How can Queering Contribute to Elementary Schoolteachers' Understanding and Classroom Practice, as They Design and Implement LGBTQ Sensitive Visual Arts Curriculum?

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ABSTRACT

How can Queering Contribute to Elementary Schoolteachers' Understanding and Classroom Practice, as They Design and Implement LGBTQ Sensitive Visual Arts Curriculum?

Melissa-Ann Ledo

As a Design Based Research (DBR) qualitative study, this thesis is positioned at the intersection of the Quebec Visual Arts Education Program and lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer (LGBTQ) youth studies. Specifically, it examined the creation process, precisely the design and implementation, of six elementary school teachers' LGBTQ sensitive Visual Arts Curriculum and their learning, understanding, and practice of Queering. The six teachers work at two elementary schools in Montreal, Quebec: one in Notre-Dame-de-Grace and one in the Plateau Montreal, including three teachers per school, one per cycle. The research illuminates the issues around their Queering of Elementary Visual Arts pedagogy, through the development and implementation of lessons that were: inclusive of various family constructs, confronting gender stereotypes, and challenging the ideas around bullying. The study employed DBR combining qualitative data collection (interviews and logs). Keeping in mind queer as strategy, an attitude, and a new understanding (Smith,1996), while celebrating difference and breaking heteronormative binaries, was at the heart of the teacher's design approach as they created the curriculum. This lead to the creation of a series of lesson plans and a guide of Best Practices to be used when implementing such lesson plans in the Elementary classroom.

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CHAPTER ONE // INTRODUCTION

My elementary days were filled with heteronormativity. The TV shows I watched as a child provided little variation from the nuclear model of family. I was a typical girly girl: always in pink, daddy's little princess. My mom once had to explain to me that 'no, I couldn't have what I wanted because I was not a real princess, only daddy's princess.' I was obsessed with romance and can actually remember who my 'boyfriend' was in each grade. When I played house or dolls with friends, I often volunteered to play the 'dad/boyfriend' role but thought nothing of it. In grade 6 I was becoming friends with the 'new girl' and was utterly obsessed with how alternative she was. We were inseparable for most of the year and geeked out on being the best artists in the class. I actually remember getting into a fistfight with her when she dumped me as a friend for the *cool girls* and teased me for my lisp. I would only later realize that this was my first girl crush, and hormones were largely at play. By the time I reached high school I knew that there was something different about me. I ditched the ballet shoes and began sneaking out my skateboard (as I was not permitted to skate because I was a girl and "might hurt my parts and not be able to have children"). I soon found myself defending gay rights at the dinner table and thought it was horrible that the 'gay guy' at school got beat up often. Though my high school provided few resources regarding sexual orientation and gender minorities, I distinctly remember picking up one brochure that spoke about Lesbian and Bisexual woman. I found myself hiding this brochure in my desk at home and often revisiting it, as I could identify myself in the section about "you may be a lesbian or bisexual if you…". But I was afraid to pursue it any further. I couldn't see myself hurting my parents and challenging the expectation on me as a *good* girl to marry a man, who *could take care* of me, and have children. And to be honest, I knew I was interested in boys, too, so it was just easier to pursue the possibilities that came with that. I came from a Catholic Portuguese immigrant family and I was very involved in my local church by volunteering with the younger kids, being part of the youth group, attending pilgrimages, etc. But my self-questioning of my sexual identity never stopped. I found myself asking priests about the first time I was intimate with a girl in my senior year. I think I shocked the man and he quickly asked questions related to my intimate interactions with boys and focused on that, rather than answering my questions about my attraction to girls. By the

time graduation rolled around, I clearly began identifying as bisexual and Christian, but continued to see boys more often than girls, as it was just easier to pursue that path with my families' resistance to me even mentioning my interest in girls. I have always been close with my parents, and I had a hard time with the hurt it caused them when I did date girls, as it created a very difficult environment at home. I did not have any role models or mentors that could provide insight on my situation, thus I chose the path of least resistance that would not disrupt my family life. I had not met anyone that was worth hurting my parents over.

After years of primarily dating men, I found myself in the midst of a difficult break-up with a man. It was a three-year relationship and I was convinced he was someone who would make my parents happy, thus making me happy. But something shifted in me. I realized that I was closing my twenties and had never really opened myself up to seeing a woman as a potential lifelong partner. After a year of traveling and self-actualization, to put it in my brother's words, "[I] stopped living for [my] parents". This was the year that I fell madly and deeply in love with my now wife.

It was not the easiest of times, but I never look back with regret. She, and the life I have now, was worth *temporarily* hurting my parents. I believe this was the part I missed all those years before: the hurt would be *temporary* and it actually was fear more than it would be hurt. They love me unconditionally, and this I know I am lucky to have, as this is not the case for many queers. It took my parents a few years, many discussions and hard work, but my parents and my wife are the best of friends now and they proudly walked me down the aisle on my wedding day.

It was this journey that made me narrow my thesis work. I found myself questioning 'what could have been in place to help me through this struggle when I was younger?'

When I first decided that I wanted to complete my masters in art education, I had a strong urge to pursue research with elementary teachers who were non-visual arts specialists, but were given the visual arts as part of their teaching schedules. How particular the world of the generalist elementary teacher is! With a full workload that includes multiple subject areas that they have to teach, many of which they specialize in, they are also given the visual arts to teach with little to no experience in art education.

