactly the letter and you have to know how to say that letter exactly correct, so it doesn’t go into me all the time.

Sharon: Sometimes when you have to spell in English because you speak three languages, do you find that some of the other languages interfere?

Tasha: Yes. Especially French. (Tasha, October 26, 2017, interview-conversation session two)

We worked together on a visualization strategy to aid in remembering words. Tasha is certain about a connection between her auditory and visual learning style: “I always remember a word that I see a couple of times…when I hear it I think of the word in my head how to spell it” (Tasha, October 26, 2017, interview-conversation session two), and she uses vocabulary like “storage,” “unlock,” “put into an empty out” (Tasha, October 26, 2017, interview-conversation session two) that relates to information processing and recall:

Tasha: I always remember a word that I see a couple of times. There is a little storage for it. Then when someone says the word or I need it, I unlock it from the storage, and it comes to my mind.

Sharon: So, how do you put it into storage in the first place?

Tasha: Umm…when I see a word or hear that word, most likely when I hear it I think of the word in my head how to spell it…then I put it into a storage, then when I see that word I spell it correctly…I empty that word out. (Tasha, October 26, 2017, interview-conversation session two)
Over the years, Tasha has developed a strategy with her spelling to consciously store words that she releases when necessary, which signaled to me not only a cognitive strategy but also an embodied, even emotional strategy that she applied to her learning situations.

Turning now to Eric, during the first session, the IPA-researcher explained the format of the monomyth and how it could relate to learning experiences and beliefs that Eric had. For example, Eric was interested in the interplay between activities in the Outer/External World (Ordinary World) and how the beliefs and values he held that were associated with the Inner World (ExtraOrdinary World). The IPA-researcher drew a diagram to explain Campbell’s (1949/2008) monomyth, and discussed how physical activities and core values fit into the Inner and Outer/Exterior Worlds. Eric was asked to give examples that he believed fit into the different circles. The Red Circle was the introduction of the Moments of Realization that occur through the interactions between the two other worlds, and create this tertiary worldview that I labelled SupraOrdinary World (see Figure 3).
Figure 3. Introduction of three worlds. Blue = External/Ordinary World; red = Moments of Realization/SupraOrdinary World; green = Inner/ExtraOrdinary World (Eric, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one).
This introduction of the monomyth lead into Eric explaining a hobby that he had which involved making swords (an activity visible in the *Ordinary World*). Eric was familiar with welding and machining techniques. As the IPA-researcher, I was curious about his hobby and asked questions. When Eric began to explain his hobby, his learning style and preference for using images emerged; Eric would explain the machining and the terminology related to making a sword by immediately drawing pictures (see Figure 4).

When I stated that I still did not understand some of the issues related to sword vocabulary, Eric took on the role of teacher and used the iPad to show me a YouTube video (i.e., relates to the theme of applying metaphors, images, and movement reflecting learning style preferences). I asked questions about his actions and choice of using videos, which lead into a discussion of his process of learning. Eric was aware that visuals, images, and videos increased his knowledge and understanding of a new topic. He explained terms like “dull” by comparing it to a poem, which he found boring. This approach was the first indication of his use of metaphors.

In all future sessions, flipchart paper, laptop, and the iPad were resources to create and access videos or images that would help explain Eric’s thought process and visual as well as kinesthetic learning style. Eric and I worked together as co-researchers exploring how he thought and he mapped out his thought processes on the flipchart paper, as we discussed authentic reading tasks at school. This co-researcher approach engaged Eric both cognitively and emotionally. He saw himself as a co-contributor and partner in the research sessions, as we “mined his mind” (Eric’s description) together to figure out how he thinks. This use of images and metaphors changed his perception and removed his resistance to coming to the research sessions.
Figure 4. Swords with vocabulary. Blue = External/Ordinary World; green = Inner/ExtraOrdinary World (Eric, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one).
In Eric’s sessions, if he was asked to describe how he was aware of his thinking process, he was articulate and would immediately go to using images to describe how he learned (i.e., applying metaphors and describing or drawing images to represent themes).

Eric: When they give me an assignment, I think about everything that they told me. ...I research it by finding videos on it [Walsh & Simpson, 2013] ...if not then I just read it. ...I will create my own video basically in my own head...what I see [from reading the words] or what I see in pictures, so I graph my own opinion on it...make my own ideas...I’m going deeper on it then most people would I am able to make a mental video about it that is deeper...

Sharon: So, part of your process is to do research on the Web?

Eric: I look on the Web or in books looking at the pictures...

Sharon: So, you make a video in your head.....The question I am asking is what sparks the spark?....So what happens with this video in your head that makes a spark?

Eric: I think it is when I am done looking at all the pictures and done reading... it kind of happens when I am done all the reading .. the pictures and the reading kind of mix together ..and it makes like its own video like a book that has words and pictures on it. (Eric, October 26, 2017, interview-conversation session two)

Contrasting Eric now with Albert, Albert found reading a frustrating experience, and he was aware that he struggled with sight words but was not able to explain why. In the following dialogue, Albert struggled with certain letters, but did not have a way of describing these struggles:
Sharon: You just read words that were correct and went quickly [San Diego Quick Assessment Tool Pre-Primer list]. Do you want to continue with the reading or not? …If you continue…I want you to not read them but code them. You look at the word and decide if the word is challenging. We will look at words and decide which ones take more energy and which ones take less. …Tell me which ones you think from just looking at the words which will take more energy…and as you put a dot beside them I will read them out loud. (Albert, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one)

[Note: Albert selected “bigger, when” as challenging words and “Spring” was one that he knew.]

Albert: I am pretty bad with “w”s. (Albert, November 9, 2017, interview-conversation session four)

In interview-conversation session four, Albert and the IPA-researcher tried to work on the “wh” words—what, when, where, why. He struggled and could not tell them apart. We tried a tactile approach using letters on a magnetic board in a game format to focus his attention and kept the number of words to three in order to lower his working memory load (he was aware that we were trying different strategies but not why these would affect his working memory), but he was not able to differentiate between them. We also tried using the “wh” words in a meaningful context. He understood the meaning or purpose of the words but could not decode them. Also, we tried to look for patterns and remove letters that were consonant blends at the beginning of the words, but these words did not create images in Albert’s mind because he could not seem to decode them based on visual features alone.
One area that Albert was very good at was story writing if he was allowed to tell the story verbally. His story grammar was well established and indicated higher level comprehension skills not contingent upon decoding (Wharton-McDonald & Swiger, 2009). We started a session by discussing a book he was reading with his parents at home: *How to Train Your Dragon*. Albert was focused on his ideas and representing those ideas in an image as an illustration to go with his story (see Figure 5).

Unlike Albert, Jessica was very aware of what study skills worked for her. She used repetition and would take definitions and terms associated with those definitions and cut them up then put them together like a puzzle. Her focus was on the printed slips of paper and she was not aware how movement affected her ability to stay focused. Just like her doodling maintained her focus, moving the slips of paper around was another way of doodling. It was clear to me why this kept her attention, but I am not sure she was aware of how important this activity was. Also, she had a very good visual memory but was not using that learning strength to help her see an image in her mind associated with the printed words on the strips of paper. I attempted to introduce another way of using doodling to tell a story of chronological events, but she was resistant and had to be persuaded to try something different, as she preferred using repetition as a memory strategy (see Figure 6).
Figure 5. Albert’s dragon story (Albert, October 26, 2018, interview-conversation session two).
Figure 6. Jessica’s history-study graphic (Jessica, October 31, 2017, interview-conversation session two).
**Interpretation: Self-awareness of learning style and emotions.** From the very beginning of our sessions, Tasha used movement to help her stay focused and manage her nervousness, and as a tool for learning—although she did the latter unconsciously. I observed her behaviour and, through dialogue, we were able to determine the importance of incorporating specific movements, like the use of the fan versus doodling, to positively impact her cognitive abilities. On the other hand, Eric realized that his mind created movies from the information he discovered using YouTube and Internet searches. The movie playing in his head allowed him to combine the ideas, and I suggested that he use dictation software or an audio recorder to describe the movie playing in his head, and then go back and transcribe his ideas. The movie that he described as “playing in his head” was his reading comprehension in action and involved text-to-self, text-to-world, and text-to-text. However, in his case it was images in movies that he was comparing and compiling. Both Tasha and Eric were very aware of the task they were doing and how they used specific abilities to complete the reading task: Tasha used movement to increase her focus and Eric was aware of creating his own movie that consolidated information he had researched.

Albert and Jessica were different in their levels of metacognitive and embodied-emotional awareness. Albert knew what he liked to do and what he did not like to do; however, I am not sure that I could describe this liking as a metacognitive or embodied-emotional awareness of his learning style. It was more a matter of activities that he would engage in or avoid. For example, Albert loved listening to audiobooks on his iPad and had a voracious appetite for this type of reading, which lead to him having excellent listening comprehension skills; when I asked how he remembered, he related it back to the images that he saw in his mind while listening to a story.
Jessica on the other hand was very aware that she needed to doodle in order to concentrate when listening to instructions or talking about how to approach an assignment. However, when asking to apply her doodling to a history assignment that was chronological and had a great deal of detail to remember, she did not want to use her doodling ability but preferred rote repetition of using cue cards and reviewing them repeatedly. Jessica tended to use movement in the form of doodling to concentrate. I wanted her to try and integrate movement by drawing as an elaborative strategy to improve her memory for historical facts versus the cue card rote-repetition.

**Metacognitive theme 2: Embodied knowing and emotions.** To varying degrees, each participant described embodied emotions and for the most part, they described them in terms of metaphors, images, and movements. For three of the four participants, the IPA-researcher had them describe emotions and feelings by associating them with a particular visual image in the form of an emoji that was connected to a chart (see Table 3). In Table 3, Tasha describes each emoji. When asked to describe the images, Tasha was encouraged to think about a previous lived experience or embodied emotion that she could associate with the image as well as any bodily sensations that occurred. Once these descriptions were completed, the emojis and engagement scale were used during authentic reading tasks and *moments of realization* to check in with Tasha on how she responded to phenomenon that emerged during the interview-conversation sessions.
Table 3

*Tasha: Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale—Emotional Responses to Reading Tasks*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emoji (Chen, 2017)</th>
<th>Descriptors from Martinovic et al., 2016</th>
<th>Literature support from Martinovic et al., 2016</th>
<th>Tasha’s comments about feelings</th>
<th>Encoded narrative themes/subthemes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>😞 Seeming nervous/anxious</td>
<td>Anxiety (Deci &amp; Ryan, 2000)</td>
<td>“This reminds me when I had a concert… I was doing ballet…and then I messed up on two steps…and then while I was dancing I felt so nervous butterflies in my stomach…worse butterflies…there were people watching…it made my head think ‘You can’t do this, you can’t do this without everyone laughing at you…you can’t do this’” (Tasha, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one).</td>
<td>Phenomenon of embodiment: Psychosomatic/physical response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>😞 Showing frustration</td>
<td>[Lack of] perceived user control (O’Brien &amp; Toms, 2008)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>😞 Having difficulty completing the reading task – nervousness and need to fidget</td>
<td>Feel [in]capable (Deci &amp; Ryan, 2000); [Lack of] perceived user control (O’Brien &amp; Toms, 2008)</td>
<td>“Same time as I got the good butterflies, I had nervous butterflies too because my first time on a plane to my home country. It felt like whenever the good butterflies would spread the excitement…the nervous butterflies would just spread the nervousness all over my body that I am still on the airplane…I’m still not there yet…. When I am nervous I need to fidget” (Tasha, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one).</td>
<td>Metacognition: Self-awareness of learning style and emotions Phenomenon of embodiment: Psychosomatic/physical response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>😞 Getting distracted while trying to complete the reading task</td>
<td>[Lack of] immersion in the task* (Przybylski, Rigby, &amp; Ryan, 2010) [*Original stated game]</td>
<td></td>
<td>Affect knowledge: Application of movement; Emotional knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>😞 Putting effort into doing the reading task</td>
<td>Motivation (Chapman, 1997; Przybylski et al., 2010);</td>
<td>“I know the answer, but don’t want to say it… Also, when I read out loud to the class…It’s”</td>
<td>Affect knowledge: Motivation and attribution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needing support/encouragement to continue with the reading task</td>
<td>Endurability (O’Brien &amp; Toms, 2008)</td>
<td>nervous…I feel weird… and all eyes are on watching me while I read usually, so I’m afraid that I’m going to make a spelling or grammar mistake or replace the words or say a word off the top of my head” (Tasha, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one).</td>
<td>Metacognition: Self-awareness of learning style and emotions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paying attention to reading task</td>
<td>[Lack of] intrinsic interest (Chapman, 1997)</td>
<td>“When my mom got my sister… I felt like I’m more mature. Now, I have a sibling to look after and play with and I’m not alone anymore. I felt excited but not as excited as my country excitement a little bit lower” (Tasha, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one).</td>
<td>Metacognition: Self-awareness of learning style and emotions Phenomenon of embodiment: Psychosomatic/physical response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing enjoyment</td>
<td>Pay] Attention (Chapman, 1997; O’Brien &amp; Toms, 2008)</td>
<td>“This one reminds me of going to my home country for the first time. I had heard lots of things that were interesting about my country, and I was excited to go. It was my first time on a plane…I felt good butterflies in my stomach…It feels like it is going everywhere. Spreading excitement all over your body” (Tasha, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one).</td>
<td>Phenomenon of embodiment: Psychosomatic/physical response Metacognitive: Self-awareness Note: Reading comprehension connection strategy – Text-to-Self Affect knowledge: Emotional knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Adapted from Martinovic et al. (2016).
Tasha defined each of the emojis and related the images to embodied emotions and physical sensations. This chart was referred to during various reading tasks as a way of explicitly identifying emotional reactions to these tasks. During the San Diego Quick Assessment Tool (LaPray, 1978), the IPA-researcher explained to Tasha that the purpose of the reading of sight words was to determine her strengths and weaknesses. Once words that require more decoding skill were reached (such as “impeccable”), Tasha was asked to select an emoji; she chose: 😊 “I know the answer but I don’t want to say it” (Tasha, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one), for how she was feeling about this assessment task.

During the Words Their Way (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2010) spelling assessment, Tasha was asked what she thought of spelling and how she felt about it: “It’s not necessarily into me…you have to know the words off the top of your head, you need to be able to say the sound of the letters (October 26, 2017, interview-conversation session two). Since we were talking about spelling, the IPA-researcher explored with Tasha how she thinks and whether certain images or pictures come to mind; Tasha became excited because she enjoys drawing. Tasha produced an image of how her mind processes words from when she sees the word until it is stored visually in her mind (see Figure 7). In the third session, we talked about her thoughts about different animals and she related these animals to embodied sensations. Tasha was asked to spell “disease” and she described how she stored it in her mind (see Figure 7); however, when she saw the word she spelled it very quickly. This led to a discussion about how she hears a word and stores it in memory, as well as seeing a word and storing it. The IPA
researcher suggested that when she hears a word she should figure out how to spell it immediately while using both the auditory and visual modes of storing information.

Sharon: Did you see how fast you spelled ‘disease’? I noticed and wanted you to notice.

Tasha: I don’t notice because it is usually how I pick it up [hearing the word and finding it in storage].

Sharon: So how did you feel when you did this so quickly?

Tasha: This is normal for me.

Sharon: Tell me how normal feels; can you look at the emojis.

Tasha: Between these two 😊 and 😊

Sharon: How does normal feel in your body?

Tasha: I have turtles in my body that go very slow. …I like the turtles in my body because I already know what is going on. …When I first get spelling going on I have cheetahs they go really fast (see Figure 8).

Sharon: So, which emoji is a cheetah to you?

Tasha: This one 😌 the Concert. …It delivers a message to the body and goes all the way to the brain, which keeps on telling me “Stop doing this” …it goes faster… “tell them you’re done, tell them you’re done.” (Tasha, October 26, 2017, interview-conversation session two)
Figure 7. Tasha’s mind-processing-words image (Tasha, October 26, 2017, interview-conversation session two).
Figure 8. Tasha’s metaphor for embodied emotions (Tasha, November 2, 2017, interview-conversation session three).
Tasha associated the image of the turtle with a slower thinking process when she was asked what her normal thinking process felt like in her body and then described the cheetah when she was asked to do a task that was unfamiliar like learning a new list of spelling words, or reading out loud at school.

When it came to embodied emotions with Eric, it was a very complex process to tease them out and their properties in themselves were complex. For example, during my interview-conversation with Eric, he described making his own videos and I wanted to pursue this more during our sessions together. Eric and the IPA researcher discussed how he realized the “spark” by comparing three novels he was reading and a lived experience involving his gym teacher. In each case, Eric focused on the emotions of the fictional characters and his gym teacher, then compared these emotions by looking for similarities between the different characters. It was during these discussions that Eric realized that emotions and looking for patterns of similarities created the moment of realization or “spark” of connecting information that resulted in an embodied reaction.

Eric used an image and the metaphor of his brain being like a castle to describe the way he stores knowledge and accesses information behind “doors.” He called it the “Castle of the Mind” (see Figure 9, I added the coloured squares to identify the SupraOrdinary moment and embodied experience). The images are associated with how he perceives his ability to learn and store information. The key term that gave insight into how he connects to characters in a story was “emotion.”

Sharon: You are saying that the video (in Eric’s mind) gives you more ideas. ...Can you go further with this...so we could say that something is happening when you are reading that relates to something you already know?
Eric: It doesn’t matter if it happened to me or not...sometimes it just happens without me doing anything.

Sharon: My question for you Eric is what makes it mix together? You and I are trying to figure out what is happening with your thought process...when something mixes together and then you have the production of a mental video in your mind.

Eric: Well, when I was reading the book I realized that everyone was angry all the time...and that they were really scared and mixing that fear with something else.

Sharon: Did you hear what you just said? You used the words “feelings” fear, anger...every time that we study it all comes back to that one word.

Eric: emotions or feelings. (Eric, November 2, 2017, interview-conversation session three)

Eric had a remarkable ability to focus on two things at the same time. He was a hybrid, non-linear thinker (J. Rowsell, personal communication, March 15, 2018), and we would discuss one idea regarding a character in a novel he was reading, then quickly move onto how he was thinking about connecting ideas, then come back to the first thought to see if there was a pattern or connection. Unlike Tasha, the emojis method did not work as well with Eric, so instead we opted far more for using visuals and graphic depictions of his thinking processes.

Each of our sessions began with a discussion of an authentic assignment Eric needed to complete for school, and this led to a discussion of his thought processes and emotions around that assignment. Most students at his grade level would just talk about what the *Ordinary World* (Campbell, 1949/2008) level school requirement was—answer the basic question related to the assignment. Eric responded differently; he would read between the lines in stories and was able to describe how the characters’ behaviour
related to their emotions. He used this knowledge to look at a different narrative to make connections. Eric looked for core values and feelings of the characters, an *ExtraOrdinary World* (Campbell, 1949/2008) perspective.
Figure 9. Castle of the mind artifact (Eric, November 9, 2017, interview-conversation session four).
Eric and the IPA-researcher discussed his ability to focus on characters’ emotions and we went on to talk about three other novels he had read and a pattern emerged. Eric had just finished reading one novel for recreation and two for school: *Ghost*, *Lock Down*, and *Acceleration*. During our dialogue about the characters in these novels, we explored his thought process and more sparks occurred. Eric and the IPA-researcher then discussed learning strengths that he had reading these novels. I was curious about how he connected the characters’ behaviours and emotions in the three novels. Eric described his ability to see patterns in the main characters’ behaviours, emotions, and story plot in these novels. When asked how he did this, he said he would pick up on the similarities in emotions, attitudes, life events, or circumstances between novels (i.e., perception of phenomena and meta-language associated with thinking and emotions theme). In particular, words drew his attention and then the ideas around what was similar between characters or plots would emerge. In the instance of the three novels, Eric identified, “pain, alone, and inflict pain” (Eric, November 9, 2017, interview-conversation session four) as key words. Albert, in contrast, was articulate in defining the emojis and associating them with a word or phrase and a lived experience and reading related. Table 4 captures his thoughts and feelings.
Table 4

**Albert: Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale—Emotional Responses to Reading Tasks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emoji</th>
<th>Descriptors from Martinovic et al., 2016</th>
<th>Literature support from Martinovic et al., 2016</th>
<th>Albert’s comments about feelings</th>
<th>Encoded narrative themes/subthemes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>🙄💖</td>
<td>Seeming nervous/anxious</td>
<td>Anxiety (Deci &amp; Ryan, 2000)</td>
<td>“I would feel sick like having the flu, or me just feeling really bad about me having to do something…or doing the 5-minute math sheet. My sister is on the timetables and I am still on adding” (Albert, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one). Or: “Doing the math sheets in 5 minutes…every day I have to restart a few which is kinda annoying …once I was 10 away and the timer went and I yelled NOOOOOO!” (Albert, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one). Or: “The creepy one” (Albert, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one).</td>
<td>Phenomenon of embodiment: Psychosomatic/physical response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🙄💖</td>
<td>Showing frustration</td>
<td>[Lack of] perceived user control (O’Brien &amp; Toms, 2008)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>😞</td>
<td>Having difficulty completing the reading task – nervousness and need to fidget</td>
<td>Feel [in]capable (Deci &amp; Ryan, 2000); [Lack of] perceived user control (O’Brien &amp; Toms, 2008)</td>
<td>“This one feels like disappointment…like when a character dies halfway through the book…you get to love the character then all of a sudden it dies” (Albert, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one).</td>
<td>Metacognition: Self-awareness of learning style and emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>😞</td>
<td>Getting distracted while trying to complete the reading task</td>
<td>[Lack of] immersion in the task* (Przybylski, Rigby, &amp; Ryan, 2010)</td>
<td><strong>Observation:</strong> Albert swivels his chair in circles when IPA-researcher explains a task verbally, and he is not doing</td>
<td>Phenomenon of embodiment: Psychosomatic/physical response</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Affect knowledge: Application of movement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Emotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Tacticity and emotions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Putting effort into doing the reading task/something else</td>
<td>Motivation (Chapman, 1997; Przybylski et al., 2010); Endurability (O’Brien &amp; Toms, 2008)</td>
<td>“This is me bugging my sister…the feeling is maybe sneaky…and my body gets more quiet” (Albert, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one). Or:</td>
<td>Affect knowledge: Motivation and attribution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not needing support/encouragement To continue with the reading task/something else</td>
<td>[Lack of] intrinsic interest (Chapman, 1997)</td>
<td>“This is me being focused like playing my video game” (Albert, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one).</td>
<td>Metacognition: metacognitive awareness of learning style and emotions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paying attention to reading task</td>
<td>[Pay] Attention (Chapman, 1997; O’Brien &amp; Toms, 2008)</td>
<td>“This one is happy…I feel excited [tries to say adrenaline] my adre...aden..Blah! What am I trying to say?...Adrenaline is pumping...pumping...I am doing something awesome like building the Lego Star Wars set” (Albert, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one).</td>
<td>Metacognition: Self-awareness of learning style and emotions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing enjoyment</td>
<td>Enjoyment (Przybylski et al., 2010) Positive Affect (O’Brien &amp; Toms, 2008)</td>
<td>“…like my uncle tickling me…it is like an earthquake in my body...scoring a goal on the soccer game on the iPad...or being the richest person in the world...or my mom reading to me” (Albert, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one).</td>
<td>Phenomenon of embodiment: Psychosomatic/physical response</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Metacognition: Self-awareness</td>
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<td>Note: Reading comprehension connection strategy – Text-to-World</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Affect knowledge: Emotional knowledge</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Adapted from Martinovic et al. (2016).
When Albert arrived for his first session, he was quietly playing a game on the iPad in the area outside the Learning Lab. I asked his mother if he could bring his iPad into the first session because I know Albert to be an active child and I was curious about how still he was while playing this game. His mother had wanted him to leave the iPad behind, but I thought this was a good place to start to talk about his emotions and movement.

Sharon: I’m going to let you play the soccer game for a few minutes then ask you questions. Is that OK if I interrupt you?

Albert: Sure.

Sharon: I saw something when I was watching you. …You were very still while playing this game…you were not moving except your fingers. …Is this a similar experience when doing the Star Wars Lego?

Albert: Yes, except when I am nearly finished then I get excited and my hand starts shaking.

Sharon: Which emoji would you pick to represent how you feel when you are almost finished a part of the Star Wars Legos?

Albert: The Happy Face pretty much.

Sharon: Now, I am going to ask you to do some things that may make you feel uncomfortable. …Do what you can. …We are going to look at how this next task makes you feel rather than how well you can do the task. …Does that make sense?

Albert: Yes.

Sharon: Here we go. …I am going to ask you to read some words. …We will start easy and then it will get harder.
[Albert starts reading San Diego words from pre-primer list. Completes the list.]

Sharon: So now we are going to keep going.

Albert: They will get harder

Sharon: Yes. But I would like to talk about that first list. You went through that first list… and you went very quickly. … Can you tell me how you were feeling while you were going through that list?

Albert: ummmm…[Eric picked the emoji that was focused…]

😊

“But when I do really good it could be this one…”

😊😊

[Note: A second list is given to Albert with words like “help” and “work.” Albert slows down and sounds out each letter. We stop after the third word in the list.]

Sharon: So how are you feeling about these words?

Albert: They should have a so-so emoji face…

Sharon: Can you pick an emoji for the words that were getting harder?

Albert: It is so-so like focused and the creepy one

😊😊😊

(Albert, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one)

Albert was articulate and he had no difficulty quickly associating his feelings with a specific emoji given the emotional frustration he has felt trying to read. Albert wants to read and was enthusiastic about using the emojis to check in with his feelings. Albert demonstrated awareness of his emotions and how they were experienced in his body (i.e.,
embodied-emotional awareness), as well as being able to associate those bodily emotional sensations with an image.