After spending five years as a secondary art specialist, after having studied Fine Arts and Art Education for six years, I understood that it is just part of the workings of a public school; teachers are given courses to teach that they do not necessarily have expertise in. It is not ideal that teachers without expertise in a field are asked to teach that domain, but any dedicated teacher will surely do their due diligence and thoroughly research their classes, right? I soon discovered that the answer to that question, as I changed roles from teacher to the Pedagogical Consultant of the 4 Arts for my school district, was "sure, when the teachers have *time*."

Keeping in mind the idea of developing elementary non-art specialists' capacities, I experienced a huge shift in the direction of my work as I attended my second National Art Education Association (an American organization) conference and my first NAEA LGBTIC (National Art Education Association Lesbian Gay Transgender Issues Caucus) members meeting. The group of dynamic and engaged art educators and advocates were upset that the meeting was held during an inconvenient time and the tension was high. It took place during one of the last time blocks of the conference and many members of the group could not attend because they had to be at other meetings or on a plane to return home. Group coordinators believed that the timing of the meeting was perhaps intentional, demonstrating a potential disregard of the importance of the group from the conference organizers. The coordinators of the LGBTQ group shared that they fought for their place within NAEA, and often this was done with much anger. Beyond sharing frustrations, the other impression these art educators gave me during that meeting was that LGBTQ sessions were the only available safe spaces for them to be *out* educators, as many of them feared losing their jobs if they were *out* in the educational institutions they work at. Observing these interactions made me reflect on inclusive environments. I firmly believe that creating straight allies is the key to advocating for this cause, and acting in anger can be alienating. We cannot expect someone to become an ally of an organization if we do not provide space for them to also find themselves, in such a way that touches their own reality, as one does not liberate people by alienating them (Freire, 2000). These ideas of having access to safe spaces as a teacher, and reaching others without resorting to anger, shaped my masters' thesis question.

After returning to Montreal and sharing this story with my graduate classmates and supervisor, I was encouraged to envision myself in a NAEA LGBTQ leadership role. I do not have the same fears as these educators, as I am not at risk of losing my job for being out as a queer woman in a same-sex relationship. Perhaps it is because I live in a progressive city, Montreal, and/or perhaps because I am Canadian. In this vein, I recognize myself in what Chambers (2013) shares about being a foreigner within his recommendations regarding research areas for Canadian Art Education stating: "By being an outsider perhaps I can see things just that little bit more clearly. Because I am not one of you, I don't worry so much about politics and politicking, or perhaps, about telling people what they want to hear" (p. 9). I found myself scribbling the following two notes into my sketchbook:

> SHIFT: This year`s NAEA conference has shifted my path (…) I want to join the (LGBTQ) Caucus and spread LGBTQ goodies from Quebec…and I am already challenging myself on my ideas for my Masters. Evaluation seems secondary to the urge to discover LGBTQ ARTS ED Paths. Let`s see where this leads me. Expectations that result in support – or - inner pull, for the win? If we start with anger, no one will listen. If we give into fear, our voice will never be heard. If we share proof, we have grounds for action and change.
>
> (2013, Studio Notes)

This presented the shift in my research question. I became curious to know why there were limited resources on the subject of LGBTQ inclusive education, and why available resources were not visual arts specific. I was under the assumption that since art teachers often embrace social justice (books such as *Art Education for Social Justice* (Anderson, Gussak & Hallmark, 2010) are commonplace) there would be more on this specific topic of diversity. I began asking questions about how my research could be used to fill in some of these gaps. I questioned my own experience, my privilege, and the path to my now queer life: How would my own experience have varied if my teachers considered difference? What kinds of questions do teachers need to ask themselves to achieve inclusive classrooms? Thinking about this, I began asking myself a series of questions regarding teaching practices in the elementary classroom: Do we set-up heteronormative play/expectations in our classrooms? How do we react when they are challenged? What

do we do if a male student declares he loves the colour pink and requests to play at the doll station? Why is it bad or unaccepted that a boy plays with dolls or likes the colour pink? Are we afraid this will permit him to be more like a girl? What is wrong with being more like a girl? Do we actuate being more like a girl with being less important? And what makes dolls and the colour pink girl things? Isn't the colour pink historically a male colour before the toy industry shifted it to 'pink is for girls'? Are girls who play sports and refuse to wear dresses still treated as lesser beings? Do we still put pressure on girls to engage in "girl activities"? Do we let our girls play with trucks?

After sitting with these questions, and with an encouraging push from both my thesis supervisor and my wife, I realized that I was becoming increasingly more interested in the hidden heteronormative curriculum that takes place in our classrooms. As teachers we are often unaware of the things we teach beyond subject matter. Geisen (2015) states "Ultimately what students will gain from your class is not all content knowledge. It's how you approach it… the bigger lessons that they'll take into the real world, which is essential in this day and age" (p. 21). Thus the shift progressed as I became increasingly interested in inviting teachers to queer the way they teach. How can this be done? Perhaps by inviting them to reflect on their use of language, their responses to student's actions, the ways in which they conduct themselves and the impact this can have on their students. The assumptions that all students identify as heterosexual and/or cis-gender, or that they come from a nuclear family structure, can be damaging and dangerous assumptions. We can see from the 2011 Canadian Statistics census that these assumptions are not valid, for example the census counted 64,575 same-sex couple families in 2011, up 42.4% from 2006. The ultimate need of humans/students to want to fit in is inherently *normal,* and much guilt, shame, and anxiety can be apparent when students feel like they do not fit the norm. As teachers, we have the power to create a norm that is more inclusive, make a norm which is actually a collection of all the differences. Ultimately, there is actually very little that makes a hetero-parental family and a homo-parental family different. Goldberg, Gartrell, and Gates (2014) share that:

> Studies comparing LG and heterosexual parents in regard to mental health, parenting stress, and parenting competence have found few differences based on family structure and that researchers have found few differences between children

raised by lesbian and heterosexual parents in terms of self-esteem, quality of life, psychological adjustment, or social functioning (p.2, 3)

My research question truly started to take a new path. This question focused on the experience of teachers creating inclusive classroom approaches, as it was the combination of my interests: the implementation of authentic art making in the elementary classroom and the lack of research on LGBTQ issues in Art Education. After extensive journal writing, preliminary research looking at an existing elementary anti-homophobia project, self-searching, and in-depth conversations, my two paths came together to form my question. I was satisfied that the conceptualization of my research could help other educators in their understanding of how to queer their curriculum. This goes beyond specific lessons; rather the focus is on inclusive themes within lessons, language choice, and classroom practice. I aimed to invite educators into a space that has them question heteronormative and binary ways of being a teacher. I believe the work to be but a small drop in the ocean of what is available to educators, but my intention is that it will have a ripple effect for art educators and for the classrooms of tomorrow. I hope the classrooms of the future generations, the classrooms of my potential future children, will be welcoming and inclusive ones.

This research involved recruiting and meeting with six elementary teachers, who were asked to engage in professional development sessions that lead to the creation and testing of Learning and Evaluation Situations (also known as a LES or Unit Plans) that focus on diversifying content through queering curriculum. Teachers were invited to co-create age appropriate visual arts LESs, implement them in their classroom, reflect on the experience, request specific resources and support, adjust the LESs, and repeat the cycle three times. This is the iterations of Design Based Research. I met with the teachers for five sessions over the course of an academic year. These sessions were focused on subject-specific knowledge building, the process of developing the LESs, the sharing of teacher results, and the discovery of what is needed for the successful delivery of the LESs. Data included one pre-group interview and survey, logs the teachers completed after teaching each LES, researcher field notes based on each session, post project one-on-one interviews, and a final focus group interview.

Design Based Research informed this work. This study attempts to answer the following question: How can queering contribute to elementary schoolteachers' understanding and classroom practice, as they design and implement LGBTQ sensitive visual arts curriculum?

The purpose of producing such a curriculum and studying its development is rooted in the evidence that Di Salvio (2005) shares in his research, "We Are Family: Sexual Diversity Issues and the Elementary Curriculum in Quebec". His evidence demonstrated that teachers believe they need to have better resources in order to help them deal with issues of sexual diversity. The notion that teachers would welcome such a project is also confirmed by the conclusions presented by Art Educator and Researcher Lampela (2001) stating that "Curricular and resource materials are needed for those teachers who are misinformed about what constitutes a discussion of sexual identity as it relates to art" (p. 157). This also reinforces the concept that work is needed within the field to help promote the safety of all children, regardless of their sexual orientation, and that of their parents and relatives.

CHAPTER TWO // LITERATURE REVIEW

Grounding Work in Government Support for LGBTQ Inclusion

This research is grounded in Canada and Quebec legislation that addresses the legal directives regarding sexual minorities. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms states in section S. 15, "Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and in particular without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability" (p. 1). Prior to 1969, same-sex practices between consenting adults were considered crimes punishable by imprisonment. That year, the Canadian government passed an omnibus bill decriminalizing private sexual acts between two people over the age of 21. The Charter, however, was not amended until 1996.

In 1977, Quebec became the first jurisdiction in Canada to amend the province's Charter of Human Rights to include sexual orientation as a prohibited ground for discrimination. The Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms in chapter I.1, 10 states "Every person has a right to full and equal recognition and exercise of his human rights and freedoms, without distraction, exclusion or preference based on race, colour, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, civil status, age except provided by law, religion, political convictions, ethnic or natural origin, social condition, or handicap"(p. 4).

The Quebec Policy Against Homophobia (2009) also encourages school administrators to acquire resources to demystify homophobia and to support participation of GLBT community groups. They are invited to take into consideration the realities of sexual minority youths in bullying and violence prevention action plans, encourage the organizing and supporting of activities against homophobia (notably the international day against homophobia), and adopt terminology in administrative documents to include same-sex parents on official documents.

This research is also supported by the following two Quebec Action Plans: *Homophobia: Let's Work on it together (*2008-2011*)* and *An Action plan to prevent and deal with violence in the schools* and *Government Action Plan Against Homophobia: Moving towards social equality - Unity in diversity* (2011-2016). The four main priorities of the 2011-2016 action plans are to "recognise the realities faced by sexual minorities;

promote respect for the rights of sexual minorities; promote well-being; and ensure a concerted approach" (p. 1). The goals within the first priority are to "promote the values of openness and inclusiveness with respect to sexual diversity" and to "increase knowledge about sexual diversity in order to introduce more effective methods to combat homophobia" (p. 3, 6).

Quebec`s (2012) *Bill 56:An Act to prevent and deal with bullying and violence: The Quebec National Assembly`s* listed its goal as preventing and dealing with all forms of bullying and violence targeting a student, a teacher, or any other staff member, which means our Quebec schools are now accountable for intervening in bullying situations. According to a recent Quebec study, this bill involves a homophobic component (2010).

Curriculum Previously Available

Thus far in my research, I have found three groups that have created general elementary curricula or lessons: The United States group *GLSEN* offers on-line teacher's lesson plans; The Quebec`s *Collision of LGBT Families* offers a teacher`s kit; and Sir Wilfred Laurier School Board offers the `*Moving Beyond Tolerance*` Program. As a pilot study, I have examined the lessons found in the `*Moving Beyond Tolerance*` program and have found that: 1) There are no written studies on how these programs informed teachers' practices; 2) This program did not necessarily address how these lessons could be integrated into other subject domains; and 3) These lessons may be viewed as a form of "Othering".

The work of Kumashiro (2000), the founding director of the Center for Anti-Oppressive Education (CAOE), helps to further understand the concept of "Othering". This author wrote that that educators should not limit their lessons about the "Other" (referring to any minority group) to once or twice a year or when this topic is addressed in a direct, isolated or exclusive way (2000). Instead, he asserts that lessons and topics about the "Other" be integrated throughout the curriculum. He describes that a movement away from discrete lessons about the "Other" can work against the tendency to treat different groups as mutually exclusive and recommends ongoing integration. Such an approach enables educators to address the intersections of these different identities and their attendant forms of oppression (Kumashiro, 2000). For this reason my research takes place over an academic cycle of a year and participants integrate their lessons through the

visual arts and other subject domains. The concept of avoiding "Othering" informs my research.

Previous Studies

The following studies provide the beginning of the groundwork on which I build my study. Prior to answering my research question, I first investigate the major topics embedded within it: *What research has been conducted on homophobia in the school context? How does research address elementary teachers' needs and what is the inclusion of LGBTQ Sensitive curricula?*

These preliminary reviews shape how I conceptualize the approach to the five sessions with my participants, as well as how I situate the possible contributions of my thesis in relation to other scholarly work. The following studies discussed are the departure point.

What research has been conducted on homophobia in the school context? Chamberland (2008) conducted a study of 2747 students from 30 high schools across Quebec who were asked to fill out an anonymous questionnaire concerning perceptions, school climate, and the academic repercussions surrounding issues of homophobia. It is important to note that Chamberland's research focused on Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB), unless otherwise specified. Greenbaum (2012) summarized Chamberland's findings for the LGBT Family Coalition of Quebec. There are three findings that come from this data that can reinforce the *raison d`être* of my research. The first is that the majority of students questioned (58.7%) considered their teachers to have spoken about homosexuality in neutral terms, or in a positive manner (39.1%); and only a small percentage (2.1%) found the discussion to be in negative terms (p. 19). This data indicates that Québec's schools are showing positive signs of openness to issues surrounding sexual orientation and gender identity. The second finding that informs my research is the large percentage of LGBTQ slurs being used by students, and that teachers were not addressing the events. A majority of students (73.3%) who heard these slurs reported that these comments were made when adult supervision was present and that no adult action was taken (p. 7). Are adults not sensitized or aware that these words can have a negative impact, or do not know how to address their use? A third finding that informs my research is that homophobic victimization targets 69% of LGB students or those who

are still questioning their sexual orientation and 35.4% of heterosexual students (p. 8). The findings regarding heterosexual students show that they are usually targeted because they take part in something not associated with their birth gender. Over a third (38.1%) of 2747 secondary school students surveyed in this study reported having experienced at least one act of violence in schools, because they are, or because they are assumed to be LGB (p. 9). These findings are important to my research as they suggest that the homophobic bullying in our schools targets questioning and homosexual students, as well as heterosexual students, thus work is needed to aid in creating safe spaces for all students.

Limits to Chamberland's research are aligned with most survey-based research done with youth: research with minors presents some unique challenges. According to Lenhart (2013), when we survey young people ages 12 to 17, we're surveying minors, who legally fall into a protected class of people and by law, minors cannot consent; their parents must give consent for them (in this case to participate in the research project). The consent requirement is a legacy of the belief that people under the age of 16, 17 or 18 are not fully equipped to make good decisions in their best interest and that youth may be unduly susceptible to coercion (i.e. they must complete the survey because it is conducted at school).

Other limits to these results are that the questions were answered via anonymous questionnaires by "mischievous responders" (Robinson-Cimpian, 2014). This author defines mischievous responders as, "youths who provide extreme, and potentially untruthful, responses to multiple questions […] affect a wide range of disparity estimates, including those between […] sexual minorities and non-minorities [which can lead to] inaccurate conclusions that substantively effect research, policy, and public discourse regarding a variety of disparities" (p. 171). Thus we must take into account these possible inaccuracies in Chamberland's work.

As mentioned above, the Director of the LGBT Family Coalition or the Coalition of Homoparental Families of Quebec, Greenbaum (2012) summarized a large selection of studies, including Chamberland et al. (2010), to produce a resource titled *Homophobia in Quebec Schools*. In this resource, the author reveals the alarming prevalence of homophobic violence – be it verbal, physical or psychological – in schools, as well as the

negative consequences that such violence can have on the youth who are its victims. She shares five main conclusions that were drawn from the studies: "Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth are more at risk; Non-LGBTQ youth are the victims of homophobic language and insults as well; Homophobia can manifest itself in a wide array of actions including, name-calling, vandalism, labelling, cyber-bullying, rumours and social exclusion; Homophobia can have major consequences on the mental health and academic success; and students lack confidence in adults' ability to solve the problem of homophobia" (p. 3-4). Being that a positive school environment is a collective effort, these five main conclusions can serve as foundation on which to build my research as it justifies the urgent need to take action.

How Does Research Address Elementary Teachers' Needs and Inclusion Of LGBTQ Sensitive Curricula?