Like Albert, Jessica was motivated and presented as a very happy person. We went through the emojis to try and define what different emotions might feel like in her body. Jessica related most of the emojis to school tasks but was not articulate on expanding on those descriptions and when we checked throughout our sessions she generally chose a smiling face. Her descriptions are included in Table 5.

**Interpretation: Embodied knowing and emotions.** There is a challenge in how to organize some of the findings in this section because there is an overlap between metacognitive processes and embodied emotions, as they are interconnected. I have placed the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale (Martinovic et al., 2016) in this section because the children/youth were asked to describe an emotional reaction to a cognitive reading task. For Tasha, this request was met with detailed stories that she felt related to each emoji.
Table 5

*Jessica: Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale—Emotional Responses to Reading Tasks*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emoji (Chen, 2017)</th>
<th>Descriptors from Martinovic et al., 2016</th>
<th>Literature support from Martinovic et al., 2016</th>
<th>Jessica’s comments about feelings</th>
<th>Encoded narrative themes/subthemes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeming nervous/anxious</td>
<td>Anxiety (Deci &amp; Ryan, 2000)</td>
<td>“I am nervous about the next Geography test, and I feel like I have butterflies in my stomach” (Jessica, October 16, 2017, interview-conversation session one).</td>
<td>Phenomenon of embodiment: Psychosomatic/physical response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting distracted while trying to complete the reading task</td>
<td>[Lack of] immersion in the task* (Przybylski, Rigby, &amp; Ryan, 2010) [*Original stated game]</td>
<td></td>
<td>Affect knowledge: Application of movement; Emotional knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting effort into doing the reading task/something else</td>
<td>Motivation (Chapman, 1997; Przybylski et al., 2010); Endurability (O’Brien &amp; Toms, 2008)</td>
<td>“I am concerned about studying” (Jessica, October 16, 2017, interview-conversation session one).</td>
<td>Affect knowledge: Motivation and attribution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not needing support/encouragement to continue with the reading task/something else</td>
<td>[Lack of] intrinsic interest (Chapman, 1997)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paying attention to reading task</td>
<td>[Pay] Attention (Chapman, 1997; O’Brien &amp; Toms, 2008)</td>
<td>“Studying my regular method for science, and I knew about the details on the test. My sister had a copy of what was on the test because she took the class before me. I could make study notes” (Jessica, October 16, 2017, interview-conversation session one).</td>
<td>Metacognition: Self-awareness of learning style and emotions Phenomenon of embodiment: Psychosomatic/physical response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Adapted from Martinovic et al. (2016).
Tasha’s descriptions and expressive vocabulary gave insight into the gap between her decoding of printed words and her extensive lexicon of receptive and expressive vocabulary that allowed her to give descriptions that had sophisticated nuances associated with them, as when she talked about the excitement all over her body when flying to her country for the first time 😊, but then she was able to explain that the second emoji was experienced to a lesser degree than the airplane when she talked about the birth of her sister 😔. Tasha’s metacognitive awareness and ability to analyze her own experience and describe it in detail indicated to me a superior ability to observe and be aware of her reactions to external events in the *Ordinary World* and she was able to interpret what these bodily sensations mean, so her affect knowledge was astute.

Similarly, Eric was able to articulate his embodied emotions when he experienced his “spark” and how this motivated him to continue to learn and seek out new ideas because of the reaction he had to discovering new knowledge. The challenge of using different media to help acquire that knowledge was sophisticated, as well as his metacognitive awareness of how ideas were connected and how his body responded to those connections. The connections of mind and body is how it verified that new knowledge had occurred. Like Tasha, Eric’s experiences could be classified under several subthemes. I chose embodied emotion because of the intensity that Eric experienced in that *moment of realization* or “spark” as he described it.

Albert was excited to respond to the idea of looking at emojis and describing his embodied feelings relative to different reading tasks. Albert’s psychoeducational assessment identified his receptive and expressive vocabulary as above average, and Albert was articulate in describing each of the emojis. He was always able to provide not
only a word or phrase to associate with it but also an example. His description ability reminded me of the charade game that we worked on for his vocabulary learning. It gave insight into how Albert’s mind works from an image to a word or phrase to an application of how that might work in real life; for example, the frowning emoji that he associated with the word “seriously” (Albert, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one) and the example of how he felt doing a simple 2 + 2 math question in a Grade 5 math book. His perception was it was too easy. Albert has such a wealth of emotions that he can associate with specific real world tasks. His analytical thinking skills are in opposition to his technical ability to decode. Unfortunately, he does not see this as a strength and chooses to define himself, as many struggling readers do, by the speed and level at which he can decode words on a printed or digital page.

In contrast, Jessica was not able to distinguish different levels of emotion based on the emojis presented. There were only three that she identified with regardless of the challenge of the reading task: The smiling emoji, the straight-line emoji, and the frowning emoji related to tasks that she felt good about doing, did not have any real feelings for at all, and those she did not like. During our time together, Jessica identified mostly with the smiling emoji because her work ethic was so strong she would just keep doing a task until she mastered it, such as using repetition for studying a science or a history term. Jessica had a method that she felt confident would work and was not willing to adapt it because it would involve taking a risk, which made her feel uncomfortable, and these uncomfortable emotions she wanted to avoid. I tried to explain that this approach may not work so well in Grade 12 or college/university, but she was unwilling to change.
Metacognitive theme 3: Metacognition and strategy use. The third and final metacognitive theme concerns metacognition and strategy use. With Tasha, she was able to decode sight words to grade level; however, her struggles relate more to reading words at grade level in a story accurately. During interview-conversation session two, when the spelling assessment was administered, Tasha interrupted the IPA-researcher to mention that she wanted to learn to spell specific words that were not on the original assessment list. The IPA-researcher decided to enter into a dialogue with Tasha about the words that were challenging for her and this led into the discovery of a spelling strategy that she was able to employ independently and raised her mark at school from 70% to 90%. The steps of the strategy that was introduced are listed in Figure 10.
Imagery for Spelling/Reading Words (especially if student is missing focusing on a particular part of the word)

1. Look at the word. What are the easiest letters to remember? What is the hardest?
2. Close your eyes and try and see the word on a blackboard in your mind or on a movie screen at the movie theatre
3. What are the letters that you see (in your mind)? Can you tell me?
4. Now, take your arm and with your eyes closed try to spell the word you see in your mind in the air. Say each letter as you move your arm. (This would have to be age appropriate)
5. Now, let’s print the word you just spelled.
6. What was/were the hardest letters to remember? Do you know why?
7. Let’s use a colour pen/pencil/marker to focus on the hardest part of the word to remember...and we are going to draw these letters really big because this will help our eyes and our mind to focus on this part of the word (*explicit instruction...telling them why they are doing this activity). This is a strategy for learning difficult words to read or spell. It is called “The Really, Really Big Spelling Strategy” You can pick your own name.

Figure 10. Imagery for spelling/reading words. Adapted from Pressley & Woloshyn, 1995; used with permission.
Tasha understood the steps of this spelling strategy and applied them to two challenging spelling words. The introduction of the spelling strategy occurred inadvertently while administering the *Words Their Way* spelling assessment. The IPA-researcher asked Tasha if she wanted to start with easier words to spell so she was not stressed, but she declined and as we began the assessment she mentioned that there was a word that she really wanted to learn to spell:

Tasha: There’s a word that is really hard that I am trying to learn to spell:

“medicine.”

Sharon: You speak three languages; do you find that these other languages interfere with finding the correct sound of the letters?

Tasha: Yes…especially French.

Sharon: Why don’t you try and spell “medicine”?  

[Tasha tries spelling the word.]

Sharon: I noticed with you were spelling the word that you paused…were you thinking?

Tasha: Yes.

Sharon: What was going on in your head?

Tasha: I think I wrote a wrong letter.

Sharon: Which one did you think was not right?

Tasha: The “c.”

Sharon: When you are writing a word do you see anything in your mind?
Tasha: I see the word I wrote so far…and I review it in my mind and I have a conversation in my head about how I spelled the word. (Tasha October 26, 2017, interview-conversation session two)

At this point, I asked Tasha to try something where I wrote a word out for her and asked her to look at it and then picture it in her head by closing her eyes and picturing the order of letters on a whiteboard. Tasha was able to quickly spell the word correctly:

Sharon: You did that very quickly…the reason I asked you to do this is that you mentioned that you could see things in your mind and that you have a little bit of a conversation in your head. How does that make you feel if you look at the emojis.

Tasha: The one that’s like the Turtle 😎 (Tasha, October 26, 2017, interview-conversation session two)

This same approach was used with another word that was unfamiliar and Tasha was able to experience a similar success.

Tasha was able to identify cognitive distractions that involved movement and physical movements that enhanced her concentration. For example, she needed to use certain items like the fan and fidget spinner to manipulate in order to focus; however, doodling involved her conscious attention and she knew it distracted her. The dialogue around the differences between the tactile manipulation (i.e., fidget objects) versus visual attention and movement is an example of her metacognitive awareness of actions that enhance her learning versus detract from it.

During the San Diego Quick Assessment Tool (LaPray, 1978), the IPA-researcher explained to Tasha that the purpose of reading sight words was to determine her strengths
and weaknesses. Once words that require more decoding skill were reached such as impeccable, Tasha was asked to select an emoji and she chose 😊 “I know the answer but I don’t want to say it” (Tasha, October 19, 2017, session one) for how she was feeling about this assessment task. The next assessment involved spelling. Tasha was asked what she thought of spelling and how she felt about it: “It’s not really necessarily into me…you have to know the words off the top of your head, you need to be able to say the sound of the letters” (Tasha, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one).

In contrast, Eric did not really respond to the emoji prompts. Instead, he talked about his thinking in terms of visuals and moving images. Initially, he does research using pictures, videos, and books, then an idea emerges and creates a spark (moment of realization) as information that is stored in the doors in the Castle of the Mind connect (see Figure 9).

While working through novel studies, Eric and the IPA-researcher created a six-part strategy that he could use that were based on learning characteristics that were strengths for him, and he was aware that he could choose to use or discard a strategy depending on whether he needed it. His awareness of learning strengths became conscious:

Sharon: What are you learning from these sessions together?

Eric: I am understanding myself which will make my life easier because I understand I see patterns. … Once I understand my pattern (of thinking) more I can use if for school…like I can turn it on and turn it off when I want to before it just happened randomly. Now, I can switch off and switch on when I want to.
Sharon: What are the list of tools that you are aware of? I am aware of six tools that you have that you can use. … Can you list them?


Sharon: If you are allowed to capture your thoughts on video or digital audio-recording first, then you can transcribe. … You have a rich toolbox of how you can approach a task. (Eric, November 16, 2017, interview-conversation session five)

Eric talked about waking up when he finished viewing the task and an awakening experience. There was a pattern of viewing, idea, awake, and click that emerged through our dialogue:

Sharon: You talked about waking up—

Eric: You know how animals are aware of things. … When I wake up I open up my senses to become aware of what is around me…

Sharon: So, your senses are heightened…you are in the moment. … What are your words to describe your experience when you are aware?

Eric: Well, when I do wake up, or I want to get an idea or I get a click feeling I am aware and it lasts longer even though I have finished all that…like I’m done the thing that I want to be aware of I get my patterns out. … It [the aware feeling] is still there after I’m done that project … done putting down my ideas … thinking…

Sharon: So, you just described a method: You have a task, view the assignment instructions—you wake up, there is a click, you are aware and then you get
patterns out even after you finish the assignment. (Eric, November 9, 2017, interview-conversation session four)

For Eric, the Castle of the Mind is not a linear process but it is hybrid and moves into different doors and trajectories. These ideas are images and words blended together with an embodied reaction when the spark occurs.

Just like Tasha and Eric, Albert made a suggestion, which ended up being the strategy that would help him learn new vocabulary words if they had concrete images associated with them. This occurred because Albert suggested playing a charade game when we were working on learning new vocabulary words. This game he had played at home; however, I quickly adjusted the focus of the game to revolve around the list of vocabulary words we were trying to learn. I chose the words carefully so each word could be associated with a mental image because they were concrete not like the “w” words (i.e., what, when, where, etc.). I did not realize at the time that this game would be the key to learning words based on their meanings and not by sounding out the symbols. It was whole-word reading.

The game we played involved describing the meaning of the target word, using movement to convey meaning, and assigning a one-word or phrase to trigger recall of the target word. The only visual prompt was the cue card that the words were written on. This game had three different repetitions built into it. Each repetition removed information until the charade leader had to be silent and act out the word. Like Jessica, this was a moment of realization for me, as after playing this word game Albert could identify all the words on the cards correctly. In talking to him about this experience, the acting out and describing the meaning of the word helped him to have a picture of the
whole word in his mind. His reading was meaning-driven not symbol-decoding driven (Vellutino et al., 2004). If I had not listened to his request to play charades, we would not have discovered this ability.

Albert and Jessica had strategies they could use to improve their reading skills, but there was not enough time for them to practice these strategies so they were internalized. However, my experience with both students involved moments of realization. Unlike with Tasha and Eric, the moments of realization that I experienced were not shared with Albert and Jessica. Jessica resisted a strategy that I had asked her to engage in that worked with her propensity for movement and the use of doodling objects. This strategy involved asking her to draw pictures and include key words from her science subject on precipitation that she was studying. Jessica participated but would not incorporate this approach into her learning skills repertoire (see Figure 11).
Figure 11. Precipitation vocabulary image (Jessica, October 17, 2017, interview-conversation session one).


**Interpretation: Metacognitive and strategy use.** Tasha and Eric were very aware of their learning strengths and required support in how they chose to access them and when to rely on their ability to use images to help them remember or create new ideas. Albert and Jessica, on the other hand, had abilities and learning strengths but they were not aware of them on their own and could not therefore employ them in new learning situations. Whereas, Tasha was able to transfer her visualization strategy to another subject successfully, and Eric realized that he could pick and choose an approach to connect his ideas by focusing on patterns, similarities and differences. Through dialogue, these abilities for Eric became explicit and manageable thereby increasing his independence as a learner.

**Affect Knowledge—The ExtraOrdinary World**

The metacognitive themes were related to the *Ordinary World* because there are the school or tutor-prescribed reading assignment tasks that triggered a behavioural and embodied-emotional sensation response. The stimulus of the reading task triggered this behavioural response that was both cognitive and emotional in relation to how the child/youth perceived the task. The Affect Knowledge theme addresses the motivation and attributions that occur. It focuses more on internal reactions that can be intense.

In the case of Tasha and Eric, the emotional response to a difficult task or awareness of new learning was visceral as described by Massumi (2002): “a rupture in the stimulus-response paths, a leap in place in space outside action-reaction circuits” (p. 61). This “rupture” and “space” I have labelled as the tertiary *SupraOrdinary World* (see chapter one and Appendix F) that emerges suddenly between the *Ordinary* and *ExtraOrdinary Worlds* and is a lived experience that is felt in the body. Massumi (2002)
goes on to describe this experience, and I have labelled that “space” as the *moment of realization*: “The space into which it jots the flesh is one of an inability to act or reflect…a receptivity that the body is paralyzed until it is jolted back into action-reaction by recognition” (p. 61). Tasha described this experience when she was dancing and made a mistake: her body slowed down because of her visceral reaction to making a mistake, and Eric described his experience of the “click” and “spark” where the recognition of a new idea was simultaneously associated with an excitement throughout his body and then relaxation response. There is a distinction that I want to make between an emotional response and a visceral one. In the metacognition theme analysis, there was a dominant sense across the children/youth of affective knowledge and moments of emotional intensities (Massumi, 2015) during the reading process. However, there were other moments that were intense and deeper than awareness of emotion. I believe that it is this visceral reaction, and how it is interpreted by the child/youth when faced with a challenging reading task that affects motivation and attribution.

**Affect theme: Motivation and attribution.** Tasha described strong emotions and associated the anxious and frustration emoji with reading tasks where she would be called on to read aloud or answer questions at school. It involved having a “worse butterfly” feeling due to peer recognition, lack of control, and negative self-talk. Tasha has low motivation and self-confidence when asked to participate out loud at school:

Sharon: When you do something academic…anything related to school…have you ever had that “my body got really heavy and I couldn’t lift a foot” feeling?

Tasha: Yes…in tests and I sometimes feel that and then if we have to answer questions…the teacher asks a random person a question and let’s say he picked
me...I don’t know the question answer. I just say, “I don’t know” or say something off the top of my head.

Sharon: So, being asked to answer a question in class you get the same feeling?
Tasha: I get the same feeling...worried that I’m going to get picked...even if I have the answer...I’m worried I have the wrong answer. (Tasha, October 26, 2017, interview-conversation session two)

Tasha made a distinction between the squiggly-line emoji and the straight-line emoji by labeling this emoji 😖 as the “I know the answer, but don’t want to say it.” Tasha has extreme self-consciousness and in describing the difference between the two emojis she showed a strong distinction between competence and confidence.

Tasha: When I read out loud to the class this is the same picture.

Sharon: So how does reading out loud in class feel in your body?
Tasha: I feel weird...and eyes are on watching me while I read usually, so I’m afraid that I’m going to make a spelling or grammar mistake or replace the words, or say a word off the top of my head.

Sharon: So, how is that nervousness different than the squiggly-line emoji butterflies?
Tasha: It’s nervous but it’s not that nervous because you know the answer but you are afraid to do it. (Tasha, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one)

When Tasha read the San Diego sight words up to Grade 5 level, she read them quickly and accurately up to her instructional (98% accuracy) and frustrational (97% accuracy) levels. However, when asked to choose an emoji regarding her proficiency with word recognition, Tasha selected the “I know the answer but I am afraid to say”
emoji 😊. Tasha selected the same emoji for two different reading tasks that required her to speak out loud. In addition, Tasha does not attribute her knowledge of three languages as an asset:

Sharon: Sometimes when you have to spell in English because you speak three languages, do you find that some of the other languages interfere?

Tasha: Yes, especially French.

Sharon: Right now it may seem like a disadvantage, but when you are older, it will be an advantage because most people only speak one.

Tasha: Oh. (Tasha, October 19, 2017, interview-conversation session one)

During our discussion of the spelling strategy using visualization, Tasha repeatedly did not automatically attribute her successful use of the visualization strategy because she knew how to store information as a positive learning attribute (external versus internal locus of control) even though she could articulate her learning strength of auditory and visual encoding of information:

Tasha: I always remember a word that I see a couple of times. … When I see a word, or hear that word, most likely when I hear it…I think of the word in my head how to spell it…then I put it into a storage…then when I see that word (in her mind) I spell it correctly. … I empty that word out.

Sharon: I think that is a great description. What we want to do is work with this description…I only showed you the word “medicine” very briefly and you were able to give it back to me very quickly. … Did you put it into storage visually?

Tasha: Yeah. I guess that is what I did. (Tasha, October 26, 2017, interview-conversation session two; emphasis mine)
It is this last statement of Tasha’s that relates to Weiner (1985) attributing a positive learning attribute to an internal locus of control that then impacts self-identity or self-confidence. Tasha only “guesses” what she did. It was through dialogue and further practice that Tasha experienced external validation of this visualization strategy. For the next session, the IPA-researcher asked her how her marks were in her spelling test. Tasha reported she went from a 70% to a 90% and was pleased, but she still did not realize her own learning potential and strength in this area. Only when I interviewed her mother did information come out that Tasha had successfully applied the visualization strategy to learning math facts.

During interview-conversation session two with Eric, the IPA-researcher and Eric talked about his high school experience. The IPA-researcher asked Eric about his lived experience at high school, and which courses were more engaging for him. Was it courses like science, history and English/math, or physical education and computers? Since Eric appeared to have a learning style that was visual and kinesthetic and struggled with academic skills, such as the mechanics of reading and writing, it was assumed that he would prefer the courses with more hands-on activities. In fact, he found the hands-on activities to be boring. He attributed this boredom to the fact that there were no ideas that emotionally engaged him. Eric found the more challenging subjects engaging because of the new ideas they generated. There was an embodied reaction associated with the realization of this new knowledge. Eric could give a name to this experienced as a “click” in his mind. Eric described the moment when the discussion of words and ideas associated with those words created a connection in his mind. This connection created new knowledge and this new knowledge was associated with a bodily sensation: “First, I
get this excitement, and next my whole body relaxes” (Eric, October 26, 2017, interview-conversation session two). This is the main reason Eric finds ideas stimulating versus exercises that involve kinesthetic movement but do not lead to connections that involve the “click” experience. Eric and the IPA-researcher had a dialogue about this psychosomatic or physical response to this moment of realization. Eric described this cognitive “click” paired with an embodied phenomenon as motivating. He wanted to continue to seek out new knowledge because of the reaction it created in his body, particularly the relaxation response. Eric attributed this reaction to the discovery of new ideas and he could recognize that this discovery added information behind one of the doors of his Castle of the Mind.

Albert was motivated when a learning activity involved movement; however, he did not attribute his ability to pay attention or stay on task to being physically active. Albert was reliant on outside helpers to make him aware of his abilities, and he did not attribute his receptive and expressive vocabulary knowledge to his appetite for listening to audiobooks. However, Albert’s use of the iPad for accessing information and listening to his audiobooks was something that his parents had introduced, which was a motivator. Albert’s parents attribute his success in listening comprehension to Albert’s use of the iPad technology. Laidlaw and O’Mara’s (2015) description of the positive impact of using technology applies to Albert and has allowed him to increase his listening comprehension while reading comprehension is severely delayed:

The provision of more accessible literacy tools and resources can play an important role in bridging what may be primarily developmental differences,
providing multimodal options that may also be motivating due to enhanced student interest and ease. (p. 67)

Jessica’s motivation to come to the interview-conversation sessions was to improve her skills so that she could increase her marks. Jessica’s motivation for marks helped her be receptive to trying different reading strategies to help her achieve this goal and fit within the research parameters of finding learning strengths while completing an authentic reading task. In one particular session, she wanted support with writing a story for her language arts class. In class, they had been reading *The Giver* by Lois Lowry. Jessica had to write the next chapter in the book and she brought the assignment to one of our sessions. This session was unique in that a process was discovered based on a suggestion that Jessica made to me. We were struggling to just talk about her ideas for the chapter, and as often occurred, her thoughts were disconnected. Jessica had a habit of thinking out loud, and she did a lot of self-talk between making suggestions about how to start the story. My role was to be the scribe in order for her to concentrate on her ideas. Jessica was perseverating over what is a big or main idea and what represented story details. Finally, she asked me if she could act out her ideas, and I agreed. Something remarkable happened as I observed her movements and listened to her self-talk. I have included the story that she created as an artifact below and will pull out examples to explain what I saw and heard.

*The Giver – The Sequel*

*Jonas gets off the sled with Gabe in his arms and starts walking toward the big brown cabin that the Giver led him to. Jonas reaches the door and knocks very quietly with fear, as he holds Gabe tightly. A young woman opens the door. Jonas*
yells in shock, “ROSEMARY!!” Rosemary says, “I’ve been expecting you.”

“Come on in and I will explain.” (Jessica, November 14, 2017, interview-conversation session five)

It was in this first part that Jessica when moving across the room to pretend to carry Gabe in her arms said to herself “This is a big idea.” Then, when she knocked on the door quietly she said, “This is a small idea.” I noticed as I watched her act out the rest of the story that her big ideas involved large physical movements and what she defined as small ideas involved small movements: the knocking on the door quietly and grasping the baby in her arms. This pattern continued as she created the rest of the story seen below:

*Jonas carries Gabe into the cabin, and Rosemary gives them warm clothing and food to eat. Gabe is playing in the corner while Rosemary and Jonas start talking.*


Rosemary says, “I know you must have a million questions.” Let me start from the beginning. When I turned 12, I was assigned to become the next Receiver. Once I saw some of the memories, I realized that there is no point in living if you have no feelings or no voice. One day, me and my dad walked home from my training and found out that they were going to release my mom. I was crushed that there was nothing I could do. I remember sitting there watching them release her in that room. My dad was devastated. I knew I could not stay there anymore. When I realized what they were doing. My dad helped me with an escape plan. I snuck out of my family unit to the city hall to replace the injection with water. I went back to my family unit and waited until the next day to get released. Once I was released, they threw me out on the edge of the community.
Then, I ran until I found this cabin. I only had one month of memories. I knew that the next Receiver would be the one to change everything. As Jonas sits there in shock. He asks, “Rosemary, why?”

“Why did the Giver not tell me that you are alive?”

Rosemary said, “My dad did not tell because he did not trust you, but because no one could ever know that I was still alive, or else they would try to hunt me down and kill me.”

As Jonas and Rosemary are playing with Gabe and getting to know each other, there is a knock at the door. Rosemary answers the door and exclaims, “Father!” And peeking from behind him was Fiona. Jonas stood there shocked and cried “Fiona?” (Jessica, November 14, 2017, interview-conversation session five)

After the story had been completed, the IPA-researcher asked Jessica if she realized what had happened. Unfortunately, she did not make a connection between her movements and her thinking of big and small ideas. I believe if we had more sessions that required writing more stories we could have consolidated this moment of realization that I had but that was not shared by Jessica. Jessica was motivated to act out the story but did not attribute the fluency in her thought process to the movements she was making with her body. Jessica was experiencing a proximal zone of development (Vygotsky, 1933/1978, p. 86). This approach could have become an independent strategy for her with continued practice using a scaffold support (i.e., as much support is provided by the researcher until Jessica takes on that knowledge and starts to apply it on her own).
**Interpretation: Affect knowledge motivation and attribution.** Tasha has not been accustomed to attributing her success in school to specific learning strengths that she has. However, the visualization strategy for spelling made a big difference for her because successful results were almost immediate, and she internalized this strategy and was motivated to use it not only with spelling but she transferred it to memorizing her timetables in math. These experiences boosted her confidence in herself as a learner. In addition, the level of anxiety that Tasha described when called upon to read or answer questions aloud in class indicates that there may be something else involving her level of worry that interferes with her ability to read fluently. It is beyond the scope of this research to explore Tasha’s anxiety, but it is of note that this does affect her ability to feel comfortable reading out loud in class.