A study conducted by Di Salvo (2005) explored ten female teachers' perspectives, through questionnaires and one-on-one interviews, regarding the inclusion of gay and lesbian issues into cycle one, cycle two and cycle 3 Moral Education; Geography, History and Citizenship Education; and the English Language Arts curriculum. In the Quebec Elementary Educational System, Cycle One refers to grades one and two, Cycle Two refers to grades three and four, and Cycle Three refers to grades five and six. Di Salvo asked the teachers if they felt it was important to have easy access to lesson plans, curriculum units, or other resources developed for children that address matters such as families with gay and lesbian parents, homophobia, gender-related name-calling, stereotyping, anti-gay bullying, sexual orientation discrimination, prejudices, or the oppression of gay and lesbian individuals. He found that only 10% of the teachers interviewed *somewhat disagreed* with this statement (p. 40 - 44). His questionnaire and discussion with the teachers also revealed that they did not feel ready or prepared to handle issues that concerned gays and lesbians, and said that they needed in-service training, and be provided with resources in order to properly address issues of sexual diversity (p. 63). The results from Di Salvo's study reveal that the majority of the teachers he interviewed would welcome the framework that my research hopes to build.

Lampela (1998), Co-founder of the National Art Education Association (NAEA) Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Transgender, (Queer) Issues Caucus, surveyed teachers in the

United States and found teachers disagreed with beginning conversations concerning LGB issues at the elementary level. The author surveyed a random stratified sample of 200 members of NAEA. The sample was chosen to include members from each state and from various teaching levels. A 35% response was obtained and 14 teachers from the sample were later interviewed. The study indicated that only 5% of art teachers believe it would be appropriate to begin the discussion of gay and lesbian artists at the elementary levels. Conversely, Lampela (2001) concluded her article for Studies in Art Education by stating that there is a need to provide for the safety of all children, regardless of their sexual orientation or that of their parents and relatives. She writes, "Providing accurate information about lesbian and gay artists, by providing an accepting classroom environment, by not tolerating hate in schools, we can provide safe places where all children are welcome and can learn" (p. 158). Lampela (2001) concludes her article by asserting that curricular and resource materials are needed for those teachers who are misinformed about what constitutes a discussion of sexual identity as it relates to art.

It is important to address the differences between the research of Di Salvo (2005) and Lampela (1998). The first is the cultural differences between participants: Di Salvo interviewed ten teachers from a province and country that has a series of government support for this type of work (see section Government Support for LGBTQ Inclusion regarding Quebec and Canada) whereas Lampela's participants are from multiple states in the United States that do not necessarily have equivalent government support. The second difference is the methods: Di Salvo had one-on-one interviews with his participants which provided a larger amount of detailed data, whereas Lampela's data consisted only of completed written anonymous surveys and email correspondents.

These studies indicate that curricular and resource materials are needed to clarify how to approach the topic of LGBTQ inclusive elementary curriculum for teachers, parents and administration. This process of clarifying misinformation and misconceptions can be reflected in the work done by Perrotti and Westhemier (2001) as they experienced working with three Massachusetts schools and the Massachusetts Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students. These authors observed the ease with which elementary school teachers can understand the impact of anti-gay name-calling and gender constraints. These teachers see the influence of social and interpersonal stress on a child's

school experience. It was found that although teachers may understand how isolation negatively affects children, they may not know how to talk to children about homosexuality as they may fear the fallout from administrators and parents if they breach the subject (Perrotti & Westheimer, 2001). These authors discuss overcoming barriers of inclusion and clarify misconceptions of what inclusion includes. They state that people imagine that talking to second graders about homosexuality means telling them details about sexual practices, often forgetting that gay and lesbian people feel things that are not about sexual activity: "teachers are often relieved to realize conversations with children about gay and lesbian people can focus on love and families" (Perrotti & Westheimer, 2001, p. 99).

Queering: Theoretical Foundation

Since the question this research sets out to answer is 'How can queering contribute to elementary schoolteachers' understanding and classroom practice, as they design and implement LGBTQ sensitive visual arts curriculum?' it is important to examine what queering actually means, and explore the word queer. It is important to note that the word queer often resists definition.

Queer insists that the gay and lesbian identities of previous generations functioned in an unacknowledged normative way, implicitly excluding men and women of colour, trans […] and any other identifiable marginalised group or subgroup. On its more theoretical register, however, queer claims that sex disturbs attempts made by language, discourse, the ego or power to fix identity to stable terms or reference. But the most sophisticated Queer Theorists rely on the implicit distinction between what is queer and what is normative, the latter often rendered as 'compulsory heterosexuality' or 'the heterosexual matric' (Penney, 2014).

That is to say, it is important to note that the word queer is one that is more inclusive, as it avoids discourse based on the normativity often adhered to by past generations of cisgender gays and lesbians. Cisgender refers to individuals who identify with the gender assigned to them at birth. Transgender people are not cisgender, as they do not identify with the gender assigned to them at birth. Thus, queer, in the context of this research, refers to fighting against heteronormativity and binary approaches to discourse.

In Barker and Scheele's (2016) book, "Queer: A Graphic History" they state that the word queer has many different meanings in different times and places. These authors explain that:

> It originally referred to strangeness or difference, and became a term of abuse. It has since been reclaimed as a positive word. It can operate as an umbrella for people outside of the heterosexual norm, or for people who challenge the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Trans) "mainstream". It can also be a way of challenging norms around gender and sexuality through different ways of thinking or acting.

This description allows us to begin to understand the source of the word and how it can be applied to curriculum. If queer refers to challenging norms around normativity, then to queer something such as curriculum, would mean to approach it in a way that challenges the usually heteronormative approach surrounding its design.

Smith (1996) defines queer in her article "What is This Thing Called Queer" as "a strategy, an attitude, a reference to other identities and a new self-understanding" (p. 280). As a strategy, queer is about disrupting the system. Queer activists, like those in OutRage (a group that uses extravagant actions that are aimed at getting the media's attention in playful and powerful ways) "don't want to work within the system and be accepted by the mainstream" (p. 279). As an attitude, queer "marks a growing lack of faith in the institutions of the state, in political procedures, in the press, the education system, policing the law" (p. 280). As a new understanding, queer "articulates a radical questioning of social and cultural norms" (p. 280).