Eric experienced a decline in motivation that he attributes to the courses he was required to take in Grade 9. For example, the school was aware that Eric preferred being an active learner, so he was placed in courses like computers and/or gym. However, Eric explained that these activities were boring to him because he was excited to learn new ideas and the main subjects like science, history and English motivated him to engage even though his reading skills were not as proficient.

Albert experienced engagement in any activities that did not require him to sit and just listen. If he could move his hands by arranging letters on a magnetic board or draw a picture and talk about a story at the same time, he was able to focus. The iPad technology engaged and motivated Albert to “read” voraciously by listening to audiobooks, at the same time as he listened to the audiobooks he made Lego figures (see Figure 12). Albert was aware that he could still understand the audio story while creating his figures in Lego.
but he did not attribute his ability to listen to involve movement – he just did it.

In conversations with Albert about stories he had read and wanted to write, Albert’s comprehension of what he was listening to reflected the Ontario Language Curriculum Grades 1–8 (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006b) description of comprehension strategies:

Identify a variety of reading comprehension strategies and use them appropriately before, during, and after reading to understand texts (e.g., activate prior knowledge through asking questions about or discussing a topic; develop mind maps to explore ideas; ask questions to focus reading; use visualization to clarify details of a character, scene, or concept in a text; make predictions about a text based on reasoning and related reading; reread to confirm or clarify meaning). (p. 97)
Figure 12. Albert’s reading space with Legos.
Albert’s Dragon Story (Figure 5) used ideas from previous *How to Train Your Dragon* stories (e.g., the one-legged evil dragon raiser), demonstrating his application of prior knowledge, as well as his illustration that depicts how he visualizes the character and the dragon. In discussing the writing of this story, Albert understood story grammar and what happens at the beginning, middle and end of stories.

Jessica’s challenge in our sessions was her constant oscillation between stating an idea then immediately shifting attention to critique the idea before trying to create another idea. It was very difficult to create a continuous flow of ideas that were connected to each other logically until she acted out the story she needed to write. The physical movements helped her to connect her ideas so that they were less disjointed. It appeared to help her stay in the moment of creating the story versus switching thoughts to verbally say or write her thoughts before all the ideas were on the page. Although I saw this ability to move and write through acting out movements, this was not something that Jessica saw as part of who she was as a learner.

**Interpretation: Researcher’s Reflections**

Since children/youth have this strong visceral response to reading tasks that are stressful, I wanted them to be able to interpret their own embodied experiences when a learning strength was discovered, so it would be a signal when they are not working with me that something unique was being learned and their bodies were talking to them affirming this new knowledge experience. In this way, the children and youth in my research study use their own lived experiences to connect this inner knowing (signaled by affect) with an external learning task (*Ordinary World*), and they are able to explicitly recognize when they are having a moment of realization because there is both a cognitive and visceral response and connection. If this happens repeatedly, then they have a way of
interpreting their body’s language telling them that they have a learning strength that can be applied to a challenging reading task. If they become familiar with this experience and have their own words and associated meanings behind those words to describe this moment, then I believe they have met their inner Magic Helper (Campbell, 1949/2008) Now, if they can trust this embodied experience, it could lead to an increased confidence and independence in negotiating reading tasks in the future and knowing how to activate their inner strengths as in Eric’s description of the “spark.” Eric’s awareness that he had a variety of learning skills that he could apply (see Eric’s six strategies, Appendix M) allowed him to connect knowledge stored separately behind the doors of his mind into a cohesive whole through his metacognitive awareness of looking for similarities and differences, patterns, and emotions. Albert had a similar strength of seeing patterns, but we did not have enough time to explore this further and apply that ability to reading challenges.

Also, as I worked with my participants, I appreciated that the moments of realization were shared. In some instances, we would experience a realization at the same time, while at other times I would realize during observations what needed to happen next. I had not expected my moments of realization to be a part of their process of discovering learning strengths. I believe these moments were possible because of my choice to stay in the learning moment with them. There were times when my mind was noisy because I was thinking about my research method and process. This occurred with Jessica, and it never felt good. However, when I let go of following a certain process and paid attention to what was happening in the moment things were different.

For example, Jessica would start with one idea when trying to compose a story and then the next thought was a commentary on the initial thought. It felt like someone
learning to drive with a lot of jerky stopping and going occurring, and I could not get
control of the situation. When I stopped trying to control or direct her by trying to impose
evidence-based composition strategies, things changed. Instead of controlling the session,
I gave Jessica time to sort out her thinking. I believe by talking out loud she processed the
teacher’s assignment expectations as well as her own thoughts. It was by my being still
and waiting for her to follow her process that she suggested acting out the story she was
trying to write for the Giver assignment. Jessica used self-talk to critique her thoughts
while moving. I noticed that her big movements coincided with main ideas and small
movements related to small ideas based on how she was critiquing herself while moving.
This was a moment of realization for me, as her use of movement was her writing aid.
When Jessica moved, her thoughts were cohesive and had a flow to them. This
experience was completely different then when she sat across from me and tried to tell
me the story.

I had a similar experience with Albert. Albert was struggling with decoding words
at the primer level. We had tried some of the EMPOWER strategies (Lovett, Lacerenza,
Steinbach, & De Palma, 2014), as he had not yet had a psycho-educational assessment
completed, which later identified visual processing as a weakness. His issue related to the
meaninglessness or the abstract nature of the alphabet letters/symbols. I believe if English
was a logographic language with the meaning embedded in the shape of the word Albert
would be successful. We tried a logographic approach by creating a picture and
integrating it into the shape of the letters (see Figure 13). The idea was to try and use a
visual and symbols to convey the meaning of the word (i.e., an integrated mnemonic).

When Albert interrupted our session by asking if we could play charades as he
played it at home with his family, I was inspired to try a game with him that I adapted in
the moment to be used for vocabulary learning. I included the description under the Affect Knowledge theme because Albert’s motivation to focus and engage in this game was high. This game became a moment of realization for me because I realized that the repetition and use of trigger words incorporated into acting out the definition used elaboration, practice, and repetition but with a different focus each time we played that reinforced the words we were learning. This game was very motivating for Albert because it followed his suggestion (Gambrell, 2011), and he brought his full attention to the words as we worked with them using a multisensory approach.

There are common characteristics between Jessica and Albert: They both have a diagnosis of attention deficit and hyperactivity, they both made suggestions to try something different, and they both use movement and imagery as a recall device. By using movement and asking them what was happening in their mind when moving, I helped them focus and engage in a reading task that previously was onerous. This approach was possible by using their natural tendency to move. They both had a learning strength that related to movement as well as using imagery. Unfortunately, these discoveries happened towards the end of our sessions together and although shared with both Albert, Jessica, and their parents, I am not sure whether they were able to incorporate them into their existing repertoire of learning skills.
Figure 13. Albert’s logograph (Albert, November 9, 2018, interview-conversation session four).
For both individuals, it was my ability to be present with them and then choosing to be spontaneous in responding to what they were asking of me that created this moment of realization. They drove the research process by their requests. It was after the activity was complete that I debriefed with them to show them what had happened. This was an outside-in process where I saw something and drew it to their attention, however, my realization did not correspond to a moment of realization for them.

With Tasha and Eric, it was an inside-out process. We discovered a learning strength through a dialogue about how they process information. They could focus on the task and think about their own metacognitive approach simultaneously and see how it applied to the reading task we were completing. In addition, this realization allowed them to take immediate ownership and apply it to other learning activities. There was an embodied sensation and emotion that accompanied this realization. In Tasha’s case, her mother told me she transferred the spelling visualization strategy to her math timetables learning. For Eric, we worked together to develop a six-step process for approaching novel and writing tasks. I believe that Eric gained confidence, independence, and efficacy because he understood how his mind works best (using videos and creating his own movie) and then selecting different strategies that are not perhaps evidence-based, but they allowed him to be proficient in making meaningful and profound connections between different literature he was reading.
CHAPTER FIVE: PARENT FINDINGS

In my research, I had two groups of participants. Chapter five functions as a second findings chapter because of the uniqueness of my participants. I had hoped that the parent findings might have reinforced or complemented the findings from the children/youth participants; however, the themes were not always similar. It is worth noting that I still experienced a moment of realization during an interview with one parent (Tasha’s Mother regarding Tasha’s chewing strategy). For these reasons, I felt it important to devote chapter five to the parent findings.

Foregrounding My Reflexivity

Creswell (2015) states that reflexivity involves “personal thoughts that researchers have that relates to their insights [my moments of realization], hunches, or broad ideas or themes that emerge during the research experience” (p. 216). I was not expecting to have my own moments of realization. While trying to get an “insider’s perspective” (Smith & Osborne, 2007, p. 53) on what was happening with the child/youth, I had my own epiphany. Smith and Osborne (2007) describe this process of getting into the personal world of a participant as “complicated by the researcher’s own conceptions; indeed, these are required in order to make sense of that other personal world through a process of interpretative activity” (p. 53). It was the interpretive phenomenological approach – the activity of the researcher trying to make sense of how the child/youth was trying to make sense of the reading task that facilitated these simultaneous ephical illuminations (i.e., researcher and child/youth sharing the same moment of realization but experienced differently). Thus, a two-stage interpretation process, or a double hermeneutic, is involved.

I am aware that it is my affect connection, as described by Gregg and Seigworth (2010), “as in the midst of inbetween-ness: in the capacities to act and be acted upon…is
the name we give to those forces—visceral forces beneath, alongside, or generally other than conscious knowing, vital forces insisting beyond emotion… drive us toward movement” (pp. 1-2). The inbetween-ness that they refer to is the SupraOrdinary World that creates this new realization because of the interaction of inner strengths (ExtraOrdinary World) and external reading tasks (Ordinary World).

Gregg and Seigworth (2010) go on to describe affect as “a force-encounter traversing the ebbs and swells of intensities that pass between ‘bodies’ (not physical)…by their potential to reciprocate or co-participate in the passages of affect” (p. 2). This description I apply to the experiences I had with children, youth and some parents when we experienced a moment of realization in a similar moment in time. Sometimes this experience would occur for me first and then, through questions and dialogue, the children/youth would experience something similar, and sometimes I had it after the children/youth described how they think or approach a reading task. I applied this same approach to working with parents: I listened and saw something that I knew I needed to make explicit by having the parent pause and discuss further an observation or statement that was made; it was my visceral response (i.e., embodied sensation) that alerted me to something unique occurring, and a teachable moment ensued.

This embodied experience that some participants experienced needs to be examined further and understood rather than just thought of as a passing sensation as Descartes (1984) proposes. Thus, through dialogue and metacognitive engagement, these sensations were given meaning, as in Eric’s use of the term “spark” and Tasha’s use of “turtle” and “cheetah” to connect this affect response to an external stimulus—a challenging reading task. As Riquelme and Montero (2013) explained about the movement associated with stress in children, this level of stress is not emotion but
connected to what Gregg and Seigworth (2010) describe as “the visceral response of affect” (p. 1).

By interacting with the parents formally in interviews and informally in conversations during the interview-conversation sessions, I was hoping to find out how parents observed and interacted with their children and youth regarding reading and reading challenges and what insights they might have. As stated from the outset, this chapter represents the findings from those interactions. I used the same reflective approach with the parents as I had with their children: I listened with curiosity regarding observations and statements that parents made and asked questions to prompt them for further details. In particular, I noticed there was a pattern in how parents realized what emotionally engaged their children during a reading event and the kinds of spaces that their children preferred as comfortable spaces to read. For example, Albert enjoys listening to audio books while playing with Lego in his room, and his parents recognized this emotional engagement and encouraged him by letting him create a comfortable space there (see Figure 14).

However, I should qualify that like all children and youth, my conversations with parents were organic and sometimes impromptu, and they were indeed idiosyncratic. For some parents, I had a series of conversations in the Brock Learning Lab and then a formal interview. For other parents, I had conversations within the Lab and then a phone call follow up. Finally, for parents like Jessica’s Mom who was very busy and who was pulled in different directions, I documented all my conversations and recollections of longer conversations with her, coupled with an email exchange.
Figure 14. Albert’s comfortable reading space with iPads.
This research has been idiosyncratic, as I stayed in the moment with the parents and whatever emerged I would be curious and explore further something a parent said that was unusual or repeated. For example, I would hear a pattern that repeated in a parent’s story about their child/youth and would be curious to ask for more details. In one instance, this led to both the parents and I having a moment of realization because of the questions that were asked and the dialogue that followed (e.g., Tasha’s Mother). I had not expected to have a dialogue about parents’ observations and responses to their child/youth’s observed behaviour that would lead to this moment or realization for me. For example, when Tasha’s mother mentioned three times during the interview process that Tasha needed to focus. I asked questions about this statement: Had Tasha’s Mother ever seen Tasha focus, and what was she doing? Tasha’s Mother described “Tasha is always chewing on something, and I tell her to stop” (Tasha’s Mother, February 28, 2018, Interview). Tasha’s Mom observed a behaviour that she believed was destructive, and she wanted Tasha to stop; yet, Tasha was focused. I asked further questions about how Tasha’s Mother could support this behaviour of chewing in a way that she was comfortable, like letting Tasha chew gum. “She loves chewing gum” (Tasha’s mother, February 28, 2018, Interview), was Tasha’s Mother’s response. This was a moment of realization for me, as I had not considered what would happen with extensive follow up with parents on their observations and responses to their children or youth.

Interpreting Findings

Once these various interviews and conversations were completed, I organized parents’ responses under three main themes versus trying to write a story using
Campbell’s (1949/2008) story framework, as the parent as Magic Helper was the prominent role that all parents shared:

- Reading History
- Parents as Magic Helpers
- Debrief on Learning Struggles

In describing the findings from the parents, I will have parent voices distributed across these three theme sections.

**Reading History**

Parents were asked to provide a brief history of reading struggles and initial reading experiences with their child and any emotions that emerged around reading together. Also, parents described and provided an image, where possible, of a favourite reading space their child/youth used and/or a description of that favourite space used with or without the parent being present (see under Theme 2 Parents as Magic Helpers).

The challenge for Tasha is she loses her place when reading and misses words. According to her mother, she is struggling to be a fluent reader at grade level and does not like to be singled out. When Tasha is the center of attention, she becomes very nervous. Tasha has been coming to the Brock Learning Lab for two years and is very motivated to improve her reading and spelling. Tasha enjoys reading and is very articulate. Tasha’s mother is not certain if there is a challenge because of the number of languages that Tasha can speak. Tasha can read in Arabic which is a right to left tracking process, whereas English is left to right. Tasha’s mother believes that Tasha is more comfortable reading in English. In addition, Tasha’s mother did share that she has problems with reading depending on the colour of paper that the print is on and feels that
Tasha has the same problem although this has not formally been assessed for either Tasha or her mother.

According to Eric’s Mom, Eric’s development seemed normal until he had epileptic seizures at age two. These seizures were severe, and he had numerous grand mal seizures during this second year. After this happened, his Mom noticed a change in his development. Once the seizures were under control, all his senses were tested and they were not the same as before the seizures.

In order to help Eric, his Mom encouraged the watching of educational television TVO, PBS, and Sesame Street to keep Eric’s mind busy. When Eric went to Senior Kindergarten (SK), he found the alphabet boring. However, Eric was very verbal and socially active. At the end of Senior Kindergarten, Eric was supposed to be reading at a beginning Grade 1 level. According to Eric’s mother, she had to fight to have him stay in SK for another year. During the second year of SK, Eric attended both morning and afternoon SK, and Mom said it helped some. Next, Mom went to the Children’s Aid Society to ask for additional help, and Eric was put in the Pathstone program. The school and Pathstone could not agree on who should provide a psycho-educational assessment. Regardless, the assessment was completed at the end of Grade 3. The school provided support, and Mom was told Eric had a mild learning disability; however, according to Mom, she was not allowed to see the report. After the assessment, Eric was given an Educational Assistant (EA) to support his learning in elementary school. Mom noted that Eric’s strength was his verbal ability, which seemed to compensate for reading struggles. According to Mom, Eric was skilled at talking others into helping him complete his work.
Both Albert’s parents participated in discussing Albert’s experiences with reading. They noticed an issue within the first two years where Albert’s speech was delayed: “When he was two years old, he wasn’t speaking any words at all. He only could say ‘eeehhh-eeeh.’ He would point and then say ‘eehh,’ and when he tried to say ‘cereal’ it was ‘eeeeooo’” (Albert’s parents, February 20, 2018, Interview). In addition to Albert’s speech delay, he experienced a reading delay: “When other kids were reading around him, he would say ‘Can you read this?’” I asked if Albert’s parents noticed a difference between Albert’s sister who was two years older and they mentioned that she did not want to read. When she would read a sentence, she would start crying because she complained that it hurt to read. Albert’s parents took her to an optometrist and the optometrist suggested that there was a problem with tracking. Albert’s sister did a visual therapy program to help her tracking, and now she reads voraciously. This program did not have the same result for Albert; however, it was determined that he did not have proper peripheral vision and had trouble with visual tracking. According to his mother, “Albert was very discouraged that the eye therapy didn’t have the same results he hoped for after seeing his sister go through it work…he seems stuck in sounding out letters.” (Albert’s parents, February 20, 2018, Interview).

Initially, Albert was informally assessed and the results indicated that he struggled with sequencing (a formal psycho-educational assessment was completed after this research was completed, which Albert’s parents shared. I have included this information in his profile). Albert struggles with reading and writing, but he enjoys telling stories, acting, and history and science if it involves stories and not timelines.

Jessica’s mother also described her daughter as having a delay in speech and reading, in addition Jessica has had problems throughout her school experience with
organizing her thoughts to write sentences and paragraphs. Jessica has a positive attitude, strong work ethic and has been very motivated to be successful in school, but she continues to struggle. As a student going to high school, Jessica’s mother says she is going to receive speech-to-text software to help; however, the software will alleviate working memory load but I am not sure that this will help Jessica generate thoughts in a logical sequence. When Jessica moved to act out her story, I saw her generating ideas in a logical sequence that was different then when she was dictating ideas to me.

**Parents as Magic Helpers**

Once parents described their children’s’ history with reading there was a natural progression to ask how they had acted as a Magic Helper in helping their child with their reading struggles. Originally, the research study was designed to allow parents to create a story about their children/youths’ experiences learning to read, or struggling with reading. However, during the interview process, parents focused on one or two challenges and then their role as a helper. During the interview, I explained the concept of the story framework but did not push parents to follow this framework because of their interest in talking about the support they provided and whether that was helpful or not, in their opinions.

Tasha’s mother tried to support Tasha’s struggles with reading by reading to her and giving her opportunities to be exposed to books. Tasha’s mother spent time reading to her often at an early age. Because Tasha’s mother learned English as a second language, she taught Tasha how to figure out a word that Tasha did not understand by using the Internet, “I told her to look up the definition and then, if she still did not understand the word, try to find a picture/image or sometimes a video.” (Tasha’s Mother, February 28, 2018, Interview). Although Tasha’s mother did not know that she was using
a semantic strategy to help Tasha decode a new vocabulary word, Tasha used this strategy because it worked. Tasha also explained to me that her mother used this strategy for her own second language learning and shared that technique with Tasha. When I asked about a special place where Tasha felt comfortable reading, Tasha’s mother shared a photograph of a tent that Tasha made with a blanket in her bedroom using her bookshelf to hold it up. This space was an emotionally comfortable place for Tasha, and Mom said she went there often to read (see Figure 15).
Figure 15. Tasha’s favourite reading spot.
Eric’s Mom has been a strong advocate for Eric and had been advocating for supports from the school and community since Eric was two years old. She provided a tutor from the Tutor Doctor who came twice a week to help Eric throughout elementary school. When a resource teacher suggested going to the Brock Learning Lab for reading support, Eric’s Mom brought him twice a week from Grade 6 to the end of Grade 9. Eric’s Mom realized that Eric was drawn to technology and reported that as technology progressed, Eric became more proficient especially with the Internet and using Google/Google drive. Eric was required to put assignments on the Google drive because teachers use Google for school purposes. In addition, Mom continued to encourage Eric to watch TVO and PBS and on the television to keep Eric’s mind busy because she recognized that he had an active mind. She believed this was important to cultivate his curiosity.

Albert’s parents’ vocations are an elementary school teacher (Mom) and a college assistive technologist (Dad). Once they were aware of the struggles that both of their children were having, they sought out supports. In Albert’s case, it took longer to find out the exact challenges and how to support those challenges. Initially, parents’ personal enjoyment of listening to audiobooks modelled and encouraged their children to do the same, “We first got the children listening to audiobooks in the car, and the Vinyl Café. … The kids called him the Story Man and asked to listen to him. Albert was probably 3 or 4 years when exposed to listening to audiobooks.” (Albert’s parents, February 20, 2018, Interview). Then, when Mom was homeschooling the children she did a lot of read aloud, “and when his sister started to read, Albert wanted to read and he was having issues with reading, so we started to be selective in giving him audiobooks to listen to.” (Albert’s
parents, February 20, 2018, Interview). This explains Albert’s enthusiasm for audiobooks and his strong listening comprehension skills. Dad tried to have Albert look at different fonts to see if that would help him with his visual processing, but it was not successful. Graphic novels have been a positive motivator for Albert, and both parents encourage him to read them and read with him. Mom said, “I notice that he wants to read more when we use graphic novels, but if there are bubbles with a lot of print in them, he will ask me to read those to him.” (Albert’s parents, February 20, 2018, Interview). Both of Albert’s parents feel that the graphic novels have increased his positive feelings towards print. They provided a favourite spot that Albert likes to go to when listening to audiobooks. He will listen to the book on his iPad and build Lego at the same time, which he really enjoys (see Figure 16).

Jessica’s father is a teacher and a lot of the support and strategies that she uses are from her father setting up a pattern for her to follow especially when it comes to studying for tests. Jessica is in constant contact with one or both parents when completing her homework and studying, so she works from the kitchen table to have easy access to parental support. Jessica’s mother helps with preparing materials from notes and textbooks so that Jessica can use repetition to remember facts. According to Jessica’s mother, “Jessica needs to be allowed to doodle and some of her teachers do not allow that in class.” (Jessica’s Mother, October 17, 2017, conversation). This awareness of Jessica’s learning style is something that Jessica’s mother has advocated for during the time at the Brock Learning Lab and she commented that, “The observations and recommendations were on point, and it truly makes me happy that the teaching style was adapted to Jessica’s learning style.” (Jessica’s Mother, December 7,
2017, email). Both parents have worked hard with Jessica to help her work with her style of learning and Jessica is improving her school performance.
Figure 16. Albert’s favourite reading space and books.
Learning Struggles

During the final interview with parents, I asked, discussed, and responded to questions that parents had about their children’s’ response to the interview-conversation sessions. Since their child was not present for this interview, parents were more candid in their responses. I was surprised by responses that parents had to movement behaviours that some of the children used to help them focus. As mentioned above, Tasha’s mother saw a behaviour of chewing that Tasha used to focus, but did not realize until we were talking how she could support the “chewing strategy.” Tasha’s mother was very aware that Tasha needed to fidget, but she did not understand the purpose of the fidgeting as a focusing technique until our dialogue. During our conversation around behaviours at home, Mom observed that, “Tasha likes to chew things, and I am always telling her to stop.” (Tasha’s Mother, February 28, 2018, Interview). When I asked if Mom noticed if Tasha was more focused when she chewed, she said “Yes. She is more focused.” (Tasha’s Mother, February 28, 2018, Interview). I went on to ask if Tasha was allowed to chew gum and Mom said that Tasha, “Loves to chew gum!” (Tasha’s Mother, February 28, 2018, Interview). This lead into a dialogue about movement and focus that seemed to work for Tasha, and Mom was more open to allow gum chewing as a strategy to support Tasha’s ability to focus.

On the other hand, Eric’s Mom was not aware of the steps that Eric used to concentrate or his specific process; however, she was able to describe his favourite space to work on reading related tasks in detail. She stated:

We have a great room with a dining table behind it and that table is used for Eric’s computer, iPad and printer. Eric was able to access the Internet and use the
television to help with homework. He claimed it as his space. (Eric’s Mother, December 8, 2017, interview)

Eric’s Mom was aware that Eric relied on technology to do his research for a project but she was not aware of his thought process in putting the research together. She had mentioned in a conversation we had of her concern about Eric’s inability to organize his thoughts so they were coherent or had a logical connection to one another. In my work with Eric, we figured out that his use of emotion, patterns, and looking for similarities and differences was a process that allowed him to connect these thoughts that seemed arbitrary. Eric’s mother felt that the support that Eric had received between the outside tutor, the Brock Learning Lab, and the research sessions had improved his ability to learn using technology, and the fact that Eric was aware of his process to help connect his ideas.

At the time of the final interview with Albert’s parents, Albert had been assessed and the psycho-educational report given to his parents. A formal diagnosis of AD/HD and reading disability with issues of visual processing, memory, executive function, and attention explained some of the struggles that Albert had been experiencing with print. However, his listening comprehension, receptive and expressive language were in the 90th percentile range. Albert’s mother expressed frustration with trying to help Albert and found that it was graphic novels that worked best for him if the print in the speech bubbles was not a full paragraph. Albert was willing to read out loud or take turns reading if the print was only one to two lines. Although Albert and his mother did not know the strategy of tap in and tap out reading (i.e., where the child/youth taps to indicate that she/he needs someone else to do the reading, then the child/youth taps back in when
she/he feels comfortable with the print), this was the way that Albert’s mother would reduce Albert’s frustration.