According to Barker and Scheele's (2016) outline of Queer Interventions, my research situates itself in Queer Activism: "a form of sexuality/gender activism that opposes assimilationist agendas of trying to [show] how "normal" LG(BT) people are. Instead it celebrates […] diversity" (p. 15). It is not Queer studies: "an academic discipline that tries to move beyond lesbian and gay studies to incorporate other sexualities and take a more critical approach to sexuality as a whole, including heterosexuality" (p. 15) nor is it Queer Theory: "a theoretical approach that goes beyond queer studies to question the categories and assumptions on which current popular academic understandings are based" (p. 15).

Though this research is not situated in Queer Theory, but rather Queer Activism, Queer Theorist Walters (2005) work was nonetheless able to contribute to the foundation of this work. This author describes the word Queer as "a rather amorphous term and still emergent enough to be vague and ill-defined" (p. 5), which echo's the previously mentioned work of Penney (2014). Walters recommends we look to a variety of places to aid us in decreeing its meaning: Eve Sedgwick, Judith Butler, Michel Foucault, Ru Paul, Riot Grrrls, ball culture, kiss-ins, etc. According to Walters, Queer Theory's social and political contexts emerge from "the AIDS crisis, the rise of postmodern/poststructuralist theory, the politics of academia […] and recent critiques of feminism" (p. 6). Queer Theory, in part, is a reaction to a school of 1970s feminism that believed each sex comes with its own essential characteristics. These contexts align with Wilchins (2004) thoughts of Queer Theory being "at heart about politics – things like [questioning] power and identity, language, and difference" (p. 5). According to Meyer (2007) in her essay included in Rodriguez and Pinar`s book *Queering Straight Teachers: Discourse and Identity in Education*, Queer Theory offers "a lens through which educators can transform their praxis so as to explore and celebrate the tensions and new understandings created by teaching new ways of seeing the word" (p. 15). The application of Queer Theory key tenets can "create classrooms that are more liberatory, inclusive of diversity and socially just" (Meyer, 2007, p. 15).

As this Literature Review reveals, the primary homophobic acts occur when children do not fit the cisgender stereotype. This notion of how each of us must look, act, and dress because of our cisgender is argued to be "deeply embedded in our society" (Wilchins, 2004), and that gender is a performance or "performativity" (Butler, 1999). Thus Queer Theory informs this study as these concepts are embodied and/or entertained, as the participants approach queering their curriculum. It is the hope that aspects of Queer Theory will be naturally explored, as teachers add another layer to what Blaise (2005) describes as the:

> Complexities of the social and political construction of gender while deepening and broadening our understandings of how heterosexual discourses are used by children to constitute themselves as gendered […] with this new set of theoretical tools, teachers can begin seeing *the familiar* in new ways" (p. 4).

Blaise (2005) holds that "uncovering gender discourses in the classroom and the ways in which children's understanding of gender norms play out in their daily lives, challenges the field of early childhood education to see the complex ways that children are actively doing gender" (p. 4). Thus, having the teachers approach the project with a queering approach will help deepen the understanding of the social construction of gender and challenge this construct through age appropriate approaches.

Queering also informs the design of the sessions. Instead of approaching the sessions with structured predetermined content, I allow for areas of uncertainty to lead the discourse.

According to Puotinen (2009) in her online article entitled *Queer is what Queer does: What is Queering Theory*, "queer/queering" as practices (of deconstruction, resistance, destabilizing) are done by persons who may or may not identify as queer. This is important to note, as five out of six of my participants identify as heterosexual and all identify as cisgender. This author discusses the tension between Queer/ing as a concept and queer/ing as specific practices done by *actual* people, as well as the ways in which it shift our perspective on and our engagement with queering theory if we moved from "queer is what queer does" to "queer is what queers do", therefore focusing on actions taken.

In "Rethinking Sexism, Gender, and Sexuality" Butler-Wall, Cosier, Harper, Sapp, Sokolower and Tempel (2016) share an article entitled "Queering Our Schools". The following excerpt of this article accentuates the conclusion of this chapter:

> Educators and Scholars of color have argued for many years that multicultural education means moving beyond "heroes and holidays" to integrating the history and lives of people of color into curriculum at every point. The same is true for LGBTQ issues and people. Participating in a Day of Silence can be a good start, but a social justice frame demands an approach to curriculum that integrates queer people – their problems, history, struggles, and contributions – into day-to-day curriculum, K-12, across the subject areas (p.25) […] When you invite kids to talk openly and ask questions about gender and sexuality, you have to be ready for whatever happens. It's trickier than geometry. (p.26)

For that reason, this thesis is grounded in research, the foundation of queering, and addresses teachers idea on what is needed to move forward in creating non-heteronormative environments.

CHAPTER 3 // METHODOLOGY & PROCEDURE

Methodology

I elected to use Design Based Research to conduct my research and structure the way in which I answered my question: How can queering contribute to elementary schoolteacher's understanding and classroom practice, as they are design and implement LGBTQ sensitive visual arts curriculum? I determined that Design Based Research was the ideal methodology to address my question because it is a collection of methodological principles and approaches used to study innovative educational interventions in complex, real-world settings. DBM bridges the theory and practice gap (Jacobsen, 2014). My participants and I use innovative educational interventions in real-world settings and attempt to bridge the gap between the theory of queering and its practical use in the classroom. It is a methodology that comes from psychology and the learning sciences that educators use to increase the impact, transfer, and translation of education research into improved practice as it stresses the need for theory building and the development of design principles that guide, inform, and improve both practice and research in educational contexts.

Barab and Squire (2004) explain that Design Based Research is not so much a single approach; Rather, it is a series of approaches with the intent of producing new theories, artifacts, and practices that account for and potentially impact learning and teaching in naturalistic settings. The new theories in this thesis are of how to queer elementary art lessons. The artifacts are the logs and lessons produced. Finally, the practices are the recommendations that participants shared at the end of the third iteration regarding approaches, support needed, assessing the population, etc. entitled Best Practices are in the conclusion chapter. During DBR, as researchers become more familiar with the research setting or social group, they must be open to emergent design, and to change in strategies during the course of the research. I held this as a core principle in my iterations, as I allowed for the teachers to inform the design of the five sessions we had together and impact the strategies used during these sessions.

According to Jacobsen (2014), Design Based Research principles include iterative cycles of design, enactment, analysis and redesign as well as disruptive, innovative design solutions and/or interventions in practice. It relies on collaboration between

researchers and participants in real-world contexts and aspires to solve real-world, complex learning problems by studying learning in complex, naturalistic settings. It is oriented toward sustained educational innovations and focuses on continual improvement in the process of designing and adapting an innovation for learning (Jacobsen, 2014). DBR studies the interactions between learners, content, criteria and context and is informed by research and aims to inform research with theories and design principles. It relies on data in both summative reporting and in a formative manner to inform the next steps in instruction, design and research. Jacobsen explains that the key principles that differentiate Design Based Research from other forms of participatory research, such as action research, are the requirement for a well-defined problem with a research-informed design solution, the testing of theory in real-world contexts and the contribution to theory and practice in addition to local impact. These key principles describe the advantages of this method and provide the justification for its use in this research: it's practical and field-based.

Gavemeijer & Cobb (2006) describe the first step in the DBR process as the ground. This first link in the chain of inquiry represents the need for scholars to base the new design upon what is already known. The researcher must go beyond a traditional literature review, seeking to define the preliminary instructional-design theory or design principles that are used to ground the initial designs. The ground is important during our process. This is addressed in several ways for my participants: half of the group had previously helped build the resource bank in the previous PDIG and all participants spent time reviewing the items in the resource bank for best practices and design principles. The full group attended the LGBT Family Coalition session that discussed ways in which to address topics within a classroom setting (as well as debunking preconceptions), thus how to plan instruction. The group was also provided several design principles (formats in which to design their LES) and participants settled on the design framework I had previously built.

My research intention was to design/develop a solution to a practical problem (Gavemeijer & Cobb, 2006). Barab and Squire (2004), in *Design Based Research: Putting a Stake in the Ground*, state that "work can involve the development of [….] curriculum, and especially theory that can be used to understand and support learning" (p.

1). They go on to explain that within Design Based Research methodology, "One challenging component of doing educational research on design-based interventions is to characterize the complexity, fragility, messiness, and eventual solidity of the design and doing so in a way that will be valuable to others" (p. 4). In other words, in order for my research to work to be effective, I need to let it be complex, and field-tested with actual teachers. To minimize this limitation of becoming overly complex, participants used the framework I provided to plan their LESs (which they had the freedom to build within, upon, and change) and I made myself available via email between sessions to help with any everyday occurrences that arose during their teaching. It was a constant cycle of learning, cognition, and development.

Methods

The method to gather raw data was done through collection of qualitative teacher reflective logs, research field notes, as well as one-on-one and group interviews. This data collection can be viewed in Figure 1. My data consisted of three separate types: Pre-project group interview and survey, post-project group interview, and individual interviews; Teacher Logs; and my field notes.

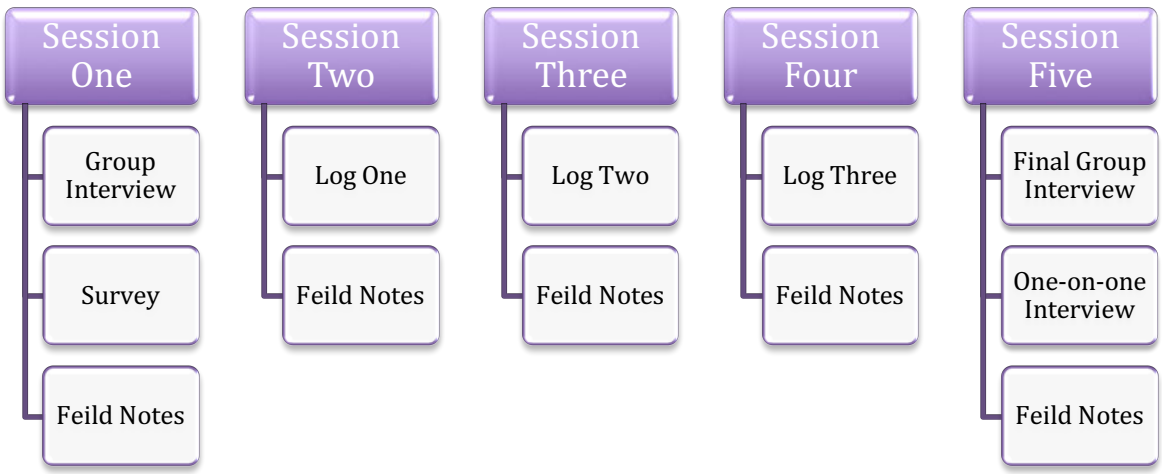

Figure 1. Methods.