Jessica’s parents were aware that she needed to doodle as a coping strategy when listening to instructions for a learning task, and they supported that behaviour; however, Jessica’s Mom shared that she was not always allowed to do that at school because her teacher had a different perspective on doodling and equated that with inattention. This situation was frustrating for Jessica because the doodling helped with her focus. In terms of studying at home, Jessica followed the instructions of her parents as these related to studying by using repetition effectively, especially when she knew what it was she was supposed to study. Jessica’s mother worked with her to provide slips of paper that she could manipulate to learn definitions. Jessica’s mother stated, “Jessica does better than her sister on tests because she works so hard to learn the material.” (Jessica’s Mother, October 17, 2017, conversation). Jessica’s mother indicated that Jessica was so motivated to do well at school that her work ethic made up for cognitive challenges.

**Researcher’s Final Reflections**

There was a pattern in parents’ responses to questions that were asked and the verbal or digitally audio-recorded narratives they shared. All parents were aware of the struggles that their children were experiencing. In some cases, like Eric, Mom was aware of a medical reason for the change in his ability to learn that was not developmental. The background of Albert and Jessica’s parents being educators was an asset in their attempts to provide early and ongoing supports to help with reading struggles. Tasha’s mother relied on her own second language learning experience to provide helpful support to Tasha in learning and understanding new vocabulary. Every parent made sure that there
was a dedicated space that provided, or was associated with, positive emotions when their children/youth were involved in a reading task. Either deliberately or intuitively, these parents knew it was important that their children/youth felt good about where they were reading, as well as providing materials that encouraged them to want to read: Tasha had a tent and access to library books; Eric had access to technology while sitting in his space in the great room; Albert had the iPad and Legos in his room, so he could listen and move; and Jessica had access to parents who worked with her as partners to help her develop patterns in approaching learning tasks that increased her ability to be successful using repetition.

In closing, my experiences of listening to parents talk about their children/youth and the struggles that the family have experienced confirms the importance of dealing with emotions around reading first. These interviews confirmed that there is a level of frustration with school systems and their children/youths’ abilities to deal with the emotions related to reading tasks that are a struggle. Parents are aware of these struggles and emotions but may not understand how to address them even when they are parent-educators. For example, I tried to explain to Jessica and her mother that the strategy of hard work using repetition for tests/exams will not transfer to college or university when the professors do not disclose exactly what will be on the tests and exams. I suggested that the strength that Jessica had of using movement and creating visuals would consolidate her understanding. Jessica’s ability to focus while doodling could be transferred into creating pictures and then associate definitions with those images (see Figure 11), versus rote memory might be helpful in high school. Jessica was not receptive to this suggestion because of the positive results she had received by using repetition. In
order for Jessica to change her strategy, she would need a scaffold support (Vygotsky, 1933/1978) to take the risk to change. In the case of Albert, his parents are open to try new approaches and when I explained the idea of teaching vocabulary that was concrete (i.e., Albert could draw or visualize the word and integrate the picture meaning with the shape of the word) as a starting point, his mother was going to try that approach since there was success with Albert doing the Charades strategy.

I was excited when Tasha’s Mom knew that Tasha liked to chew to focus and loved chewing gum. Tasha’s Mom was open to letting Tasha use gum to help her stay on task. Similarly, Eric’s Mom knew the learning environment that Eric needed at home in order to thrive. The interviews with the parents not only helped the parents to look differently at their children, but it helped them to realize how they could be more supportive and aware that repeated behaviours that they witness at home contain clues to learning strengths or coping strategies that help their children to focus. These behaviours like the chewing, doodling, or Lego building increased focus and attention for those children/youth who used them. If these conversations had not occurred, the parents may not have become aware of the connection between what they observe and how they can encourage certain behaviours to facilitate reading success. I realized that as educators we need to be curious and listen to parents, as well as their children, in order to incorporate insights that parents and teachers have that can increase children/youths’ awareness of their own learning strengths, both at home and at school.
CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Good teachers possess a capacity for connectedness. They are able to weave a complex web of connections among themselves, their subjects, and their students so that students can learn to weave a world for themselves. The methods used by these weavers vary widely: lectures, Socratic dialogues, laboratory experiments, collaborative problem-solving, creative chaos. The connections made by good teachers are held not in their methods but in their hearts—meaning heart in its ancient sense, as the place where intellect, emotion and spirit will converge in the human self. (Palmer, 1998, p. 11)

I start this chapter with Palmer’s (1998) definition of good teachers as connectors because the word “connector” described my role with the children and parents involved in this study. I was both a listener and questioner of stories that I heard. In being curious about the lived experiences and embodied emotions described by children, youth, and parents, I was able to weave (Palmer, 1998) connections between children/youths’ emotional and cognitive responses to challenging reading tasks by staying in the moment with them (Krishnamurti, 2010). Through dialogue, we discussed these challenges and discovered learning strengths that were incorporated with evidence-based reading strategies (e.g., Tasha’s Imagery for Spelling/Reading Words, see Figure 10). Emotional reactions took precedence over introducing reading strategies because the emotions affected the children/youths’ ability to engage and focus on challenging reading tasks. Palmer’s (1998) description of teachers being connected within themselves, with their subject, and with their students was my experience. Teaching from the heart requires teachers to be more than subject experts.

Currently, there is a lack of training on how to discern and work with children and youths’ emotions in the classroom (Colley & Cooper, 2017). In a one-to-one interview-conversation session, there is a greater opportunity to interact and observe behaviour and emotional reactions. However, Riquelme and Montero’s (2013) research concerning the
stress response of children provides a valuable tool for teachers who may have only a passing knowledge of their students. Teachers can observe their students’ behaviour (i.e., shifting attention, movement, and seeking help) and without detailed knowledge of the student be curious as to the source of this observed emotional stress. Educators need to acknowledge the profound impact of emotions related to struggling to read, and the traumatic effect on struggling children and youth when they are required to read throughout their school day in their various subjects. Poor reading ability cannot be avoided as it is a core skill, and the constant struggle can affect both a child/youth’s motivation and self-identity/concept (Weiner, 1985). If children, youth, and their families are aware of learning strengths and can connect those strengths with evidence-based reading strategies that work for them, then a degree of independence may occur (Brownlee, Rawana, & MacArthur, 2012). The result may be that the child/youth attributes her/his reading success to personal ability versus outside remediation alone. Discernment and wisdom are needed to find a way to release the visceral response created by prolonged exposure to reading challenges by connecting children and youth to their innate abilities—abilities that they may unconsciously access while being unaware of how to explicitly apply them. This was the major finding of my research: the need for children, youth, and their parents to work with emotions and cognitive abilities that relate to innate learning strengths.

Research Questions

Returning to my overarching research question, it included elements of my theoretical lenses: metacognition and narrative; the phenomena of embodiment/lived experience narratives; and perception of phenomena, which I refer to as “affect
knowledge” (Massumi, 2015). There is a dialogic approach implicit to my methodology that I adopt to discuss thoughts and experiences children and youth had while doing an authentic reading task. The research method for my dissertation illuminated their metacognitive, narrative, and affect knowledge processes and from these dialogues themes emerged. During the research, my curiosity in probing the statements or feelings that the children/youth expressed about reading and non-reading experiences helped delineate these themes. Using cross-confirming, two independent auditors analyzed data and verified the themes of metacognition and narrative with subthemes relating to self-awareness of learning style and emotions; embodied knowing and emotions; metacognition; and strategy usage. The affect knowledge theme and subthemes of motivation and attribution emerged by asking the children/youth to provide their own definitions for each emoji image and then during reading tasks to check in and evaluate how they were feeling. My research questions were as follows:

1. How does a dialogic approach to conducting research illuminate children and youths’ struggles with learning how to read? Does it lead to discoveries by children/youth, parents, and IPA-researcher about emotional knowledge and learning strengths that are exhibited through embodied responses?

Subquestion 2 relates to metacognition and the use of narrative to create an awareness of both cognitive and emotional responses, and subquestion number three relates to the use of images such as the emojis (Chen, 2017) and the Emoji Emotional Engagement Scale (adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016; see Appendix A) to increase cognitive and emotional awareness and knowledge:
2. How does Campbell’s (1949/2008) Hero/Heroine’s Journey as a metaphoric device elicit stories about reading struggles (from participants) and familial stories about reading struggles? In what ways does the metaphor create a connection to an embodied-emotional awareness of reading difficulties for children and youth and their families?

3. What are the outcomes when children/youth participants create visual artifacts (e.g., digital pictures of reading spaces, diagrams of metaphors related to reading, etc.) based on their perceptions and emotional reactions to their Hero/Heroine’s Journey? How do these visual artifacts contribute meaning to their stories?

Before presenting the children/youths’ profiles, I remind the reader that each participant’s session began with questions about the previous week at school and types of assignments that were completed. I sat beside each child/youth in a large room where we had access to the SMART board, iPads, laptop, flipchart paper, markers, and doodle paper. From my perspective, the choice of sitting beside the child/youth created a learning space of equality. This seating arrangement made it easier to talk about emotional responses, as well as drawing visuals as part of communicating ideas while talking. Before each session, I asked participants permission to digitally audio-record our sessions, and I reviewed with the children/youth their personal Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale (adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016) that was created during their first interview-conversation session. In the next four sections, I reflect on the lived experiences and new learning that occurred with the participants in the research study.
Discussion: Looking Back and Moving Forward

My research was conceived from a visceral affect-response to my PhD program struggles and lived experience. Once I connected my stress and emotional experiences to the lived experiences of children and youth who struggled cognitively and emotionally with their reading process, I had the focus for my research. My own terminology and vocabulary have evolved throughout this research process, as I began the research I used literature and descriptors that related to emotions; however, my research led me deeper into the visceral experiences associated with affect that are not the same as emotions, and were described most effectively by Massumi (2002, 2015) and Gregg and Seigworth (2010).

Massumi (2015) describes emotion as a part of affect because it draws on specific memories associated with a particular emotional state: “No one emotional state can encompass all the depth and breadth of our experiencing of experiencing. … The same is true of conscious thought. … There is no way they can all be actually expressed at any given point” (p. 5). Massumi (2015) states that just because these emotions and thoughts are not expressed does not mean that they are absent; instead, they are held in potential; there is the possibility for all “associated memories, habits and tendencies to be expressed, but these are held in potential. … Affect as a whole, then, is the virtual co-presence of potentials” (p. 5). I believe that this potential for multiple lived experiences to be triggered can occur for some children/youth in a magnitude that causes a visceral response when reading challenges occur. There is a cumulative memory effect caused by struggling to read daily through numerous school subjects, and then children and youth are asked to practice more reading at home because parents are concerned with the gap in
their child/youth’s reading ability. This yields an affect potential associated with reading that is traumatic because there is no relief from the numerous school subjects and related memories and lived-experiences of struggling with reading that over time have an exponential impact on self-identity and motivation.

This embodied response goes beyond emotion or an affect state and is visceral because of the magnitude of sensations associated with the stimulus of the reading task. Gregg and Seigworth (2010) describe the body’s ability to experience affect and to be impacted by affect. They suggest that embodiment not only relates to affect but to cognition as well and that the two are intertwined. In Eric’s case, he describes a moment of realization as a “spark” and the bodily sensations and thoughts are experienced almost in unison, and Tasha talks about “happy butterflies” when the Imagery Spelling/Reading Strategy is realized as working with her learning strength of using visual memory. Gregg and Seigworth (2010) suggest that the use of affect is a name given to the forces that drive visceral forces that result in movement in the body, thought processes, or in an inability to respond because of being overwhelmed. It is these forces that are experienced in a depth that the use of the term visceral indicates a more profound bodily response. Riquelme and Montero (2013) described stress responses in children when stressed which I have extrapolated to apply then to youth as well when it comes to reading challenges. This movement language expresses these forces that Gregg and Seigworth (2010) label as insisting on expression beyond emotion. Visceral response is a descriptive phrase that I believe captures the intensity of lived experience and embodied emotions of the children/youth and families in my study.
I have struggled to describe how I have worked with the children/youth because my research method involved suspending my research agenda as a linear process and being curious as I listened to narratives and allowed the research to be fluid and evolve. It is difficult to describe this method within one qualitative research method because there is uncertainty in how the researcher can stimulate this type of storytelling since it is not a process so much as an embodied experience and involves exploring an embodied phenomenon using narrative and arts-based data collection. The closest description I can provide in terms of teaching someone else to follow my method involves two processes: First, stay in the moment with a quiet mind, being a listener, and being curious about the vocabulary or repetition of phrases in the stories being heard (Krishnamurti, 2010); and second, asking open-ended questions that prompt further storytelling (White, 2007). In addition, I used an awareness of repetition of vocabulary within a story told, and I applied the metaphor of the hero/heroine on a journey to emotionally laden reading stories. For example, White (2007) talked about individuals using specific vocabulary to describe an experience, and White emphasized the importance of allowing the individuals to create their own vocabulary that is meaningful to them (e.g., the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale adapted from Martinovic et al., 2016, with permission). This approach allowed the child/youth to describe her/his emotions and each description reflected embodied emotions that were unique to the individual. I would listen for words or phrases that were repeated and then ask questions about those specific words or phrases. Campbell’s (1949/2008) steps of the Hero’s Journey was a useful support because it fit most of the children/youths’ lived experiences with reading, and it allowed us to talk
about their lived experiences and embodied emotions of struggles, failures, and successes within a creative story context.

In my research, I looked at the specific phenomenon of embodiment as it related to reading and awareness of learning strengths. Taipale (2014) described the perception of something occurring in the external environment as an awareness of an embodied response. I have called this description, a moment of realization of reading strength. It is what Taipale (2014) described as an embodied condition or lived experience triggered through this new awareness. Eric was able to describe his moment of realization, as an embodied reaction to the cognitive realization of new ideas, and I experienced a moment of realization that was embodied while listening to his description. Lincoln (2005) describes this as the reforming of roles between the researcher and the research participant that it is nonlinear, or as Fine et al. (2000) describe a fluidity that allows the researched to be the researcher and vice versa. This reversal of roles occurred in particular when I was working with Eric and Tasha. Palmer (1998) relates this to teaching from the heart where there is a convergence of emotions, intellectual activity, and spirit. When this convergence is shared between a teacher and student, they create a unique space where self-awareness of something new occurring in learning potential emerges.

My approach with the children and youth using them as heroines and heroes in their own stories helped them to engage in the dialogue. A rapport developed because I allowed them to have a voice and talk about their lived experiences, emotions, and visceral responses to challenging reading tasks. The process that I followed did result in every child/youth being aware of learning strengths, and in the case of two of the children/youth, they took ownership of what they discovered and were able to apply it
independently. Perhaps with more time, I could have worked with the other two children/youth, so they had more practice and experience with their innate learning strengths to use them independently.

The challenge in writing the conclusion to my dissertation is to convey the complicated interplay between cognitive analysis of a reading task, the accompanying visceral phenomenon, and moments of realization between the researcher and the researched. How do I extrapolate these findings to a larger application for teachers and students in an educational setting? I believe the answer to this question involves three things: teachers being in the moment with students where the teacher is not thinking of a solution but listening for repetition in descriptors the student uses when describing her reading experience; the teacher becomes curious and engages in a dialogue about particular words and phrases the student uses to describe a reading challenge; and finally, the teacher and student’s awareness of embodied/visceral responses to specific cognitive reading tasks and the emotional impact of those tasks on engagement may provide cues as to the specific evidence-based reading strategy that could be applied.

It was this desire to connect visceral sensations to cognitive demands through dialogue with children and youth that led me to have them pay attention to external behaviours that were rooted in visceral responses to struggles and successes with reading tasks (this is where I applied Riquelme and Montero’s (2013) stress behaviour observations). I wanted children/youth to value their own bodily sensations as a language that needed to be understood in order to guide them into choosing reading strategies that work with their unique learning strengths, and for them to avoid those that had a detrimental effect on their emotions and wellbeing. For example, Jessica advocating with
teachers for her right to be allowed to doodle in order to focus during explanations of school learning tasks. I believe that if children/youth are given the opportunity or practice pausing and reflecting on their thinking processes and embodied responses (metacognition and meta-affect), they may experience moments of their inner Magic Helper (Campbell, 1949/2008) arising to assist them. If these experiences occur more often, then I believe they will be motivated to continue to engage in a challenging reading task and attribute their success to their own abilities as much as from help from teachers, parents, and tutors (Fisher & Frey, 2012, 2014).

This realization was possible because of White’s (2007) emphasis on asking counselling clients to articulate moments of positive and negative experiences by creating their own vocabulary. I adapted this counselling technique to use with children and youth when describing their lived experiences with reading and reading struggles. Also, I created a way of checking in emotionally on the effect of a specific reading task by creating a lexicon for emotions based on familiar emoji images. These images helped the children/youth to anchor bodily sensations and cognitive descriptions of feelings to a concrete visual. I then connected those visuals to a scale adapted from the Observation Scale created by Martinovic et al. (2016). Words/phrases became the triggers to moments of realization, which happened numerous times. Not in the sense of an “Aha!” but in the experience surrounding that aha/spark moment when there was a palpable space created, and within that space, there were two individuals with separate bodies connected or co-joined by a mental focus on deconstructing thoughts and images that occurred during a reading challenge, and within that context something unique emerged (Gregg & Seigworth, 2010).
This palpable space that was created was unique because of the visceral response that signalled to the child/youth and myself that something was happening. This prompted a dialogue between us that became the pathway to explore what was slowly emerging. Then, when it became recognizable as an embodied knowing it affirmed the cognitive analysis. In other words, the two separate experiences were co-joined, and that co-joining created the *SupraOrdinary World*. This *SupraOrdinary World* was not only experienced by the children/youth but also by myself as the IPA-researcher. My experience involved a realization of a learning strength I observed in the children/youth and when I elaborated on what I saw and asked questions on what was happening cognitively for some of the children and youth they experienced a *moment of realization* that we then discussed in terms of her/his cognitive and bodily experience.

Moving forward. I developed a model and process for recognizing and mapping this research, so a method could be followed (see Appendix F). In this way, these lived experiences that the children/youth and I had were not arbitrary, but a discovery of an approach that can be accessed through paying attention to initial visceral responses occurring even before cognitive awareness or recognition of a challenge emerges. I call these visceral responses “breadcrumbs.” If I am able to teach children/youth to pause when these bodily sensations appear, then think about their learning strengths and try known strategies to see which increases this visceral response or decreases it, they may have a positive solution to dissipate or manage visceral responses. If children/youth, parents, and educators are aware of the importance of these affect breadcrumbs and are encouraged to work with cognitive solutions to either enhance or lessen the affect in a positive way. Then, these breadcrumbs become a strategy in children/youth and parents
affect tool kit. There emerges a nonverbal language that can help to lessen the trauma of struggling to read.

**Implications for Theory**

Visceral responses to challenging reading tasks and discovery of personal learning strengths through embodied sensations, like any new language, must be learned in order to use it effectively. I am talking about learning the language of affect, and it has common features that we all share, but it is also unique to the individual. If parents and educators can help children/youth to interpret this language, then the visceral responses that occur related to reading and ensuing trauma when they are not resolved can be lessened. I believe we need to use a bottom-up approach to affect, just like learning to read. This approach would start with dialoguing with young children (although anyone can use it at any age), and it involves the work of Riquelme and Montero (2013) because they describe the observable behaviours of children who are under stress. These behaviours of shifting attention, movement, and seeking help communicate the embodied reaction to a stressful reading task to an observant educator or parent (see Appendix B). Parents and educators usually respond to stress behaviour of movement, shifting attention, and seeking external support by identifying the external stressor and responding to the external world reading event (Campbell, 1948/2008) by helping the child/youth sound out the word or correct the spelling. However, I am suggesting that we need to pause and be curious in asking them what are they feeling in their body when we observe these outward behaviours, as the two are connected.

I have used Campbell’s (1949/2008) monomyth as a template that benchmarks particular emotional and cognitive responses to reading challenges and depicts the
emergence of a moment of realization (see Appendix F). I am using the Hero’s Journey narrative to draw attention to embodied responses to both evidence-based reading strategies failures and successes (Ontario Government, 2003). I define the learning successes as moments of realization which relates to Merleau-Ponty’s (1992/2014) description of reciprocity and supports White’s (2007) approach to narrative as a dialogue where I as the IPA-researcher do not impose my perceptions and method on the children/youth and their families but rather, as Merleau-Ponty describes, allow them to be active contributors to the process of discovering a learning strength that incorporated elements of an evidence-based strategy (Watson, Gable, Gear, & Hughes, 2012). I believe my approach was unique and increased self-efficacy for two of the children/youth in my study because I did not allow a researched strategy supported by empirical data to take precedence over the emotional response of the child or youth to that strategy. If I had imposed these evidence-based strategies without considering the children/youths’ emotional and cognitive abilities and reactions, I would have been enacting, “one person’s world…enveloping the other’s, and one would feel alienated to the benefit of the other” (Merleau-Ponty, 1992/2014, p. 373). Instead, I followed Merleau-Ponty’s advice to “commit to living in an inter-world where I make as much room for the other as I do for myself” (p. 373). This is what he meant as reciprocity and what I believe Palmer (1998) describes as connectedness. I may be an expert in evidence-based reading and learning strategies, but if the child/youth does not internally connect, that is, emotionally and cognitively respond to the strategy because it resonates with existing abilities, I have not “made room for the other.”
It was by using Riquelme and Montero’s (2013) observation of stress tools that I would ask questions about children/youths’ observed behaviours and what they were feeling. Especially in observing and experiencing moments of realization, or as my major theorists describe: “unicity of cognito” (Merleau-Ponty, 1992/2014, p. 373), “conditioned co-arising” (Kurak, 2003, p. 343) or “abduction” (Massumi, 2015, p. 9) facilitated by the interaction and integration of what Campbell (1949/2008) describes as the two worlds. During these two-world interactions and/or integrations, there are moments when awareness of learning strengths emerges (i.e., the SupraOrdinary World opens and a moment of realization occurs).

This moment of realization awareness is signalled by embodied sensations that Husserl (1931/2012) describes as transcendent phenomenology that focuses on bodily sensation and is not based on cognitive facts but on “essential Being” (p. 4). This new awareness was possible by exploring with children/youth their embodied experiences through a dialogue that asked them to develop their own vocabulary around these embodied experiences and emotions, which was captured using the Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale adapted from Martinovic et al. (2016). Palmer’s (1998) image of the educator as a weaver applies to my work, as I observed children/youths’ embodied responses to challenging reading tasks and engaged in dialogue to deconstruct their lived experiences. Together we weaved an understanding of emotional responses to reading and set up a framework within which to interpret their reactions by associating images with embodied experiences.
Implications for Future Practice

My research focused on the impact of emotions on reading and how meta-affective awareness helped to increase awareness of metacognitive processes. Metacognitive processes involved children/youths’ thinking about their own reading abilities and their realization that the sensations they feel in their body relate to strong emotions that can be used to uncover cognitive abilities. By increasing awareness of their emotional responses, children/youth can increase awareness of their own thinking processes as well. According to Gottman, Katz, and Hooven (1997), meta-emotion/affect is a structurally organized set of emotions and cognitions about emotions of the individual and of the emotions of others, and metacognition involves knowing what you know or thinking about your own thinking (Flavell, 1979). I have approached metacognition from a Vygotskian lens that relates meta-cognitive awareness to social interactions: “Every function in the child’s cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological), and then inside the child (intrapsychological)” (Vygotsky, 1933/1978, p. 57) and this approach is compressed into the concept of the proximal zone of development with the two inherent qualities of knowledge and control. In this quote, Vygotsky describes an outer world interaction (the printed page and being asked to read with social support) and an internalization/ independence or inner world (when with the Magic Helper(s)’/social interaction help, new abilities are internalized and external support removed). The awareness of these two worlds interacting both from an affective and cognitive perspective when support is not provided for a challenging reading task creates a visceral emotional response with associated negative thoughts. Thus, when
working with children/youth, the impact of this visceral emotional response to reading struggles needs to be a priority for both teachers and parents.

In my research, I used stories, artifacts, and images to help children and youth to examine affect and articulate what they have often found unassailable, or what causes them to feel inarticulate and insecure. The children/youth in my study had strong image-based cognitive abilities, as well as auditory and verbal skills. These faculties were the sensory faculties that allowed them to take in information, feel it, and process it into a final product: reading new sight words, a visualization spelling strategy, movement and writing, and mental video-making in order to collate information from different sources into a meaningful whole. The question I am asking at the conclusion of my dissertation is: How can this labour-intensive approach be developed into a strategy that can be taught to larger groups to proliferate knowledge on helping children/youth to become aware of personal learning strengths and apply them to challenging tasks? I have done this in a one-to-one setting. Nonetheless, can this be expanded to a whole classroom with the teacher as strategist modeller? How do I turn the narratives I captured here into a method that can be replicated by others? I have outlined briefly in Appendix F steps I believe could be developed into a method, and I have provided an overview below.

The first step is what Campbell (1949/2008) describes as the Call to Action (see Figure 1): the presentation of a reading task that may be beyond current abilities of the child or youth, or their emotional engagement with the task (Gambrell, 2011). If the task is challenging, there will probably be an emotional reaction that can be externally observed: shifting attention, movement, and seeking outside help (Riquelme & Montero, 2013). The teacher/parent needs to work with the children/youth to engage them with this
task by allowing them some choice (Gambrell, 2011). In order to engage with the child/youth, the teacher/parent begins a dialogue about what makes the reading task challenging. If the discussion leads to breaking the reading task down where the child/youth has input and ownership (Gambrell, 2011), then the child/youth *Crosses the Threshold* and the emotional resistance to the task may change. This decision by the child/youth to engage provides the teacher/parent with an opportunity to introduce an evidence-based strategy that may work with the child/youth’s unique learning strengths.

The dialogue about the learning task is part of identifying with the children/youth their learning strengths. This can be accomplished by asking what is something that the child/youth feels they do well; it might not be just school-related but outside hobbies as in the case of Eric who knew how to weld and make swords. This hobby and how Eric explained it showed that he used visuals and had strong kinaesthetic abilities. I needed to incorporate these abilities into the strategies we were using. The next few steps of Campbell’s (1949/2008) model involve trial and error or failure and persistence with the reading task (Fisher & Frey, 2014) with the teacher/parent acting as a Magic Helper and introducing a strategy then observing and asking questions about responses the child/youth has to the strategy that is being applied—this is where tweaking of that strategy occurs, so it incorporates the child/youth’s learning strengths.

Emotional engagement of children/youth is something that teacher/parent’s encourage by involving the child/youths’ interests in selecting reading texts; however, if the selected reading text is beyond the child/youth’s current ability, a scaffold of support by the teacher/parent can help with the reading struggle especially if the teacher/parent is aware of a learning strength the child/youth has (Vygotsky, 1933/1978), and if the task
of decoding new words is broken down into manageable parts, the child/youth may remain motivated to continue even when the task is difficult (Fisher & Frey, 2012). Once the First Success occurs, there is an awareness that the child/youth’s own ability was the source of the success (Attribution theory; Weiner, 1985). If this self-awareness involves both a metacognitive and embodied-emotional awareness while realizing a new learning ability, I associate this lived-moment experience with the moment of realization. Now, there is an opportunity for the child/youth’s perception of themselves as a learner to change. If the child/youth can connect thoughts and bodily sensation with this phenomenon or experience of a moment of realization (i.e., an awakening) that she/he has a learning strength, and she/he realizes it through both a cognitive and embodied reaction, then it is possible to repeat this as the scaffold support is slowly withdrawn from a teacher/parent allowing the child/youth to become her/his own Magic Helper. This self-awareness can lead to increased confidence and persistence. Campbell’s (1949/2008) model would say that the child/youth takes this newly acquired self-knowledge (metacognition and embodied-emotional awareness) back to the school setting and behaves differently towards reading. This occurred for two of the four children/youth in my study, and I believe that their emotional response to challenging reading tasks decreased because they were aware of a learning strength that they could independently apply to future reading tasks. As far as resources available to guide this approach, I have developed those in the detailed questions that I associated with each part of Campbell’s monomyth. In the future, I will modify these questions to make them relate to a school situation and create a resource tool for teachers and parents (see Appendix M [sub-Appendix G]).
In the challenges of life, we are all faced with moments of visceral responses to external stresses that we may not know how to interpret or negotiate. The one constant that we share is that these unresolved stressors impact us 24/7. There are many valuable external supports available to help limit or remove this impact. Let us compare them to the struggling reader who has many evidence-based strategies available to improve reading performance; yet, there is something missing. I believe I have found what is missing. An approach where individuals can interpret embodied responses to an external stimulus and learn their own inner affect-language that can alert, guide, and advise them as to what external strategy or support method would best work with who they are as individuals, and with their unique personality, characteristics, and responses to stressors. This affective self-knowledge, if made explicit by checking in with bodily sensations versus interpreting those sensations as something that just happens and is combined with cognitive analytical abilities, could create the potential for an inner Magic Helper emerging and assisting decision making, which is what occurred for some of the children/youth in my study. The process for this to occur is depicted in Appendix F and is a method that could be turned into a seminar for teachers and parents to use when working with children and youth who struggle with reading. This is my unique application or extension of Campbell’s (1949/2008) Hero’s Journey model to an educational application. I believe this story approach to discussing the history of learning challenges for struggling readers is more emotionally engaging when presented as a narrative because it resonates with lived experiences that teachers, parents, children, and youth have lived with during their schooling. Also, it provides a context for the struggles and hope that with perseverance there will be success as each child/youth comes to
realize that she/he has within them their own Magic Helper. Our role as educators is to help them to discover that helper.

**Implications for Future Research**

I believe educators and parents must be guided to follow the same narrative Hero or Heroine Journey concept as the children and youth in this study. I see Joseph Campbell’s (1948/2008) monomyth as the conceptual framework for a larger application. In Appendix F, I created a framework or method to guide educators and families in deconstructing some emotionally challenging reading experiences by seeing the struggle as part of a process with the potential for positive outcomes. I hope to use this framework to develop a method that incorporates visual images, “The drawing and writing process involves documenting layers of thought and using each layer as a stepping-stone to another layer” (Davidson, 2008, p. 36). There are a few resources that use the idea of drawing as a way to map life events (Bigham, 2006; Ernst DaSilva, 2001; Nobbes, 2013), which I would incorporate into Campbell’s story framework. Also, I would like to publish a practitioner paper describing this method, communicate that method through workshops, and finally, support further reading with the publication of a manual or book.

In this research study, I focused on emotions and reading because there is a gap in the literature. The embodied-emotional phenomenon needs to be a priority for educators in helping children/youth who struggle with reading to alleviate their visceral response to prolonged reading struggles. There is a larger application of Campbell’s Hero’s Journey that can be used as a guide to emotional reactions, or as a predictor of those reactions in children/youth when they are being required to do a reading task that is challenging. There are stages that children/youth either move through or stay stuck at because of
discouragement, lack of motivation, or lack of awareness of innate skills that they possess that could help them become proficient readers. Teachers and parents can use this guide to understand the emotional process that occurs when reading challenges are experienced. It is not arbitrary but predictable. I would like to do future research using the model depicted in Appendix F to test out the steps using a dialogic approach to discover learning strengths and how to apply them to reading challenges that trigger a visceral emotional response. This research will contribute further to a theory that emotional meta-awareness can guide metacognitive reading strategies because there is a connection between embodied-emotional responses, reading challenges, and the discovery of learning strengths. Metacognitive awareness is heightened by being able to interpret the visceral emotional responses possibly leading children/youth to be aware when they have a learning strength that they can apply independently by listening to their body while completing a challenging reading task.

According to Vygotsky (1934/1987), there is an interrelationship between emotions and thought where emotions and motivation support thinking and not the other way around. By changing the experience with reading through an individual knowing that she/he has the inner ability to self-help places emotion first as an experience of confidence. If this experience occurs, this emotion connects to confidence and becomes an inner strength when struggling with the reading process and leads to change in thoughts about reading:

[Thought] is not born of other thoughts. Thought has its origins in the motivating sphere of consciousness, a sphere that includes our inclinations and needs, our interests and impulses, and our affect and emotions. The affective and volitional
tendency stands behind thought. Only here do we find the answer to the final
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Appendix A

Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale

Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale – Emotional Responses to Reading Tasks

Emoji Emotional Engagement Observation Scale – Factors of possible engagement with reading based on Gaming Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emoji (Chen, 2017)</th>
<th>Descriptors from Martinovic et al., 2016</th>
<th>Literature Support from Martinovic et al., 2016</th>
<th>Child/ Youth Comments about Feelings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeming nervous/anxious</td>
<td>Anxiety (Deci &amp; Ryan, 2000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing frustration</td>
<td>[Lack of] perceived user control (O'Brien &amp; Toms, 2008)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having difficulty completing the reading task</td>
<td>Feel [in]capable (Deci &amp; Ryan, 2000); [Lack of] perceived user control (O'Brien &amp; Toms, 2008)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting distracted while trying to complete the reading task</td>
<td>[Lack of] immersion in the task* (Przybylski, Rigby, &amp; Ryan, 2010) [*Original stated game]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting effort into doing the reading task</td>
<td>Motivation (Chapman, 1997; Przybylski et al., 2010); Endurability (O'Brien &amp; Toms, 2008)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needing support/encouragement To continue with the reading task</td>
<td>[Lack of] intrinsic interest (Chapman, 1997)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paying attention to reading task</td>
<td>[Pay] Attention (Chapman, 1997; O'Brien &amp; Toms, 2008)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing enjoyment</td>
<td>Enjoyment (Przybylski et al., 2016) Positive Affect (O'Brien &amp; Toms, 2008)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Model of Struggling Reader Stress-Behaviours as Concepts Associated with Key Theories and Theorists

This visual summarizes the stress behaviours of struggling readers as described by Riquelme and Montero (2013) and the connection to theories associated with these concepts of behaviour.
Appendix C

DSM-V Reading Struggles Description

Specific learning disorder in elementary school-age children typically manifests as marked difficulty learning letter-sound correspondence (particularly in English-speaking children), fluent word decoding, spelling, or math facts; reading aloud is slow, inaccurate, and effortful, and some children struggle to understand the magnitude that a spoken or written number represents. Children in primary grades (Grades 1-3) may continue to have problems recognizing and manipulating phonemes, be unable to read common one-syllable words (such as mat or top), and be unable recognize common irregularly spelled words (e.g., said, two). They may commit reading errors that indicate problems in connecting sounds and letters (e.g., “big” for “got”) and have difficulty sequencing numbers and letters. Children in Grades 1-3 also may have difficulty remembering number facts or arithmetic procedures for adding, subtracting, and so forth, and may complain that reading or arithmetic is hard and avoid doing it. Children with specific learning disorder in the middle grades (Grades 4-6) may mispronounce or skip parts of long, multi-syllable words (e.g., say “conible” for “convertible,” “aminal” for “animal”) and confuse words that sound alike (e.g., “tornado” for “volcano”). They may have trouble remembering dates, names, and telephone numbers and may have trouble completing homework or tests on time. Children in the middle grades also may have poor comprehension with or without slow, effortful, and inaccurate reading, and they may have trouble reading small function words (e.g., that, the, an, in). They may have very poor spelling and poor written work. They may get the first part of a word correctly, then
guess wildly (e.g., read “clover” as “clock”), and may express fear of reading aloud or refuse to read aloud.

By contrast, adolescents may have mastered word decoding, but reading remains slow and effortful, and they are likely to show marked problems in reading comprehension and written expression (including poor spelling) and poor mastery of math facts or mathematical problem solving. During adolescence and into adulthood, individuals with specific learning disorder may continue to make numerous spelling mistakes and read single words and connected text slowly and with much effort, with trouble pronouncing multi-syllable words. They may frequently need to reread material to understand or get the main point and have trouble making inferences from written text. Adolescents and adults may avoid activities that demand reading or arithmetic (reading for pleasure, reading instructions).

Adults with specific learning disorder have ongoing spelling problems, slow and effortful reading, or problems making important inferences from numerical information in work-related written documents. They may avoid both leisure and work-related activities that demand reading or writing or use alternative approaches to access print (e.g., text-to-speech/speech-to-text software, audiobooks, audiovisual media). (APA, 2013, p. 71)
Appendix D

Permission to Use Hero’s Journey (Figure 1)

Sharon Moukperian

From: Veronica Sicoe <veronica.sicoe@gmail.com>
Sent: August-04-15 4:20 PM
To: Sharon Moukperian
Subject: Re: Asking Permission to Use your Hero’s Journey Figure

Dear Ms. Moukperian,

I hereby give you permission to use my illustration of the hero’s journey for your writing. I’m glad you found it useful, and hope it will be a good instrument to you.

Wish you success with your work, and good luck! ☺

Regards,

Veronica Sicoe
Science-Fiction Writer and Blogger

Author of The Deep Link (The Ascendancy Trilogy Book One)

Email: veronica.sicoe@gmail.com
Website: veronicasicoe.com
Newsletter: veronicasicoe.com/author-newsletter
Facebook | Twitter | Google+ | Goodreads

On Tue, Aug 4, 2015 at 10:00 PM, Sharon Moukperian <smoukperian@brocku.ca> wrote:
Dear Ms. Sicoe,

I am a PhD student at Brock University. I am completing a part of my written work for evaluation by the university. I would like to use your model of the Hero’s Journey that is based on Joseph Campbell’s work. In order for me to include your figure in my writing I need a response from you by email giving me permission to do so. I am not selling any of my written work and I have referenced you and your website in my writing. However, I need an email response from you to ensure that I have your permission to use the figure. I have attached it below for your convenience. Thank you for considering my request.

Warm regards,
Sharon Moukperian
Appendix E

Spiral of Narrative Inquiry Artifact

New Experience Emerges

Alternative Storyline

Metacognitive Change

Emotional Change

Physiological Change

Moment of Realization
Appendix F

Moment of Realization Model Artifact: Interview Conversations and the Opening of the SupraOrdinary World

THE HERO IN NATURAL ENVIRONMENT: *School/Brock*

**14. TAKING NEW PLACE IN OLD WORLD:**
Youth uses new strategies in school

**13. RESTORING ORDER:**
Embodied Emotions changed towards reading

**12. Stepping Up to Final Challenge - Success:**
Confidence as Magic Helper

**11. ACCEPTING THE NEW ROLE:**
Application of new LS

**10. DISCARDING OLD SELF:**
3rd SupraOrdinary Moment - Perception of self as Magic Helper

**9. GRAND TRIAL, REVELATION & INSIGHT:**
Tutoring 2nd SupraOrdinary Moment

**ExtraOrdinary World**

*Shared Tutoring Experiences, Embodied Emotions, Perceptions SUBJECT BODY*

**SupraOrdinary Moments of Realization**

**Ordinary World - Struggling Reading Task**

**4. CROSSING THE THRESHOLD:**
Tutoring Begins & Learning Strengths (LS) Discovered

**5. TRIAL & 1ST FAILURE:**
Unsuccessful application of LS

**6. MEETING ALLIES & ENEMIES:**
Struggle and realization of LS

**7. GROWTH, NEW SKILLS:**
Practice of new skill

**8. 1ST SUCCESS:**
SupraOrdinary Moment

**1. CALL TO ACTION:**
Youth registered in Reading Support Program

**2. REFUSAL OF THE CALL:**
Youth emotional resistance to reading/reading support

**3. MEETING THE MENTOR:**
Tutor and Youth Meet
Appendix G

Matryoska Nesting-Doll Artifact: Theorists’ Contributions to Research Methodology

1. Overarching Framework & Inter-actionist Approach

2. Externalizing the Problem and Image Representation

3. Perceptions of Struggling Reader and Family Phenomena

4. Embodied-Emotions Lived Experience
## Appendix H

### At-A-Glance Theoretical Framework Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>At-A-Glance Table of Theories in the Embodied Reading Process</th>
<th>1. Narrative Inquiry and Arts-Based Data Collection</th>
<th>2. Embodied Emotions Phenomena and Phenomenology of Perception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Narrative provides an opportunity to locate participants’ stories within Campbell’s monomyth during a struggling reading task.</strong> Experiences are captured by being curious, encouraging the use of art, and entering into a dialogue about the struggling experience.</td>
<td><strong>Perceiving the Moment of Realization</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>The task of reading and the struggle associated with it brings out emotions and bodily sensations that are associated with personal learning strengths and weaknesses.</strong> The phenomena of new self-knowledge through the experience of a SupraOrdinary moment: A mental connection elicits a bodily reaction made possible through the dialogue/social interaction between researcher and participant. <strong>The impact of this SupraOrdinary moment depends on the interpretation that the participants associate with the cognitive realization and corresponding affective and bodily sensations. This moment is captured by the researcher through questions that prompt the participant to describe the phenomenon and the meaning that the participant associates with that experience.</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### At-A-Glance Table of Theories in the Embodied Reading Process (Cont'd)

| 3. Social Constructivism and Metacognition | Zone of Proximal Development – Lev Vygotsky (1933/1978) | The social interaction as the struggling reading task is discussed provides the opportunity for SupraOrdinary moments to occur and the researcher uses her observation of natural occurring ways of being with text and creating artifacts that are shared with the participant to increase metacognition related to personal learning strengths used during a challenging reading task. |


Appendix I

Struggling Readers’ Questions

Ordinary World – External Events Story-Line

1. Beginning of the Story – The Problem – Initial Interview

1.1 The Hero in his natural environment: Questions/Stories will be asked about reading and the reading process in initial personal interviews with struggling readers separate from parents. For example, “Can you tell me what you read at home/when you read/how you like to read?

1.2 Call to Action: Questions leading to stories/narratives about the history of reading performance and possible feelings around reading. For example, “Can you remember the first experience with reading? What was it? How did you feel?

1.3 Refusal of the Call: Questions/Stories around any barriers to responding to the reading. For example, “Can you remember your first experience reading? What was it like? How did you feel? Were there challenges? If so, what were they?

1.4 Meeting the Mentor: Questions leading to stories/narrative about something that changed (e.g., Could be Psycho-Ed assessment; resource person, friend, reading strategy, etc.). For example, “Was there something that happened that changed how you felt about reading? If so, what was it? What changed?

This ends the section on Ordinary World questions. This section helps in gathering the historical facts that relates to identifying the Problem in terms of Story Grammar – where the Problem becomes the Call to Action. Next, questions are asked that involve the Middle part of Story Grammar where there are several attempts to solve the
problem. These questions relate to the interview-conversation experience. The researcher and youth are involved in an authentic reading task (outward visible event) and attempt to find possible solutions to the challenging reading task. Asking questions about the lived reading experience of the struggle-attempts connects the outward visible events with the ExtraOrdinary World of the participant’s inner values, beliefs and perceptions involving emotions, thoughts, cognitive processes, and perceptions. This phenomenon occurs within social interactions between the researcher and participant in the form of the dialogues during the interview-conversation process. Capturing this lived reading experience of struggling to read involves multiple lenses that will be accessed by developing questions to generate narratives that use the stimulus of the struggle to deconstruct the embodied response to that struggle – the lived reading experience phenomena.

**ExtraOrdinary**

World – Inner Embodied Responses Story-Line

2. **Middle of the Story – Finding Solutions – The Six Interview-conversation Sessions**

2.1. **Crossing the Threshold**: Questions leading to stories/narrative regarding first steps forward into a possible solution - What were they? How did they come about? How did you feel about this? What happened?

2.2. **Trial and First Failure**: Questions leading to stories/narrative: -What happened after first try…was it successful? Why or why not?
2.3. Meeting Allies and Enemies: Questions leading to stories/narrative - Who were these people or things? How did you feel about them? Did one group outnumber the other? Why or why not? What did you do?

2.4. Growth, New Skills: Questions leading to stories/narrative - What was the growth? When did you notice it? How did it come about? What were the new skills? How did you acquire these skills? How did you know they were working or not working?

2.5. First Success: Questions leading to stories/narrative - What was the first success? How did it come about? How did you feel about it? Why do you think you were successful? What did it mean to you...to your family?

3. End of Story – Discovery of Learning Potential

3.1 Grand Trial Revelation and Insight: Can you remember a difficult moment when learning to read? What can you tell me about the moment? Why was it difficult? (break it down to what individual looked like when struggling...what did individual sound like when struggling...what did individual feel like when struggling).

3.2. Discarding Old Self: Questions leading to stories/narrative - What has changed for you? How do you see yourself as a reader now? How do you feel about yourself as a reader/parent? Can you tell me a little story?

3.3. Accepting the Role: Questions leading to stories/narrative – What would happen for you to see yourself as a reader? What would that look like for you, sound like, feel like? Can you tell me a little story about that?
3.4. **The Road Back:** Questions leading to new alternative story/narrative – What has or has not changed for you? How does that feel? Can you tell me a story about this change/ non-change?

3.5. **Stepping up to the Final Challenge – Success:** Questions leading to stories/narrative about what is different - How do you see yourself as a reader? How will you use what you know about your abilities when at school? What has changed in your perception of yourself? What do you feel about what you know? Is it different? Why or why not?

**Return to Ordinary World – Hero Finds a Place**

4. **After Story – The Final Interview**

4.1. **Restoring Order:** Questions leading to stories/narrative. For example, “What did you learn during your interview-conversation sessions? Did anything change in how you feel about reading? Why or why not? If something changed, what was it? How did it change? What was different for you?”

4.2 **Taking a New Place in Old World:** This would represent the final interview where we talk about the story that was written and what observations, experiences, or feelings have emerged from the process of writing a personal narrative. Were there any insights, new ideas or perspectives that emerged from this experience, if so what were they, and why do the participants think these new experiences/beliefs/insights occurred?
Appendix J

Parents of Struggling Readers’ Questions

Ordinary World – External Events Story-Line

1. Beginning of the Story – The Problem – Initial Interview

1.1. The Hero in His Natural Environment: Questions/Stories will be asked about reading and the reading process in initial personal interviews. For example, “Can you tell me what you read at home/when you read/how you read with your child/youth?”

1.2. Call to Action: Questions leading to stories/narrative about the history of reading performance, perceptions and feelings around reading from parents’ living with the youth’s struggles to read. Tell me a story of when your child first started to read. What was that like for you as a parent? What was that like for your child? When were you aware that there may be challenges with reading for your child?

1.3. Refusal of the Call: Questions/Stories around any barriers or responds to efforts to help the youth with reading. What happened? What did you do? How did you feel about the situation? What did you notice about your child’s feelings about the situation? Was there resistance on the part of your child? Why or why not?

1.4. Meeting the Mentor: Questions leading to stories/narrative about something that changed (e.g., Could be Psycho-Ed assessment; resource person, friend, reading strategy, etc.).
Can you tell me a story about someone/people who you feel helped your child she struggled to read? Who were they? What happened? What did they do for you or your child?

At this point the Ordinary World with Facts about the Families’ Reading History ends, and Story Grammar of the “Problem” being introduced at the beginning of the story begins. This corresponds to the Call To Action, which is the family’s experience of their child going to school to learn to read. The Middle part of the story is where different solutions by parents are attempted or interventions to help the child and her family cope with the struggles to learn to read. The End of the story occurs when a solution or possible solution is discovered and how that solution or possibility affects the family’s story and/or becomes the beginning of another story. Even though the story grammar has a simple framework (i.e., beginning, middle, and end), the outward descriptions of specific reading strategy interventions with a social context (at school and at home) have a corresponding inner effect on the family members’ emotions, perceptions, values, and beliefs. It is hoped that this inner landscape can be accessed through the use of language but also by using digital pictures that the family can take to express some of the story experiences that go beyond the limitations of spoken or written language.

ExtraOrdinary World – Inner Embodied Responses Story-Line

2. Middle Of the Story – Finding Solutions

2. 1. Crossing the Threshold: Questions leading to stories/narrative regarding first steps forward into a possible solution.

Can you tell me a story about what happened when you realized that reading was different for your child?
What steps did you take? How did you approach possible supports? How did you feel about this? What happened?

2.2. Trial and First Failure: Questions leading to stories/narrative - What happened after first try? Can you tell me a story about the things you did as a family to try and help her to read? Was it successful? Why or why not?

2.3. Meeting Allies and Enemies: Questions leading to stories/narrative about others who may be involved.

Can you tell me a story about other things you did with the school/community to try and help with reading? Who were these people or things? What helped with the struggle to read? What did not help or maybe even hurt? How did you feel? Did you rely on one support source more than another? Why or why not? What else did you do?

2.4. Growth, new skills: Questions leading to stories/narrative - What was the growth or lack of growth? When did you notice it? How did it come about? What were the new skills? How did you acquire these skills? How did you know they were working or not working?

2.5. First Success: Questions leading to stories/narrative - What was the first success? How did it come about? How did you know there was a change? How did you feel about it? Why do you think you were successful? What did it mean to your family?

3. End Of Story – Observation of Struggling Readers’ Learning Potential

3.1. Grand Trial Revelation and Insight: Can you remember a difficult moment when your child was learning to read? What can you tell me about that moment?
Why was it difficult (e.g., break it down to what individual looked like when struggling, what did individual sound like when struggling, and/or what were your feelings when observing the struggle?).

3.1. Discarding Old Self: Questions leading to stories/narrative - Was there a moment when something changed? What was it? What changed? How did it change? How do you feel about this change in your child? How did you feel as a parent? Did this change affect your relationship with your child and reading? Why or why not?

3.2. Accepting the Role: Questions leading to stories/narrative - Can you tell me a story about something that changed in your experience with your child’s struggle to read? How did that affect you as a family? What was it? How did you know there was a change? How did you feel about that change? How do you see your child as a reader now? What has or has not changed in how you see your child as a reader? What would need to change for you to see your child differently? What would you describe as a good reader?

3.3. The Road Back: Can you tell me a story about how you see yourself as a family moving forward to help your child continue to become an even better reader?

3.4. Stepping up to the Final Challenge – Success: Questions leading to stories/narrative - Can you tell me a story about what things might still be a challenge to your child becoming a better reader? Why?

4. After Story or New Story

4.1. Restoring Order: Questions leading to stories/narrative.
4.2 Taking New Place in Old World: This would represent the final interview where we talk about the story that was written and what observations, experiences, or feelings have emerged from the process of writing a personal narrative. Were there any insights, new ideas or perspectives that emerged from this experience, if so what were they, and why do the participants think these new experiences/beliefs/insights occurred? What expectations do parents have for the future for their child? What predictions would they make about future reading challenges?
Appendix K

Certificate of Ethics Clearance

Brock University
Research Ethics Office
Tel: 905-688-5550 ext. 3035
Email: reb@brocku.ca

Social Science Research Ethics Board

Certificate of Ethics Clearance for Human Participant Research

DATE: 6/19/2017
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: ROWSELL, Jennifer - Teacher Education
FILE: 15-276 - ROWSELL
TYPE: Ph. D.
STUDENT: Sharon Moukperian
SUPERVISOR: Jennifer Rowsell
TITLE: Investigating the Emotional Impact of Narrative Dialogue on Struggling Readers' Discovery of Learning Potential

ETHICS CLEARANCE GRANTED

Type of Clearance: NEW
Expiry Date: 6/1/2018

The Brock University Social Science Research Ethics Board has reviewed the above named research proposal and considers the procedures, as described by the applicant, to conform to the University's ethical standards and the Tri-Council Policy Statement. Clearance granted from 6/19/2017 to 6/1/2018.

The Tri-Council Policy Statement requires that ongoing research be monitored by, at a minimum, an annual report. Should your project extend beyond the expiry date, you are required to submit a Renewal form before 6/1/2018. Continued clearance is contingent on timely submission of reports.

To comply with the Tri-Council Policy Statement, you must also submit a final report upon completion of your project. All report forms can be found on the Research Ethics web page at http://www.brocku.ca/research/policies-and-forms/research-forms

In addition, throughout your research, you must report promptly to the REB:

a) Changes increasing the risk to the participant(s) and/or affecting significantly the conduct of the study;
b) All adverse and/or unanticipated experiences or events that may have real or potential unfavourable implications for participants;
c) New information that may adversely affect the safety of the participants or the conduct of the study;
d) Any changes in your source of funding or new funding to a previously unfunded project.

We wish you success with your research.

Approved:

Ann-Marie DiBiase, Chair
Social Science Research Ethics Board

Note: Brock University is accountable for the research carried out in its own jurisdiction or under its auspices and may refuse certain research even though the REB has found it ethically acceptable.

If research participants are in the care of a health facility, at a school, or other institution or community organization, it is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that the ethical guidelines and clearance of those facilities or institutions are obtained and filed with the REB prior to the initiation of research at that site.
## Appendix L

**The Hero’s Journey Embodied-Phenomenon Theoretical-Connection Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ORDINARY WORLD</strong></td>
<td><strong>STATIC PHENOMENOLOGY</strong></td>
<td>The child/youth realizes there is a struggle to read what is in front of her/him.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Ordinary World external to the individual where the reading tasks are objects that the child/youth interacts with in the physical world.</td>
<td>The World of the Natural Standpoint—I and My world around me (Husserl, 1931/2012, p. 51). Describes how objects are recognized (i.e., manifested to consciousness).</td>
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<td><strong>Call to Action</strong>—The perception that action on a reading task is required.</td>
<td>1.a “I am aware of a world…I experience it. Through sight, touch, hearing, etc., in different ways of sensory perception” (Husserl, 1931/2012, p. 51).</td>
<td>Jessica’s suggestion to use movement to help create her story, which allowed her to equate large movements with main ideas and small movements with supporting details.</td>
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<td>2. Refusal of the Call—Initial refusal to try a reading strategy or practice one that was helpful.</td>
<td>1.b “They [sensory perception of objects] are present as realities in my field of intuition whether I pay attention to them or not” (Husserl, 1931/2012, p. 52; emphasis mine).</td>
<td>Jessica intuitively created a movement-story-making strategy but did not embrace that strategy to make it repeatable when asked to write another story. This ability existed and was a good strategy but Jessica did not pay attention to it. It just occurred naturally as she suggested doing this approach.</td>
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<td>3. Crossing the Threshold—Child/youth decides to try a different strategy that is outside their usually approach to a reading task.</td>
<td><strong>TRANSCENDENT PHENOMENOLOGY</strong>&lt;br&gt;There is an interaction or dialogue between static and genetic methods as a particular experience is researched. Because of this dialogue, some new experience occurs and needs to be made meaning of. This new experience may transcend existing knowledge, and there is awareness of this experience through a method of self-evidence (i.e., the phenomenological onlooker). Self-consciousness of this onlooker who can see the Self interacting with an Object (i.e., reading task) and the response to that interaction all at the same time. The observer observing the observed applies here (Krishnamurti, 2010).</td>
<td>Embodied sensations that occur in a moment of realization of learning strength when a different approach to a reading task is attempted: Jessica was encouraged by the IPA-researcher to use images to study for her precipitation test versus writing out definitions. Jessica was initially reticent but tried it. Eric described a moment of recognizing something new about his thinking process, and he experienced this moment in his body as a spark: “I get excited all over my body and then I relax”. He attributed this embodied experience to a new awareness of knowledge about the world.</td>
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<td>4. <strong>Meeting the Magic Helper</strong>—Initially an external person/object that provides help. The goal is for the child/youth to become her/his own Magic Helper through the discovery of personal learning strengths.</td>
<td>2. Consciousness in relation to itself (Self-Constitution). Intersubjectivity emerges genetically from bodily experience (Taipale, 2014). The role of embodiment between subjectivity and objective world reality.</td>
<td>2.a <strong>Phenomenological Onlooker</strong>—Defined as the clearly established way of seeing or thinking about a phenomenon that the individual becomes Eric’s description of his Castle of the Mind and the doors that contain different types of knowledge and how he connects these doors of knowledge through</td>
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aware of in him or herself: the onlooker is known as transcendental-phenomenological reduction (Husserl, 1931/2012). The Observer observing the observed (Krishnamurti, 2010).

looking for behaviour patterns and emotions in stories he is reading then relating it to self, world and other texts. Eric could dialogue about the reading task, his learning strengths applied to the reading task, and his embodied sensations to new awareness. Eric did this in a rhizomal manner through question prompts that stimulated self-reflection.

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<tr>
<th>EXTRAORDINARY WORLD</th>
<th>GENETIC PHENOMENOLOGY</th>
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<tr>
<td>The Inner World of thoughts, beliefs, core values, and perceptions that interact with external social interactions and interpretation/meaning making of interactions with objects (authentic reading tasks).</td>
<td>The intentional structure of consciousness – Creation of Identity using an interaction space. It is always in motion or becoming through interactions and interpretations between Ordinary World events and ExtraOrdinary World reactions to those events within the child/youth...“the layers of meaning sedimented in the stream of temporal awareness” (Sousa, 2014, p. 28). For example, personal meaning constructed from interactions with others, the self, and authentic reading tasks.</td>
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<td>Tasha's detailed description of her inner emotions dependent upon external events. She could articulate how a reading experience affected her emotions and beliefs about herself as a reader using the emojis (Chen, 2017) and relating them to past and present events.</td>
<td>3. Consciousness in relation to other subjectivities – My interactions with the Objects in the Ordinary World and my subjective experience in relationship to my Core Values and Inner Belief response (i.e., Child/youth perceives self as a good/poor reader).</td>
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<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td><strong>Topic</strong></td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td><strong>Trial and First Failure</strong>—Engaging in trying different evidence-based reading strategies that compliment learning style strengths (i.e., visual/auditory/kinesthetic/social interaction strengths).</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td><strong>Meeting Allies and Enemies</strong>—Reading Strategies that may work or not work.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td><strong>Growth of New Skills</strong>—IPA-researcher observations and discussion of observed learning behaviour with child/youth.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td><strong>First Success</strong>—Child/youth experiences a success with an authentic reading task and use of an evidenced-based reading strategy combined with personal learning strength AND <strong>Grand Trial Revelation and Insight</strong>—Moment of Realization and experience of SupraOrdinary World embodied emotional phenomenon.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td><strong>Integration of Three Worlds</strong>—SupraOrdinary World experiences through the interaction of the Ordinary and ExtraOrdinary Worlds.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td><strong>Discarding the Old Self</strong>—Practicing the new strategy and changing perception of self as a struggling reader connecting with inner Magic Helper.</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td><strong>Accepting the New Role</strong>—Becoming an independent strategy user.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. &amp; 13.</td>
<td><strong>The Road Back and Stepping up to the Final Challenge</strong>—Success: Practice at home: Incorporating the strategy when working with authentic reading tasks.</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td><strong>Taking New Place in the Old World</strong>—Using the personal learning strength strategy independently when approaching an authentic reading task</td>
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<tr>
<th>Phenomenological <strong>Onlooker—Research Themes</strong> that emerged from transcripts and observations:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Metacognition</strong>: Self-awareness of Learning Style (Vygotsky, 1986; White, 2007).</td>
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<th>relax (see chapter four)</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Eric and Tasha were able to recognize their learning strengths and apply them independently (<strong>Discarding the Old Self</strong>—Metacognition).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jessica and Albert used movement and images intrinsically to help with reading tasks but did not reach a point of using them independently.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tasha and Eric had the experience of <strong>Accepting the New Role</strong>.</td>
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<td>Tasha used her visualization strategy not only for authentic reading tasks, but she applied this strategy to dealing with math problems: she visualized math facts by closing her eyes and seeing the image in her mind, then her mom asked her to wait for a few minutes before writing down what she had seen in her mind. Her mother described a big improvement in her math fact retention.</td>
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Appendix M

Approved REB Application

Brock University Research Ethics Board (REB)

Application for Ethical Review of Research Involving Human Participants

If you have questions about or require assistance with the completion of this form, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 ext. 3035, or reb@brocku.ca.

Selecting a Research Ethics Board

Files will be allocated to one of two REB panels based upon the type of research to be undertaken.

If your research involves any of the following, submit to the Bioscience Research Ethics Board (BREB):

- physiological measures such as EEGs, heart rate, GSR, temperature, blood pressure, respiration, vagal tone, x-rays, MRIs, CT or PET scans;
- ingestion or other use of food, beverages, food additives, or drugs, including alcohol and tobacco;
- medical techniques or therapies, including experimental medical devices;
- physical exertion beyond normal walking;
- physical movement in participants who have medical vulnerabilities (e.g., spinal cord injury, osteoporosis);
- human biological materials (e.g., tissues, organs, blood, plasma, skin, serum, DNA, RNA, proteins, cells, hair, nail clippings, urine, saliva, bodily fluids);
- interventions with the potential for physiological effects (e.g., diet, exercise, sleep restriction); and/or
- use of medical or official health records (e.g., hospital records).

If none of the above points are characteristic of your research, submit to the Social Science Research Ethics Board (SREB)

Indicate which REB panel is appropriate for this application:

☐ Bioscience (BREB)  OR  ☒ Social Science (SREB)
Return your completed application and all accompanying material to reb@brocku.ca

Researchers may submit new REB applications electronically (as PDF or Word attachments), provided that they include digital or scanned signatures. Alternatively, Principal Investigators (i.e., faculty only) may email REB applications with a note in lieu of signatures, provided that the application is sent from their Brock University email addresses. **Hard copies will be accepted by the Research Ethics Office (Mackenzie Chown D250A) until January 2015.**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>DOCUMENT CHECKLIST</th>
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<tr>
<td>2 complete sets of the following documents (one original + one copy)</td>
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</table>

**Recruitment Materials**
- Letter of invitation
- Verbal script
- Telephone script
- Advertisements (newspapers, posters, SONA)
- Electronic correspondence guide

**Consent Materials**
- Consent form
- Assent form for minors
- Parental/3rd party consent
- Transcriber confidentiality agreement

**Data Gathering Instruments**
- Questionnaires
- Interview guides
- Tests

**Feedback Letter**

**Letter of Approval for research from cooperating organizations, school board(s), or other institutions**

**Any previously approved protocol to which you refer**

**Request for use of human tissue sample in research** Please Note: this form is required for all research projects involving human tissue, bodily fluids, etc.

**Signed Application Form**
SIGNATURES

PLEASE NOTE: The title "principal investigator" designates the person who is "in charge" of the research. In this position, the principal investigator is assumed to have the abilities to supervise other researchers, be responsible for the financial administration of the project, have the authority to ensure that appropriate guidelines and regulations are followed, and be competent to conduct the research in the absence of faculty supervision. The restriction of the term "principal investigator" to faculty or post-doctoral fellows does not have implications for ownership of intellectual property or publication authorship. Given the above considerations, a student cannot be identified as a "principal investigator". However, for the purpose of recognizing a student's leadership role in the research, a faculty member may designate a "principal student investigator" below.

INVESTIGATORS:

Please indicate that you have read and fully understand all ethics obligations by checking the box beside each statement and signing below.

☐ I have read Section III: 8 of Brock University's Faculty Handbook pertaining to Research Ethics and agree to comply with the policies and procedures outlined therein.
☐ I will report any serious adverse events (SAE) to the Research Ethics Board (REB).
☐ Any additions/changes to research procedures after approval has been granted will be submitted to the REB.
☐ I agree to request a renewal of approval for any project continuing beyond the expected date of completion or for more than one year.
☐ I will submit a final report to the Office of Research Services once the research has been completed.
☐ I take full responsibility for ensuring that all other investigators involved in this research follow the protocol as outlined in this application.

Principal Investigator: Dr. Jennifer Rawsell
Signature ___________________________ Date: April 15, 2016

Principal Student Investigator (optional) Sharon Moukperian Ph.D., Candidate
Signature ___________________________ Date: April 15, 2016

Co-Investigators:
Signature ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

Signature ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

FACULTY SUPERVISOR:

Please indicate that you have read and fully understand the obligations as faculty supervisor listed below by checking the box beside each statement.

☐ I agree to provide the proper supervision of this study to ensure that the rights and welfare of all human participants are protected.
☐ I will ensure a request for renewal of a proposal is submitted if the study continues beyond the expected date of completion or for more than one year.
☐ I will ensure that a final report is submitted to the Office of Research Services.
☐ I have read and approved this application and proposal.

Signature ___________________________ Date: ___________________________
SECTION A – GENERAL INFORMATION

Title of the Research Project: Investigating the Emotional Impact of Narrative Dialogue on Struggling Readers’ Discovery of Learning Potential

1. Investigator Information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position (e.g., faculty, student, visiting professor)</th>
<th>Dept./Address</th>
<th>Phone No.</th>
<th>E-Mail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Principal Investigator</strong></td>
<td>Dr. Jennifer Rowsell</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>Faculty of Education</td>
<td>905-688-5550 Ext.6121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Principal Student Investigator</strong></td>
<td>Sharon M. Moukperian</td>
<td>Ph.D. Student</td>
<td>Faculty of Education</td>
<td>905-646-0076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Co-Investigator(s)</strong></td>
<td>Dr. Jennifer Rowsell</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>Faculty of Education</td>
<td>905-688-5550 Ext.6121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty Supervisor(s)</strong></td>
<td>Dr. Jennifer Rowsell</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>Faculty of Education</td>
<td>905-688-5550 Ext.6121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Proposed Date of commencement: ☒ upon approval, OR □ other. Please provide date

   (dd/mm/yyyy) 07/01/2017

   Proposed Date of completion (dd/mm/yyyy): 31/09/2017

3. Indicate the location(s) where the research will be conducted:
   Interviews will be conducted at the BRIC building, 130 Lockhart Drive, St. Catharines, ON in Brock Learning Lab and/or Centre for Multiliteracies in a private room with the door closed to ensure privacy and confidentiality.
   - Brock University ☒
   - Community Site □ Specify _____
   - School Board □ Specify _____
   - Hospital □ Specify _____
   - Other □ Specify _____

4. Other Ethics Clearance/Permission:

   (a) Is this a multi-centered study? □ Yes ☒ No
   (b) Has any other University Research Ethics Board approved this research? □ Yes ☒ No

   If YES, there is no need to provide further details about the protocol at this time, provided that all of the following information is provided:
Title of the project approved elsewhere: _____
Name of the Other Institution: _____
Name of the Other Board: _____
Date of the Decision: _____
A contact name and phone number for the other Board: _____

Please provide a copy of the application to the other institution together with all accompanying materials, as well as a copy of the clearance certificate / approval.

If NO, will any other University Research Ethics Board be asked for approval? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Specify University/College _____

(c) Has any other person(s) or institutions granted permission to conduct this research? ☐ Yes ☒ No
If yes, specify (e.g., hospital, school board, community organization, proprietor) provide details and attach any relevant documentation. _____

If NO, will any other person(s) or institutions be asked for approval? ☐ Yes ☒ No
Specify (e.g., hospital, school board, community organization, proprietor) _____

5. Level of the Research:

☐ Undergraduate Thesis ☐ Masters Thesis/Project ☒ Ph.D
☐ Post Doctorate ☐ Faculty Research ☐ Administration
☐ Undergraduate Course ☐ Graduate Course ☐ Other (specify course)
Assignment Assignment
(specify course) _____ (specify) _____

6. Funding of the Project:

(a) Is this project currently being funded ☐ Yes ☒ No
(b) If No, is funding being sought ☐ Yes ☒ No

If Applicable:
(c) Period of Funding (dd/mm/yyyy): From: _____ To: _____

(d) Agency or Sponsor (funded or applied for)

☐ CIHR ☐ NSERC ☐ SSHRC ☐ Other (specify): _____

(e) Funding / Agency File # (not your Tri-Council PIN) _____

7. Conflict of Interest:

(a) Will the researcher(s), members of the research team, and/or their partners or immediate family members receive any personal benefits related to this study – Examples include financial remuneration, patent and ownership, employment, consultancies, board membership, share ownership, stock options. Do not include conference and travel
expense coverage, possible academic promotion, or other benefits which are integral to the general conduct of research.

☐ Yes  ☒ No

If Yes, please describe the benefits below.

N/A

(b) Describe any restrictions regarding access to or disclosure of information (during or at the end of the study) that the sponsor has placed on the investigator(s).

N/A

SECTION B – SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH

8. Rationale:

Briefly describe the purpose and background rationale for the proposed project, as well as the hypothesis(es)/research question(s) to be examined.

There is a tendency in literature and reading theory to privilege cognitive models without an account of affective and emotional dimensions of reading. My study goes some way in redressing this gap in literature by focusing on emotions, embodiment and felt experiences with reading. To do so, I will work with four families asking them to attend a combination of interviews and interview-conversation sessions where they will talk about their reading stories and stories of emotion and possible trauma related to learning literacy. Also, I will meet individually with the member of the family who struggles with the reading process to explore perceptions of reading and learning strengths while completing a school related reading task that the individual and family have identified as challenging. These meetings are situated as six interview-conversation sessions and will be used to co-create a strategy that the individual can apply independently at school when completing a reading related task. In terms of the reading story and emotions around reading, does the creation of a personal strategy that the individual who struggles with reading can use independently during a reading task change the story? If so, how does it change and what changes?

The study will apply narrative theory and arts-based data collection to look at the topic. The focus of this research is to explore with children/youth and parents, their process of making meaning from experiences of struggling with reading. The research methods for exploring this focus are narrative inquiry with arts-based approach to data collection. The purpose of using this method and data collection approach is to provide multiple pathways to gather data. Stories are not rigid constructions but sometimes require the use of images as well as words to express ideas and feelings. The role of the researcher is to listen, question, and record these stories. The researcher will be a part of the study as it involves auto-ethnographic and critical ethnographic approaches. My area of interest involves the emotion that people carry with them if learning creates traumas
that hinder and inhibit their learning. Using narrative may help uncover feelings about struggling to read and fostering meta-awareness of these feelings that helps them to gain a deeper understanding of themselves as readers and externalizes the problem of struggling to read. This externalization is important because children/youths who struggle to read sometimes identify themselves as the problem because they struggle with reading skills. This identification can have a traumatizing effect on children/youths and their families.

Apply phenomenology as a lens; I will look closely at a specific lived experience of participating in six interview-conversation sessions that will be explored and further articulated during interviews. As well, I will draw on Joseph Campbell’s two worlds (i.e., the inner world of emotions, beliefs, values and self-perception, and the outer world of events and social interactions), external observable activities can be used as discussion topics and how these experiences were felt and interpreted. Did these activities related to reading trigger emotions and changes in self-perception, and what kind of emotions and self-perceptions were created through these lived reading experiences particularly those that occur during the interview-conversation sessions? These lived experiences (van Manen, 1997) provide an opportunity to explore how the child/youth identifies with the struggle to read, and what is the impact if any on the child/youth when she/he struggles to learn to read. Metaphor allows the participants to be the mythical heroic figure in their own stories.

My main research question is:

1. How does a dialogic approach with the researcher as listener facilitate moments of discovery about the struggling reader’s embodied sensations to reading struggles and reading achievement?

My subquestions are:

2. Using the Hero’s Journey as a conceptual framework, will struggling readers and their familial stories of reading development help externalize the problem of struggling to read by mirroring the elements of this framework?

3. What happens when participants and their families create visual artifacts (e.g., digital pictures of reading spaces, diagrams of metaphors related to reading, etc.,) based on their perceptions and emotions? How do these contribute meaning to their stories?

References

9. Methods:

Are any of the following procedures or methods involved in this study? Check all that apply.

- Questionnaire (mail)
- Questionnaire (email/web)
- Questionnaire (in person)
- Interview(s) (telephone)
- Interview(s) (in person)
- Secondary Data
- Computer-administered tasks
- Focus Groups
- Journals/Diaries/Personal Correspondence
- Audio only/video taping (specify)
- Observations
- Invasive physiological measurements (e.g., venipuncture, muscle biopsies)
- Non-invasive physical measurement (e.g., exercise, heart rate, blood pressure)
- Analysis of human tissue, body fluids, etc. (Request for Use of Human Tissue Sample must be completed and attached)
- Other: (specify)  

Describe sequentially, and in detail, all of the methods involved in this study and all procedures in which the research participants will be involved (paper and pencil tasks, interviews, questionnaires, physical assessments, physiological tests, time requirements, etc.)

Attach a copy of all questionnaire(s), interview guides or other test instruments. If reference is made to previous protocols, please provide copies of relevant documentation.

Methods Overview

The participants for this study are invited to participate in a creative arts-based story approach to describing reading and struggles with reading, and the children/youths will also participate in interview-conversation sessions where their learning strengths when reading will be discussed.

The participants are drawn from the Brock Learning Lab interview-conversation program and involve children/youths and their parents, who have experienced struggles with reading. The participants will be asked to complete the following:

Interview Process for All Participants Chronological Order

June 5 - 9, 2017
Interview 1 (Initial): Each parent(s) separate from child/youth
Interview 2 (Initial): Each child/youth separate from parents

June 12 – 23, 2017
Six Interview-Conversation Sessions: Each child/youth in separate session
Interview 3: Each parent(s) separate – Story creation

June 24 – July 14, 2017
Interview 4: Each parent(s) separate – Deconstruct story creation and interview-conversation sessions
Interview 5: Each child/youth with parent(s) present – Child/youth co-presenter during interview

August 2017
Participants will be offered the opportunity to review transcripts for approval and clarification. If the transcripts are not returned, Sharon Moukperian will make contact with the family to discuss how to resolve this concern by asking the family to destroy the transcripts. For example, setting up a time to meet in person to assist in the review of the transcript if that is seen as helpful by the participants.

September 2017
Feedback Letter regarding research (Appendix D)

Interview Details

- Interview 1: Initial Parent-Only Interviews – this interview will be 60 minutes (Appendix E)
- Interview 2: Initial Child/Youth-Only Interview – this interview will be 60 minutes (Appendix F)
- Six interview-conversation sessions Child/Youth-Only – these sessions will be one hour in length each (Appendix G)
- Interview 3: Second Parent-Only Interview – this interview will be 60 minutes (Appendix H)
- Interview 4: Parent – Only Interview – this interview will be 60 minutes (Appendix I)
- Interview 5: Parent and Child/Youth Interview – this interview will be 60 minutes (Appendix J)

During Interviews 1 and 2 parent(s) and child/youth will be asked to explain their choices of artifacts and images related to reading and why these representations are considered positive/negative in terms of feelings and perceptions (Appendices E and F). These visual and/or objects provide a stimulus for dialogue about the families’ histories and relationships to the reading process. These initial interviews introduce the study and the participants will sign appropriate permission documents at that time if they did not do so earlier. Also, Interview 1 for the parents is preparatory for Interview 3 (the second interview for the parents – separate) where the parents will craft their reading narrative of their child/youth using Joseph Campbell’s (1949/2008) story model (Appendix H). Interview 2 for the child/youth prepares the child/youth for the Six
**Interview-conversation Sessions** where the child/youth will have an opportunity to create her/his stories as part of these interview-conversation sessions (Appendix H).

**Interview 4** (the concluding interview with the parents separate) provides an opportunity to dialogue on the process of story creation, interview-conversation sessions, and perceptions based on the story creation and interview-conversation experiences without the child/youth present, so the dialogue with the parent(s) has the potential of being more candid. For example, the parents and researcher talking about the child/youth’s reading/learning strengths and weaknesses, which may affect the child/youth if there are concerns expressed by the parent(s) (Appendix I).

**Interview 5** (the third interview for the parents will be the second interview for the child/youth), is conducted for each family. It is structured to allow the child/youth to be a co-contributor because the child/youth will talk about her or his experience during the interview-conversation sessions (Appendix J).

In **Interview 5**, the child/youth will be co-contributor to the interview process because she/he will talk about her/his experience and story of completing an authentic learning task. In addition, the child/youth will participate in six interview-conversation sessions. These sessions are conducted with the child/youth in a one-to-one private setting with the researcher as tutor.

**Description of Interview Process**
Prior to the initial interview sessions, all participants will be asked to bring in artifacts and images (e.g., pictures of a favourite location and a less favourite location for reading, book, or comfort/discomfort object) representing the child/youth’s choice and the parents’ perception of the child/youth’s choice to the first interview. **Note:** Parents will be directed to bring these artifacts that represent where their child/youth’s favourite/not favourite spaces are. This choice of artifacts related to parents’ perception of their child/youth’s spaces would occur during the initial interview. They will be instructed to select these artifacts and images based on both positive and negative affect and perceptions. Families will also be provided with an “Information Sheet on Spaces and Places” explaining the nature of acceptable images (i.e., spaces only with no identifiable head shots or images of individuals, see Appendix K). These artifacts and images will be used to focus a portion of the interview on emotions and perceptions of struggling to read (O’Donoghue, 2006). During this preliminary interview, the Joseph Campbell (1949/2008) story model will be explained and modeled by the researcher.

**Parent Participant Interviews 1, 3, 4, and 5**
The parents’ **Interview 1** - initial interview will involve asking them to tell their story of the struggles their child/youth has had with reading before the start of the research. There are specific question prompts that will be asked within the context of storytelling versus answering a question (See Appendix E). This method is intended to use storying as a more comfortable approach to talk about a possible emotionally charged topic – their child/youth’s struggles with reading. Also, it prepares the parent-participants for their second interview (Interview 3) of going into more details about the struggling to
read experience from the parents’ experience using the story model of Joseph Campbell. During Interview 1, the parents will be asked if they brought in artifacts and if not they will be asked if they have a digital camera at their disposal (if not one will be provided), so they could take pictures of spaces that they believed created positive experiences with reading for their child/youth and spaces they believed created negative ones and bring them to Interview 3.

In Interview 3, the parents will be asked to create their story and think of illustrating their story with their pictures where appropriate. The parents’ story will be transcribed by the researcher and given to the parents for proofreading for accuracy and for them to indicate where the researcher should insert their pictures. The researcher will produce a storybook with illustrations based on the parents’ stories and pictures to share with the parents at Interview 4 for deconstruction.

In Interview 4, the parents have an opportunity to deconstruct their story creation and talk about the interview-conversation sessions.

In Interview 5, the parents’ and child/youth will participate in the child/youth’s second interview at the conclusion of the six interview-conversation sessions where the child/youth shares interview-conversation experiences during the interview-conversation session, the learning that may or may not have taken place, and if comfortable her or his story based on Campbell’s story model. During this interview, the child/youth is a co-contributor versus the researcher taking the lead role. It is an opportunity for the child/youth to talk about the experience and her/his perceptions.

Storybook Creation by Parents (Interview 2) and Children/Youths (part of Six Interview-Conversation Sessions)
In the initial REB submission three interviews or workshops were to be conducted; however, Sharon Moukperian had a conversation separately with a parent and her child/youth and realized that the perception of the struggles with reading might be different and parents and children/youths may be more comfortable sharing their perceptions separately. For this reason, the research design now consists of three interviews conducted separately for the parents, and one separate interview for the child/youth and one joint interview with parents and the child/youth participants. The questions asked of the parents and children/youths (see question prompts in Appendices F and J) will be similar; however, the parents will be asked what their perception of their child/youth’s approach to reading, what they do when there is a struggle, and how the parent is affected by this struggle. The data collected from the parents will be from the audio-recorded interviews and if any diagrams are created to explain how they perceive their child/youth responding to a reading challenge, this will become part of the data collection. Thus, the initial interview will involve the parent describing their own story of their child/youth’s struggle to read using Campbell’s story model. Any diagrams or writing the participant chooses to create in order to describe this struggle will become part of the data that will be analyzed. During the final interview with child/youth and parent, the child/youth-participant will also be asked to tell his or her story of struggling to learn to read using as prompts the Joseph Campbell (1949/2008) Hero’s Journey story.
template, and this will be audio recorded and transcribed by the researcher only. The data that will be collected via observations, drawings, school learning tasks (e.g., compared themes from two books or write a story) and audio recordings. The stories that are told and interview dialogue transcripts, as well as visuals that are brought in or digitally recorded will constitute the actual data.

**Interview 2: Child/Youth**

This initial interview will involve asking the child/youth to tell her/his story of any struggles the child/youth has had with reading before the start of the research. The child/youth’s initial interview is similar to the parents in terms of introducing the study’s purpose and asking them to talk about their story of reading. The story prompts associated with the Campbell (1949/2008) story model will also be introduced (Appendix F).

**Child/Youth Six Interview-Conversation Sessions Details**

In addition to the two interviews, the child/youth will be asked to participate in six interview-conversation sessions where the researcher and child/youth will discuss how the child/youth approaches a reading task that is challenging while actually working on an authentic reading task. This discussion involves using the authentic learning task like a novel/printed text that needs to be read, a creative story to be written, or an assignment involving reading that needs to be completed. The researcher and child/youth may use the SMART board, iPad, and/or flipchart paper and pencil and paper or computer to capture the work that is done during the interview-conversation research sessions. While doing the task, the researcher will audio-record the session and will ask the child/youth about his or her thinking while doing the task (i.e., metacognition), and are there any emotions or thoughts that the task stimulates, if so what are they, and how are they perceived by the child/youth? By completing an authentic task, the child/youth is engaged because the task to be completed is for school versus a simulated task. The purpose is to explore with the child/youth through dialogue how she/he experiences a challenge and what strengths might emerge. If these strengths emerge, is the child/youth aware of this strength and how is it experienced? The questions that are being asked of the child/youth and the results of the interview-conversation sessions will be shared with the parents during the child/youth’s second interview at the end of the interview-conversation sessions. The interviews with the child/youth-participant will be audio-recorded and the interview questions will involve the child/youth-participant describing a reading task from school that is a struggle while completing that task with support from the IPA-researcher. In addition to working on an authentic task, the researcher will ask questions of the child/youth that relate to specific elements of Campbell’s story model (see Appendix G) and the answers to these question prompts will be used so the child/youth and researcher put a story together about the struggling to read experience. The first part of the story comes from the answers to the questions in the initial interview and the second and third parts of the story are constructed throughout the interview-conversation sessions. The pictures the child/youth selected and brought to the initial interview and any drawings completed during the interview-conversation sessions will be used for illustrations if the child/youth-participant chooses to use them.

**Summary of Data Collected:**
All sessions will be audio recorded and transcribed by the researcher along with any drawings or written work that may be generated by participants. If the written work involves homework for school, then digital pictures will be taken of these visual artifacts. After the interviews and interview-conversation sessions, the PSI will make detailed observation notes in the form of a Journal to capture the observations and reflections from participating in these sessions.

1. Audio Recorded Interviews
2. Visual Artifacts
3. Detailed Observation notes – JOURNAL

**Terms Clarified**

**Creative Arts-Based Story Approach**
As part of this study, a creative arts-based story approach will be used where parent and child/youth participants will write separate stories about their experiences with reading. The stories they write will use the metaphor of the child/youth as a heroine or hero in her or his story. Metaphor allows both parents to see the child/youth and the child/youth to look at her/himself as the mythical heroic figure in her/his own stories. It is based on an argument that Joseph Campbell (1949/2008) makes stating that through metaphor a life experience can be examined through the lens of the hero’s journey. Metaphor becomes a device to connect these two experiences through story-telling and use of visual artifacts as illustrations (i.e., mythical hero with child/youth’s lived experience with learning to read) where the child/youth can share abstract “inner” world of beliefs and emotions by becoming the heroes in her/his own story by using the hero’s journey model as a story grammar framework.

**Discussion of Learning Strengths**
For the child/youth in the six-interview-conversation sessions that are part of this research, the child/youth will be asked to think about what is happening for her/him when completing a reading task in terms of reading challenges and learning strengths that might emerge. The researcher enters into a dialogue with the child/youth about thought processes or moments where something changes in approaching a reading task. Pausing to discuss this moment of change, may lead the child/youth to recognize a learning strength.

10. **Professional Expertise/Qualifications:**

Does this procedure require professional expertise/recognized qualifications (e.g., registration as a clinical psychologist, first aid certification)?

☐ Yes specify: ______  ☒ No

If YES, indicate whether you, your supervisor, or any members of your research team have the professional expertise/recognized qualifications required?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No

11. **Participants:**
Describe the number of participants and any required demographic characteristics (e.g.,
age, gender).

Four families will be recruited to participate in this research. This includes one or both
parents and a child or youth. The ages of the children/youths will range from 7 years to
16 years old. The children/youths being recruited will have struggles with reading, and it
does not matter what gender they are.

12. Recruitment:

Describe how and from what sources the participants will be recruited, including any
relationship between the investigator(s), sponsor(s) and participant(s) (e.g., family
member, instructor-student; manager-employee).

*Attach a copy of any poster(s), advertisement(s) and/or letter(s) to be used for
recruitment.*

A letter of invitation (See Appendix A) will be given to families who have participated
in the Brock Learning Lab program during the 2016-2017 interview-conversation
sessions by email versus in person so that there would be no increase in feelings of
pressure or coercion. The parents and children/youths know both Dr. Rowsell as the
former director of the Learning Lab and Sharon Moukperian as the former coordinator
of the Learning Lab. However as of Fall 2016, neither the PI nor the PSI are in these
positions, so there was not an opportunity to tutor potential participants or to have direct
contact with them. The potential for coercion was not possible because neither Sharon
nor Jennifer were working in the Lab in these positions during the 2016-2017 program
year.

13. Compensation:

a) Will participants receive compensation for participation? □ Yes  ☒ No
b) If yes, please provide details.

N/A

SECTION C – DESCRIPTION OF THE RISKS AND BENEFITS OF THE
PROPOSED RESEARCH

14. Possible Risks:

1) Indicate if the participants might experience any of the following risks:

   a) Physical risks (including any bodily contact, physical stress, or administration of
      any substance)? □ Yes  ☒ No
b) Psychological risks (including feeling demeaned, embarrassed worried or upset, emotional stress)?

☑ Yes ☐ No

c) Social risks (including possible loss of status, privacy, and/or reputation)? ☐ Yes ☑ No

d) Are any possible risks to participants greater than those that the participants might encounter in their everyday life?

☐ Yes ☑ No

e) Is there any deception involved?

☐ Yes ☑ No

f) Is there potential for participants to feel obligated to participate or coerced into contributing to this research (because of regular contact between participants and the researcher, relationships that involve power-dynamics, etc.)?

☑ Yes ☐ No

2) If you answered Yes to any of 1a – 1f above, please explain the risk.

The parents and children/youths know both Dr. Rowsell as the former director of the Learning Lab and Sharon Moukperian as the former coordinator of the Learning Lab. However as of Fall 2016, neither the PI nor the PSI are in these positions, so there was not an opportunity to tutor potential participants or have direct contact with them. The potential for coercion was not possible because neither Sharon nor Jennifer were working in the Lab in these positions during the 2016-2017 program year.

3) Describe how the risks will be managed and include the availability of appropriate medical or clinical expertise or qualified persons. Explain why less risky alternative approaches could not be used.

My research methods involve asking questions and helping the family to capture in print and with visual images their stories about dealing with reading difficulties. This method involves the least amount of risk. However, asking individuals to talk about challenges can trigger negative thoughts and emotions. Information on counseling options and educational supports will be made available to participants and the risks discussed before the research begins.

I will be able to assess if a child/youth is distressed about what is being talked about through observing their behaviours. Riquelme and Montero (2013) have found that when a child/youth is distressed, they will demonstrate this through movement, attention shifting, and asking for help from someone outside of themselves. I am aware of these behaviours and will be paying close attention to them.

I will be able to assess if a child/youth is distressed about what is being talked about using the following observations as confirmed in research conducted by Riquelme and Montero (2013) that when a child/youth is distressed she will demonstrate this through movement, attention shifting, and asking for help from someone outside of herself.
I am asking children/youths and their families to talk about reading difficulties. This topic can be emotionally challenging for some members in a family. I will provide suggestions for support systems and informational/educational resources to families should the need arise to do so:

Niagara Stress and Trauma Clinic
http://www.stressandtraumarelief.com/index.php

15. Possible Benefits:

Discuss any potential direct benefits to the participants from their involvement in the project. Comment on the (potential) benefits to the scientific community/society that would justify involvement of participants in this study.

I believe there are emotional and educational benefits to being able to look at a challenging experience of learning to read and describe that experience in a story format. A story format with illustrations provides a familiar context and method whereby families can describe personal experiences. By situating the research within a specific story model as described by Joseph Campbell where the main character (the child/youth who struggles with reading) is perceived as the hero/heroine, there is an opportunity for the child/youth and her/his family to perceive the struggle with reading differently. Based on work done by Michael White (2007) regarding narrative and the use of narrative as a method which may allow families and their children/youths to express candidly their thoughts and feelings, it is hoped that the process of sharing personal stories and discussing them with others who struggle with the reading process will allow emotions and thoughts about reading to be expressed through a creative arts-based story approach. Also, the discussion of personal learning strengths that will be conducted within policy guidelines provides an opportunity for these students to demonstrate metacognition and interconnectional skills. This research study not only fosters these skills, but also actively improves them because the students will have an opportunity to practice and debrief regarding the personal impact of using learning strengths to deal with challenges related to reading.

SECTION D – THE INFORMED CONSENT PROCESS

16. The Consent Process:

Describe the process that the investigator(s) will be using to obtain informed consent. Include a description of who will be obtaining the informed consent. If there will be no written consent form, explain why not.
For information about the required elements in the letter of invitation and the consent form, as well as samples, please refer to:

http://www.brocku.ca/researchservices/forms/index.php

If applicable, attach a copy of the Letter of Invitation, the Consent Form, the content of any telephone script, and any other material that will be utilized in the informed consent process.

| The investigator will provide a Letter of Invitation and Consent Form to be signed by the participants. |
| The purpose of this study and its associated methods are outlined in the Letter of Invitation (Appendix A) and Consent Form (Appendix B) and an Assent Letter (Appendix C), and Information Sheet on Spaces and Places Photographs (Appendix K). These documents will be distributed in the late Spring of 2017. |
| Protection of Identity |
| The information revealed by participants holds the expectation of privacy, which means that all data collected will not be shared with anyone except the researchers listed on this application. The only persons who will have access to the data are the researchers and dissertation committee members. Consent to participate will be obtained during the first interview. |
| All data will be secured in the Principal Investigator's office in a locked file cabinet for a period of 5 years after publication of study findings. Electronic data and audio-recorded data will be entered into a computer with secured access. After the 5-year interval, the questionnaires/survey documents will be shredded and the transcripts and audiotapes will be destroyed. All electronic files relating to this study will also be destroyed. |
| Finally, all participants will be assigned an identification number/pseudonym and matched to a Master List that will be kept secure with a password and destroyed after voluntary member checking is completed. These pseudonyms will be used in all analyses and data reporting. Participant files will be stored in a secure area of the primary researcher's office and will only be available to those researchers listed in this application as well as dissertation committee members. All interview sessions will be audio recorded and transcribed. Digital audio-recordings will be labeled using the assigned pseudonyms and will be stripped from any potentially identifying information. |

17. Consent by an authorized party:

If the participants are minors or for other reasons are not competent to consent, describe the proposed alternative source of consent, including any permission form to be provided to the person(s) providing the alternative consent.
For participants who are minors, the parents/guardian will be approached to sign a consent form on behalf of the minor, as well as offering the minor an Assent Form Appendix C.

18. Alternatives to prior individual consent:

If obtaining individual participant consent prior to commencement of the research project is not appropriate for this research, please explain and provide details for a proposed alternative consent process.

N/A

19. Feedback to Participants:

Explain what feedback/ information will be provided to the participants after participation in the project. This should include a more complete description of the purpose of the research, and access to the results of the research. Also, describe the method and timing for delivering the feedback.

A thank you note and debriefing letter will be distributed to the participants by email or postal mail once the primary findings of this study have been determined. An Executive Summary will also be provided to the participants following the completion of the study (most likely by early Fall, 2017). Both the thank you/feedback letter and the executive summary will appear on Brock University Letterhead. All final documentation that provides feedback and thank you will be emailed or sent by postal service (see Appendix D).

20. Participant withdrawal:
   a) Describe how the participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the project. Outline the procedures that will be followed to allow the participants to exercise this right.

As outlined in the Consent Form contained in Appendix B, participants will be informed verbally and in writing about their right to withdraw from this study at any time and for any reason without penalty. Several clauses are included in the Letter of Invitation and Informed Consent Form indicating that participation in this study is voluntary and that all data associated with it will be treated in a confidential manner. It is qualified that participants’ decisions to participate (or not to participate) in this study will have no bearing on the services they receive at the Brock Learning Lab now or in the future. Finally, participants will be reminded that they are under no obligation to complete the follow-up interviews associated with this study at each point of the data collection procedure. That is, students and parents/guardians will be reminded that they may decline to participate in any portion of the study, or withdraw from the study in its entirety, at any time and without penalty, and participation in this study will, in no manner, affect the quality of instruction provided for children/youths attending the Brock Learning Lab reading support program now or in the future.
b) Indicate what will be done with the participant’s data should the participant choose to withdraw. Describe what, if any, consequences withdrawal might have on the participant, including any effect that withdrawal may have on participant compensation.

All data will be secured in the Principal Investigator's office in a locked file cabinet for a period of 2 years following the completion of this study. Electronic data will be entered into a computer with secured access. After that interval, the documents will be shredded and the audiotapes will be destroyed. All electronic files relating to this study will also be destroyed.

The conditions of withdrawal and anonymity will be explained to potential participants (written and verbal formats) in an attempt to reduce any feelings of coercion and the need to participate in this research program. It will be stressed that there is no obligation to participate in this study. It will also be explained that individuals who decide to participate may withdraw from any portion of the study, or the study in its entirety, at any time and without penalty. Finally, participation in this study will, in no manner, affect the quality of interview-conversation instruction provided to the students or the information provided to parents/guardians while receiving interview-conversation services at the Brock Learning Lab.

Thus, there are no anticipated adverse effects associated with participant withdrawal from this study. In the event of participant withdrawal, all data acquired from the participant will be destroyed or returned.

SECTION E – CONFIDENTIALITY & ANONYMITY

Confidentiality: information revealed by participants that holds the expectation of privacy. This means that all data collected will not be shared with anyone except the researchers listed on this application.

Anonymity of data: information revealed by participants will not have any distinctive character or recognition factor, such that information can be matched (even by the researcher) to individual participants. Any information collected using audio-taping, video recording, or interview cannot be considered anonymous. Please note that this refers to the anonymity of the data itself and not the reporting of results.

21. Given the definitions above:

   a) Will the data be treated as confidential?  ☒ Yes  ☐ No
   b) Are the data anonymous?  ☐ Yes  ☒ No
   c) Describe any personal identifiers that will be collected during the course of the research (e.g., participant names, initials, addresses, birth dates, student numbers,
organizational names and titles etc.). Indicate how personal identifiers will be secured and if they will be retained once data collection is complete.

Personal identifiers will be collected such as participants’ names, email and mailing addresses, and consent form signatures of parents/guardians. The data will be stored under lock and key in Dr. Jennifer Rowsell’s office at Brock University, Rm. 376, and confidentially destroyed by shredding 5 years after publication of the study results. This information will be stored separately from the research data. The Master List will not be retained that links individual participants to de-identified data, but destroyed after voluntary member checking is completed.

The information revealed by participants holds the expectation of privacy, which means that all data collected will not be shared with anyone except the researchers listed on this application and dissertation committee members. The only persons who will have access to the data are the researchers

Sharon Moukperian will confidentially destroy interview transcripts by shredding 5 years after publication. The audio digital audio-recordings will be destroyed by being erased once they are transcribed.

d) If any personal identifiers will be retained once data collection is complete, provide a comprehensive rationale explaining why it is necessary to retain this information, including the retention of master lists that link participant identifiers with unique study codes and de-identified data.

All participants will be assigned an identification number/pseudonym. This number will be used to track participants' response patterns across the story creation and interviews. Individuals who participate in the interview portion of this study will also be assigned a pseudonym. These pseudonyms will be used in all analyses and data reporting. Participant files will be stored in a secure area of the primary researcher's office and will only be available to those researchers listed in this application. All interview sessions will be audio recorded and transcribed by Sharon Moukperian. Participants’ personal identifiers will be secured on a password-protected computer. Personal identifiers will not be retained once data collection is complete, as the file will be replaced with pseudonyms.

Sharon Moukperian will confidentially destroy interview transcripts 5 years after publication once the data has been analyzed. The audio recordings will be destroyed once they are transcribed.

e) State who will have access to the data.

Dr. Jennifer Rowsell, Sharon Moukperian and dissertation committee members will have access through the use of an encrypted computer. The data will be stored under lock and key in Dr. Jennifer Rowsell’s office at Brock University, Rm. 376.
f) Describe the procedures to be used to ensure anonymity of participants and/or confidentiality of data **both during the conduct of the research and in the release of its findings.**

| All personal identifiers will be removed and pseudonyms will be assigned to participants; although I can guarantee confidentiality, I cannot guarantee anonymity. |


g) If participant anonymity and/or confidentiality is not appropriate to this research project, explain, in detail, how all participants will be advised that data will not be anonymous or confidential.

| N/A |

h) Explain how written records, video/audio tapes, and questionnaires will be secured, and provide details of their final disposal or storage, including how long they will be secured and the disposal method to be used.

| The data will be stored under lock and key in Dr. Jennifer Rowsell’s office at Brock University, Rm. 376 and destroyed as per Brock University’s research policy and procedures (kept no longer than 5 years after publication of finding results from this study). |

**SECTION F -- SECONDARY USE OF DATA**

23.

a) Is it your intention to reanalyze the data **for purposes other than described in this application?**

| Yes ☐ No ☑ |

b) Is it your intention to allow the study and data to be reanalyzed by colleagues, students, or other researchers outside of the original research purposes? If this is the case, explain how you will allow your participants the opportunity to choose to participate in a study where their data would be distributed to others (state how you will contact participants to obtain their re-consent)

| N/A |

c) If there are no plans to reanalyze the data for secondary purposes and, yet, you wish to keep the data indefinitely, please explain why.

| N/A |

**SECTION G -- MONITORING ONGOING RESEARCH**

It is the investigator’s responsibility to notify the REB using the “Renewal/Project Completed” form, when the project is completed or if it is cancelled.

24. Annual Review and Serious Adverse Events (SAE):

a) **MINIMUM REVIEW REQUIRES THE RESEARCHER COMPLETE A “RENEWAL/PROJECT COMPLETED” FORM AT LEAST ANNUALLY.** Indicate whether any additional monitoring or review would be appropriate for this project.

N/A

*Serious adverse events* (negative consequences or results affecting participants) **must be reported** to the Research Ethics Officer and the REB Chair, **as soon as possible** and, in any event, no more than 3 days subsequent to their occurrence.

25. COMMENTS

If you experience any problems or have any questions about the Ethics Review Process at Brock University, please feel free to contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 ext. 3035, or reb@brocku.ca

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**SUB-APPENDIX A**

**BROCK UNIVERSITY LETTER HEAD**

**Letter of Invitation to Participate in Research Program**

**Title of Research:** Investigating the Emotional Impact of Narrative Dialogue on Struggling Readers’ Discovery of Learning Potential

**To:** Families Attending the Brock University Learning Lab, BRIC Building, Brock University, June 2017

**From:** Jennifer Rowsell (Principal Investigator) and Sharon Moukperian (Co-Investigator)

**Date of Study:** June 2017 – September 2017

Please accept this letter as your invitation to participate in a research program exploring the experiences, emotions, and perceptions of families with children/youths who struggle with the reading process who are participating in the Brock Learning Lab reading support interview-conversation program. As part of this study, a creative arts-based story approach will be used where you and your child/youth will write separate stories about your experiences with reading. The stories you write will use the metaphor of your child/youth as a heroine or hero in her or his story. Metaphor allows your child/youth to be the mythical heroic figure in her/his own stories. It is based on an argument that Joseph Campbell (1949/2008) makes stating that through metaphor a life experience can be examined through the lens of the hero’s journey. Metaphor becomes a device to
connect these two experiences through story-telling (i.e., mythical hero with child/youth’s lived experience with learning to read) where the child/youth can share abstract “inner” world beliefs and emotions by becoming the heroes in their own story by using the hero’s journey model as a story grammar framework.

We understand that children/youths should have a choice to participate and an Assent Letter/Script will be provided/used so children/youth feel they have a voice in choosing to be a part of the research or not (see attached Assent Letter). On the day of the research, if your child is unwilling to participate, she/he will not be made to participate, and any current or future services you may access from the Brock Learning Lab will not be affected.

Below are the questions that form the foundation of the research study outlined here:

1. What are families’ experiences and emotions when a child/youth struggles with the reading process?
2. What happens when the child/youth explores personal learning strengths while completing a school related reading task? What might they learn about themselves?
3. How does writing a story and using visual images to express experiences with struggling to read affect emotions and perceptions of parent and the child/youth?

Should you choose to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete in the following activities:

1) Parents participate in a series of three interviews, (maximum of three hours).

2) Children/youths participate in two interviews: one alone with the researcher (one hour maximum) and one with the parents and researcher at the end of the study where the child/youth talks about her/his experiences and learning (this would be the third interview for the parents and second for the child/youth).

3) Children/youths participate in six interview-conversation sessions as part of the Brock Learning Lab support program, with a researcher who has her Ontario Teaching Certificate and BEd. at a time of convenience to yourself and the researchers involved in this study: where an authentic learning task identified by the child/youth will be completed and during the time completing this task a discussion of learning strengths related to reading will occur.

4) The preliminary interview and interview with the parent and child/youth at the end of the study will be conducted by one of the members of the research team. During these interviews, parents and child/youth will be asked to reflect on their experiences and challenges with reading, and the child/youth may share a story that was created during the six interview-conversation sessions as well as any authentic task that was completed during the last interview. The first interview will focus on the history of struggling to read and the final interview on
perceptions of reading after the child/youth has identified personal learning strengths and applied them to the reading process. Each interview is expected to last no longer than one hour and will be audio recorded for subsequent analysis. You will be offered a copy of the interview transcriptions and will have the opportunity to edit or change this information so that it represents an accurate portrait of your thinking about the interview questions. This is voluntary and you are not required to review the transcripts as part of this study.

5) Complete family stories separately with the use of visual images as illustrations (See Information Sheet attached) about the struggling to read experience through participation in two interviews for the parents and during six-interview-conversation sessions for the child/youth based on Joseph Campbell’s story model of the Hero’s Journey. This will be completed during the second interview for the parents, which should not take longer than one hour and during the six one-hour interview-conversation sessions with the child/youth.

6) Your participation in this study will not affect any current or future services that you may receive from the Brock Learning Lab.

The total time commitment for parents will be THREE hours plus bringing their child/youth to the SIX interview-conversation sessions and two One hour interview sessions. The child or youth will attend SIX hours of interview-conversation plus TWO hours of interviews for a total of EIGHT hours.

Additionally, it should be stressed that there is no obligation to participate in this study as it is on a voluntary basis, and that individuals who decide to participate may withdraw from any portion of the study, or the study in its entirety, at any time and without penalty. Furthermore, individuals who decide to participate in this study may elect not to answer any specific interview questions or share their stories with other participants.

All stories and interview information collected during this study will be considered confidential. At no point will your name/identity be associated with specific information collected as part of this study. Instead, only general information representing participants’ perceptions, beliefs, and experiences about struggling with the reading process will be disseminated in any written or verbal reporting of this study. The only individuals who will have access to the data are Dr. Rowsell, Sharon Moukperian and the dissertation committee members.

Participation in this study is voluntary. The data collected will be retained for 5 years after publication of the results of the study then destroyed. You and your child/youth may decline to answer any question or participate in any component of the study. Further, you and your child/youth may decide to withdraw from this study at any time and may do so without penalty or loss of benefits. Participation in this study will, in no manner, affect the quality of instruction provided for children/youths attending the Brock Learning Lab reading support program now or in the future.

The researchers would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for considering participation in this study. You will be provided with an informed consent form that you will be asked to sign, if you agree to participate in this study. This study
has been reviewed and approved by the Brock University Research Ethics Board (File # t.b.d.). If you have any questions or concerns about your participation in the study, you may contact Sharon Moukperian, Ph.D. Candidate at 905.646.0076 (smoukperian@brocku.ca), or Dr. Jennifer Rowsell at 905.688.5550 ext. 6121 (jrowsell@brocku.ca).

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**SUB-APPENDIX B**

**BROCK UNIVERSITY LETTERHEAD**

**INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

**Title of Research:** Investigating the Emotional Impact of Narrative Dialogue on Struggling Readers’ Discovery of Learning Potential

**To:** Families Attending the Brock University Learning Lab, BRIC Building, Brock University, June 2017

**From:** Jennifer Rowsell (Principal Investigator) and Sharon Moukperian (Co-Investigator)

**Date of Study:** June 2017 – September 2017

You are being invited to participate in research that will explore the experiences, emotions, and perceptions of families whose children/youths struggle with the reading process and to discuss these experience through interviews, writing personal stories, exploring learning strengths, and a final group sharing of story products. As part of this study, a creative arts-based story approach will be used where you and your child/youth will write separate stories about your experiences with reading. The stories you write will use the metaphor of your child/youth as a heroine or hero in her or his story. Metaphor allows your child/youth to be the mythical heroic figure in her/his own stories. It is based on an argument that Joseph Campbell (1949/2008) makes stating that through metaphor a life experience can be examined through the lens of the hero’s journey. Metaphor becomes a device to connect these two experiences through story-telling (i.e., mythical hero with child/youth’s lived experience with learning to read) where the child/youth can share abstract “inner” world beliefs and emotions by becoming the heroes in their own story by using the hero’s journey model as a story grammar framework.

We understand that children/youths should have a choice to participate and an Assent Letter/Script will be provided/used so children/youths feel they have a voice in choosing to be a part of the research or not (See attached Assent Letter). On the day of the research, if your child is unwilling to participate, she/he will not be made to participate, and participation in this study will, in no manner, affect the quality of instruction provided for children/youths attending the Brock Learning Lab reading support program now or in the future.
Below are the questions that form the foundation of the research study outlined here:

1. What are families’ experiences and emotions when a child/youth struggles with the reading process?
2. What happens when the child/youth explores personal learning strengths while completing a school related reading task? What might they learn about themselves?
3. How does writing a story and using visual images to express experiences with struggling to read affect emotions and perceptions of parent and the child/youth?

In order to gather the information, we will need, we are asking permission to do the following:

1) Parents participate in a series of three interviews (maximum of three hours).

2) Children/youths participate in two interviews: one alone with the researcher (maximum of one hour) and one with the parents, and researcher at the end of the study (this would be the third interview for the parents and second for the child/youth).

3) Children/youths participate in six interview-conversation sessions as part of the Brock Learning Lab support program, with a researcher who has her Ontario Teaching Certificate and BEd. at a time of convenience to yourself and the researchers involved in this study: where an authentic learning task identified by the child/youth will be completed and during the time completing this task a discussion of learning strengths related to reading will occur.

4) The preliminary interview and interview with the parent and child/youth at the end of the study will be conducted by one of the members of the research team. During these interviews, parents and child/youth will be asked to reflect on their experiences and challenges with reading, and the child/youth may share a story that was created during the six interview-conversation sessions as well as any authentic task that was completed during the last interview. The first interview will focus on the history of struggling to read and the final interview on perceptions of reading after the child/youth has identified personal learning strengths and applied them to the reading process. Each interview is expected to last no longer than one hour and will be audio recorded for subsequent analysis. You will be offered a copy of the interview transcriptions and will have the opportunity to edit or change this information, so it represents an accurate portrait of your thinking about the interview questions. This is voluntary and you are not required to review the transcripts as part of this study.

5) Complete family stories separately with the use of visual images as illustrations (see Information Sheet attached at end of this form Appendix K) about the struggling to read experience. This involves participation in two interviews for the parents and during six-interview-conversation sessions for the child/youth based on Joseph Campbell’s story model of the Hero’s Journey. This will be completed during the second interview for the parents which
should not take longer than one hour, and during the six one-hour interview-conversation sessions with the child/youth.

The total time commitment for parents will be THREE hours plus bringing their child/youth to the SIX interview-conversation sessions and two One hour interview sessions. The child or youth will attend SIX hours of interview-conversation plus TWO hours of interviews for a total of EIGHT hours.

The researchers do not anticipate that there will be any risks involved for your child/youth; however, the experience of struggling with reading skills and the emotions that are sometimes associated with feeling challenged when reading could cause some emotional stress. If you should notice your child/youth is distressed or if Sharon working with your child/youth notices distress, a conversation will be initiated to talk about this observation. The following is a resource in the community you could contact for support if you or your child/youth need further support: The Niagara Stress and Trauma Clinic http://www.stressandtraumarelief.com/index.php; phone: 905-905-687-6866 provides support for families.

The benefits of allowing your child to participate in this study involves your child/youth learning about personal approaches to reading and perhaps discovering learning strengths that she/he can use independently in future learning situations. Also, the study will incorporate the use of technologies that might be tools that can be used later when future reading tasks are assigned.

All information that you and your child/youth provides will be considered confidential, and you and your child/youth’s responses will not be identified by name. You and your child/youth will have a pseudonym and any specific identifying information will be taken out of any reporting or publications. The only individuals who will have access to the data are Dr. Rowsell, Sharon Moukperian and the dissertation committee members. We cannot guarantee anonymity, but we will go to every effort to maintain confidentiality in the research study. Data will be kept under lock and key in the Brock Learning Lab and Centre for Multiliteracies at the Brock Research and Innovation Centre on Lockhart Drive, St. Catharines, ON.

Participation in this study is voluntary. The data collected will be retained for 5 years after publication of the results of the study then destroyed. You and your child/youth may decline to answer any question or participate in any component of the study. Further, you and your child/youth may decide to withdraw from this study at any time and may do so without penalty or loss of benefits. Participation in this study will, in no manner, affect the quality of instruction provided for children/youths attending the Brock Learning Lab reading support program now or in the future.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University (file # XXXX). If you have any comments or concerns about your or your child/youth’s rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 Ext. 3035, or reb@brocku.ca. If you have any questions or concerns about your participation in the study, you may contact Sharon Moukperian, Ph.D. Candidate at 905.646.0076 (smoukperian@brocku.ca), or Dr. Jennifer Rowsell at 905.688.5550 ext. 6121 (jrowsell@brocku.ca).
I have read and understand all of the information provided within this form about the study. I understand that I may ask questions in the future; and by signing below, I am giving my free consent to participate in this study.

Feedback about the use of the data collected will be available in Fall 2017, and will be emailed or sent by postal service. In order to provide this feedback, please provide your mailing address/email and phone number (all personal information will be kept confidential)

Phone number:

Mailing Address:

Email Address:

Thank you for your help.

CONSENT FORM

Child/Youth’s Name: ___________________________________

Parent/Guardian’s Name: _________________________________________

☐ I give my permission for my child/youth to participate in the Brock University study conducted by Jennifer Rowsell and Sharon Moukperian

Signature of Parent/Guardian: ______________________________________

Date: _______________________

Please keep one copy of this form for further reference.
SUB-APPENDIX C
ASSENT LETTER/SCRIPT

ASSENT FORM

Date: 
Project Title: Investigating the Emotional Impact of Narrative Dialogue on Struggling Readers’ Discovery of Learning Potential
Principal Investigator: Dr. Jennifer Rowsell
Co-Investigator: Sharon Moukperian, PhD Candidate

I’m completing a research study. A research study is a special way to find out about something. I am researching how children/youths think and feel about reading when what they have to read is difficult. You will be using iPads and the Smart Board to work on something related to reading that you do at school. While we are working together on your school reading assignment, we will talk about what you are thinking about the assignment and feeling. At the end, we will ask you some questions about what you know about how you read and what you might do if something is difficult with reading. We will audio record this.

Also, we will create a story about you as the main character learning to read and what you do if there is difficult reading work you are asked to do. Your parents will write their own story about your reading as well. At the end of the study, you will be able to share the story you write with other people in the study if you want to.

You can choose if you want to be involved in this study. Nothing bad will happen if you are involved, but if you don’t like something just tell Sharon or Jennifer about it. You will be asked to answer some questions about what you are thinking when reading. I will try to use the answers from you to see how telling stories helps you with your reading. We might also find out other things that will help other students one day.

When we are done with the study, we will write a report about what we found out. We won’t use your name in the report. We will use a pretend name called a pseudonym.

You do not have to be in this study. You can say “no” and nothing bad will happen. If you say “yes” now, but you want to stop later, that’s okay too. All you have to do is tell us you want to stop. If you choose to not be in this study you can still participate in the interview-conversation sessions.

If you want to be in this study, please sign your name or let me know.

I, _________________________________, want to be in this research study.

(write your name here)

_________________________________________________
Researchers signature                                       Date
Dear (Insert Participant Name),

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your participation in the research project “Investigating the Emotional Impact of Narrative Dialogue on Struggling Readers’ Discovery of Learning Potential.”

This study was intended to explore the experiences, emotions, and perceptions of families with children/youths who struggle with the reading process who are participating in the Brock Learning Lab reading support interview-conversation program.

The findings of this study are … (OUTLINE FINDINGS)

The findings of this study will be reported in… (Insert Relevant Forums of Dissemination)

If you would like more information about this study and/or have further questions about the associated findings, please contact Sharon Moukperian, Ph.D. Candidate at 905.646.0076, or Dr. Jennifer Rowsell at 905-644-5550, ext. 6121

Sincerely,

Sharon Moukperian, Ph.D. Candidate
Brock University Learning Lab

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**SUB-APPENDIX E**

**INTERVIEW 1: PARENTS INITIAL INTERVIEW – SEPARATE**

**Parent(s) Initial Interview Questions**

The initial interview will involve asking the parents to explain their choices of artifacts and images related to reading and why these representations are considered positive/negative in terms of feelings and perceptions. These visuals and/or objects provide a stimulus for dialogue about the family’s history and relationship to the reading process. This interview is preparatory for the first workshop and the crafting of the first part of the parents’ reading narrative.

Interview 1 will focus on the history of learning to read from the parents’ perspective. It will provide a baseline of prior experience. In order to facilitate this narrative the following questions will be used as prompts:
1. Can you tell me what your definition of reading is and give me an example?
2. How do you feel about reading, and has it changed over time, if so how?
3. When you read, what do you do as an individual?
4. Did you bring artifact(s) or picture(s) with you? What do/does this artifact/picture represent? Does it have any special meaning for you? Can you tell me about it?
5. Why did you select the artifacts/images/drawings that you did?

Note: These questions will be asked of both parents and children/youth

Parents-Only Questions
1. Tell me a story of when your child/youth went to school for the first time and what do you remember about his or her reading experience?

2. When was the first time your child/youth was asked to read? What happened? What did you do? Can you remember when it was a struggle for your child/youth to read? Why was it a struggle or Why not?

3. Can you tell me a story of someone/people who you feel helped your child/youth when he or she struggled to read? Who were they? What happened? What did they do for your child/youth or with you and your child/youth?

4. Can you tell me a story about what happened when you realized that reading was different for your child/youth?

5. Can you tell me a story about the things that your child/youth tried to read?

6. Can you tell me a story about whom or what helped your child/youth to read, and/or who or what did not help maybe even made it difficult?

7. What kind of reading practices does your family do together?

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SUB-APPENDIX F
INTERVIEW 2: CHILD/YOUTH INITIAL INTERVIEW – SEPARATE

Child/Youth-Participant Initial Interview Questions
The child/youth’s initial interview is similar to the parents in terms of introducing the study’s purpose and asking them to talk about their story of reading. The story prompts associated with the Campbell story model will be introduced.

1. Can you tell me what your definition of reading is and give me an example?
2. How do you feel about reading, and has it changed over time, if so how?
3. When you read, what do you do as an individual?
4. Did you bring artifact(s) or picture(s) with you? What do/does this artifact/picture represent? Does it have any special meaning for you? Can you tell me about it?
5. Why did you select the artifacts/images/drawings that you did?
Note: These questions will be asked of both parents and children/youth

Child/Youth-Only Questions

1. Tell me a story of when you went to school for the first time and what do you remember about reading?

2. When was the first time you were asked to read? What happened? What did you do? Can you remember a time when it was a struggle to read? Why or Why not?

3. Can you tell me a story of someone/people who you feel helped you when you struggled to read? Who were they? What happened? What did they do for you or with you?

4. Can you tell me a story about what happened when you realized that reading was different for you?

5. Can you tell me a story about the things you did to try to read?

6. Can you tell me a story about whom or what helped you to read, and/or who or what did not help maybe even made it difficult?

7. What kind of reading practices does your family do together?

SUB-APPENDIX G
SIX INTERVIEW-CONVERSATION SESSIONS: CHILD/YOUTH SEPARATE

During the interview-conversation sessions, the researcher will focus on a metacognitive narrative relating to reading and working with the child/youth-participant to determine emotional and cognitive strengths when reading something easy and challenging. During these sessions, the researcher will also use the questions prompts below as a guide to creating a story with the child/youth of the child/youth’s experiences with reading struggles before the interview-conversation and during as well as any successes or new discoveries of learning strengths that will be described using the Campbell story framework/model.

Child/Youth-Participant Story Creation Questions

Ordinary World – External Events Story-Line

1. Beginning of The Story – The Problem – Initial Interview
1.1 **The Hero in his natural environment:** Questions/Stories will be asked about reading and the reading process in initial personal interviews with struggling readers separate from parents.

1.2 **Call to Action:** Questions leading to stories/narratives about the history of reading performance and possible feelings around reading.

1.3 **Refusal of the Call:** Questions/Stories around any barriers to responding to the reading.

1.4 **Meeting the Mentor:** Questions leading to stories/narrative about something that changed (e.g., Could be Psycho-Ed assessment; resource person, friend, reading strategy, etc.).

This ends the section on **Ordinary World** questions. This section helps in gathering the historical facts that relates to identifying the Problem in terms of Story Grammar – where the Problem becomes the Call to Action. Next, questions are asked that involve the Middle part of Story Grammar where there are a number of attempts to solve the problem. These questions relate to the interview-conversation experience. The researcher and youth are involved in an authentic reading task (outward visible event) and attempt to find possible solutions to the challenging reading task. Asking questions about the lived experience of the struggle-attempts connects the outward visible events with the ExtraOrdinary World of the participant’s inner values, beliefs and perceptions involving emotions, thoughts, cognitive processes, and perceptions. This phenomenon occurs within social interactions between the researcher and participant in the form of the dialogues during the interview-conversation process. Capturing this lived experience of struggling to read involves multiple lenses that will be accessed by developing questions
to generate narratives that use the stimulus of the struggle to deconstruct the embodied response to that struggle – the lived experience phenomena.

ExtraOrdinary World – Inner Embodied Responses Story-Line

2. Middle Of the Story – Finding Solutions – The Six Interview-conversation

Sessions

2.1. Crossing the Threshold: Questions leading to stories/narrative regarding first steps forward into a possible solution - What were they? How did they come about? How did you feel about this? What happened?

2.2. Trial and First Failure: Questions leading to stories/narrative: -What happened after first try…was it successful? Why or why not?

2.3. Meeting Allies and Enemies: Questions leading to stories/narrative - Who were these people or things? How did you feel about them? Did one group outnumber the other? Why or why not? What did you do?

2.4. Growth, new skills: Questions leading to stories/narrative - What was the growth? When did you notice it? How did it come about? What were the new skills? How did you acquire these skills? How did you know they were working or not working?

2.5. First Success: Questions leading to stories/narrative - What was the first success?

   How did it come about? How did you feel about it? Why do you think you were successful? What did it mean to you…to your family?

3. End Of Story – Discovery of Learning Potential
3.1 Grand Trial Revelation and Insight: Can you remember a difficult moment when learning to read? What can you tell me about the moment? Why was it difficult? (break it down to what individual looked like when struggling...what did individual sound like when struggling...what did individual feel like when struggling).

3.2. Discarding Old Self: Questions leading to stories/narrative - What has changed for you? How do you see yourself as a reader now? How do you feel about yourself as a reader/parent? Can you tell me a little story?

3.3. Accepting the Role: Questions leading to stories/narrative – What would happen for you to see yourself as a reader? What would that look like for you, sound like, feel like? Can you tell me a little story about that?

3.4. The Road Back: Questions leading to new alternative story/narrative – What has or has not changed for you? How does that feel? Can you tell me a story about this change/ non-change?

3.5. Stepping up to the Final Challenge – Success: Questions leading to stories/narrative about what is different - How do you see yourself as a reader? How will you use what you know about your abilities when at school? What has changed in your perception of yourself? What do you feel about what you know? Is it different? Why or why not?

Return to Ordinary World – Hero Finds a Place

4. After Story – The Final Interview

4.1. Restoring Order: Questions leading to stories/narrative
4.2 Taking a New Place in Old World: This would represent the final interview where we talk about the story that was written and what observations, experiences, or feelings have emerged from the process of writing a personal narrative. Were there any insights, new ideas or perspectives that emerged from this experience, if so what were they, and why do the participants think these new experiences/beliefs/insights occurred?

Interviewer explains Joseph Campbell’s story model to Parent(s), and asks some follow up questions:

Figure 1. The Hero’s Journey (Sicoe, 2013, Permission Granted)

1. What do you think about telling your story using this pattern?

2. Who do you think is the hero/heroine in your story? Can you tell me why?

Sixth Interview-conversation Session Question Prompts:

1. Can you tell me a story about anything that changed about your struggle with reading when talking about your learning strengths? What was it? How did you know there was a change? How did you feel about that change? Why do you think there was a change?
2. Can you describe what you notice about your current reading that relates to this strength?

3. How do you feel about this strength?

4. Why do you feel this way?

5. Can you use an image or draw how you think your brain works when reading?

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**SUB-APPENDIX H**

**INTERVIEW 3: PARENT(S) SECOND INTERVIEW (STORY CREATION WITH ARTIFACTS) DISCUSSION PROMPTS**

The story model uses question prompts to guide the story construction and these prompts relate to Joseph Campbell’s story framework/model. See below.

If Parents did not bring in artifacts for the first interview, prior to the second interview session, participants will be asked to bring in artifacts and images representing their struggling to read experiences to date. They will be instructed to select these artifacts and images based on both positive and negative affect and perceptions. Families/Parents will also be provided with an “Information Sheet on Spaces and Places” explaining the nature of acceptable images (i.e., spaces only with no identifiable headshots or images of individuals, see Appendix K). These artifacts and images will be used to focus a portion of the interview on emotions and perceptions of struggling to read (O’Donoghue, 2006). During this preliminary interview, the Joseph Campbell story model will be explained and modeled by the researcher.

The initial interview will involve asking the family to explain their choices of artifacts and images related to reading and why these representations are considered positive/negative in terms of feelings and perceptions. These visual and/or objects provide a stimulus for dialogue about the family’s history and relationship to the reading process. This interview is preparatory for the first workshop and the crafting of the first part of their family reading narrative.

1. Did you bring an artifact or picture with you? What does this artifact/picture represent? Does it have any special meaning for you? Can you tell me about it?

2. Why did you select the artifacts/images/drawings that you did?

3. What are some of your thoughts around your experience with reading? Has your experience with reading changed over time?
4. Does your family read together, if so what are some of the things that you read together as family? What does your family do about reading as a family?

5. What is your first memory of reading? How did that feel for you? Was that experience what you anticipated/thought would happen?

6. How would you describe yourself as a reader? Why would you describe yourself that way? How do you think your parents/guardian would describe you as a reader? Why would they describe you that way?

7. If you could write a story about you as a reader, what would you call it?

8. Would you have pictures in your story? Why or why not?

9. How would you like to create your story (e.g., Comic book, video, picture collage, written, etc.,)?
   a. What are some of your thoughts around the process of reading?
   b. What are some of your emotional experiences with stories and writing stories?

10. What emotions do you feel when you think or talk about reading? Why do you feel the way you do?

11. Is there anything you would like to change about the way you read? Why or why not? If you would change something, what would it be? Why?

12. Can you tell me about some of your experiences at home, school, or at the Learning Lab with reading? What were your experiences?

13. Have these experiences affected how you make decisions and set goals around reading? Explain.

14. If you were able to talk to your future self, what advice would you give “future you”? Why would you give that advice?

Interviewer explains Joseph Campbell’s story model to Parent(s), and asks some follow up questions:

Figure 1. The Hero’s Journey (Sicoe, 2013, Permission Granted)
SUB-APPENDIX I
INTERVIEW 4: PARENT(S) DECONSTRUCT INTERVIEW - SEPARATE

Interview 4 provides parent(s) an opportunity to dialogue on the process of story creation, interview-conversation sessions, and perceptions based on the story creation and interview-conversation experiences without the child/youth present so the dialogue has the potential of being more candid (i.e., parents and researcher talking about the child/youth’s reading/learning strengths and weaknesses).

1. What did you think about telling your story about your child/youth’s struggles with reading using this pattern?

2. What was the experience like looking at your child/youth as the hero/heroine in your story? Can you tell me why or why not?

3. Any other thoughts about this experience that you would like to share? What have you seen happening for your child/youth during the interview-conversation sessions?

SUB-APPENDIX J
INTERVIEW 5: PARENT AND CHILD/YOUTH PARTICIPANT - TOGETHER

Child/Youth-Participant Second Interview (with Parents Present)

This session will focus on reflecting on changes in reading strategies used.
1. Can you tell me a story about something that changed in your experience of reading as a family after ____ recognized there was a learning strength that could be used when reading? What was it? How did you know there was a change? How did you feel about that change? Do you see yourself as different as a reader than you did before? Why or why not? Does your family see you differently as a reader? Why or why not?

2. Can you tell me a story about how you see yourselves as a family and/or individual moving forward to become even better at reading?

3. Can you tell me a story about what things might still be a challenge to this happening for you? Why? What will you do to continue becoming a better reader in your own eyes?

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SUB-APPENDIX K
INFORMATION SHEET ON SPACES AND PLACES PHOTOGRAPHS

In order to protect the privacy of individuals, the researchers are asking participants to only take pictures of “places” (e.g., a certain location) or a “space” (e.g., an area that has meaning for you) with no identifiable headshots or images of individuals (e.g., pictures of individuals) included in these photographs.

Here are some samples of pictures that would be acceptable:

![Sample Picture 1](image1.jpg)
![Sample Picture 2](image2.jpg)
![Sample Picture 3](image3.jpg)
Appendix N

Eric’s Six Strategies for Comprehension

Numerous researchers have documented the struggles that students with learning disabilities have with reading comprehension. These struggles involve decoding written text, making words connect with meaning, inferring from the text to read between the lines, being able to make conclusion, remember what is read and summarizing it appropriately, and tracking understanding of what was read (Watson, Gable, Gear, & Hughes, 2012). Walsh and Simpson, (2013) describe the use of iPads as the “embodied interactivity that supports learning” (p. 149) and comprehending of new material through movement. Eric has used digital technologies spontaneously through his education. During our time together, we were co-researchers into how he approached reading tasks and through analyzing three novels he was reading. We were able to identify his process of making connections and putting those ideas on paper through examining three characters in three different novels. The process involved six different steps or strategies. Our work together allowed Eric to increase his awareness of his learning strengths and gave him confidence in approaching future reading comprehension tasks:

1. Look at assignment (i.e., the main characters in three different novels) if discussing these characters create a mental video. If doing something related to science/history/geography then look for video clips/webpages/pictures with text on the web using iPad or a computer.

2. Gather information from a few sources then look for patterns and identify what is similar or may be different between the characters or information gathered on a topic.
3. Create an order or sequence like when doing Tig welding. Make the ideas to follow a sequence and connect with each other.

4. Use discussion and listening to Eric talking because it helps him establish key points or ideas.

5. Analyze the pattern of behaviour in the three characters, or if doing non-fiction that attributes that might be common.

6. Access prior knowledge or experiences to make connections: this uses comprehension strategies: text-to-self, text-to-text, text-to-world. In Eric’s case it involves movies, YouTube clips, and other internet resources.