The interviews were completed using different in-depth approaches outlined by Van Den Hoonaard (2012). This author outlines these approaches as an interview guide:

creating a list of areas that the interviewer wants to cover, providing little direction to the person being interviewed, and starting with one opening question thus allowing the participant to lead where he or she will (p. 80). My findings on the different methods of interviews were gathered during my pilot project, where I interviewed teachers, administrators, and staff regarding the elementary curriculum previously mentioned: The `*Moving Beyond Tolerance*` program. I determined that the interview method outlined by Van Den Hoonaard (2012) that would work best for me was the first method, which involves an interview guide, and the third method, which starts with one opening question and letting the participant lead where he or she wants, since these two approaches provided the richest data for my pilot.

When reporting DBM, researchers are invited to include goals and elements of the design, educational settings, description of each phase, outcomes or findings, and lessons learned (Collins, Joseph & Bielaczyc, 2004). These elements are integrated into the framework of how the logs were designed, how the interview guides were created, and how field notes were taken, and appear in the various chapters of this thesis.

Procedure

The year prior to this project, The Ethics and Religious Culture and Sexual Education Consultant, three elementary teachers, and I, the Pedagogical Consultant for the 4 Arts for the school district at that time, were part of a Professional Development and Innovation Grant (PGIG), a grant available for Québec's English schools. This PDIG team produced a list of elementary approved resources, including LGBTQ sensitive picture books, lesson plans and online resources. To expand on this work, this group of three elementary school teachers and two consultants reached out to three more elementary teachers to apply for a new PDIG. This group applied for a new PDIG to request that the six participating teachers be granted five days of release time from their regular teaching duties to produce LESs. The design and implementation of these LESs are studied in this thesis. The grant was approved, which allowed for these teachers to participate in three iterations of the Design Based Research and queering their curriculum.

These five working days follow regular working schedules beginning at approximately 8:30 and finish at 3:30. These five days took place following iterations

that reflect the work of McKenney and Reeves (2012). They outline three phases to the Design Based Research process. These phases include analysis and exploration; design and construction; and evaluation and reflection. The group participated in these cycles following the formula outlined in Figure 2.

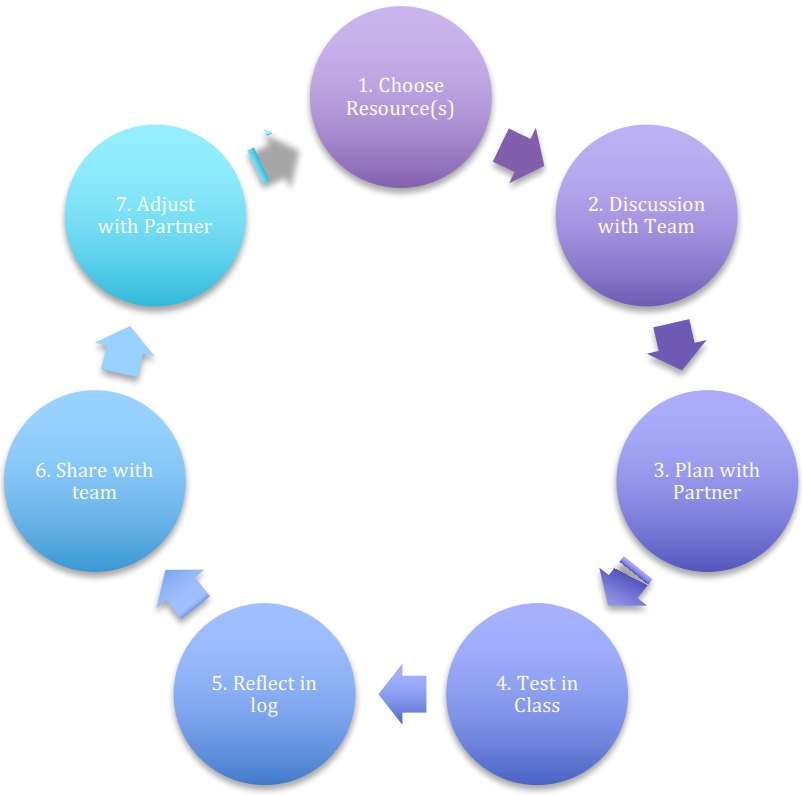

Figure 2. Iteration cycles.

Prior to session one, I applied for ethics with the Concordia Ethics board and the English Montreal School Board. Both were approved.

Dealing with Data

The data for this thesis is comprised of the one group pre-interview, six surveys (one per teacher), 18 teacher logs (three per teacher), six one-on-one post-interviews, one post-interview and my field notes. The interview results were audiotaped and transcribed. The logs, survey results and field notes were typed.

The first step to analysing the data was a first reading of the data and creating of memo codes and open coding. Open Coding according to Van Den Hoonaard (2012) involves labelling the themes that you find in your transcripts or field notes. Urquhart

(2013) describes Open Coding as going through the data, line by line or paragraph by paragraph, attaching codes to the data and remaining open-minded, seeing what the data might be telling you. My second step was focused coding, where the codes are refined and themes emerged. I then grouped the open codes into larger categories in the stage of *selective coding* (Urquhart, 2013), on the basis of the key categories. My third step was constant comparison or *theoretical coding* (Urquhart, 2013) where these categories are related to each other and the relationships between them considered, finding constructs, connecting them, and considering the nature of that relationship. Comparison became a key step in my process, as both Saldana (2015) and Charmaz (2016) highlight comparison as an important part of the process; it makes the changes that have occurred more apparent.

The following three chapters will provide an in-depth discussion of these themes. Chapter 4 focuses on the pre-interview, Chapter 5 focuses on the teacher logs, and Chapter 6 focuses on the post-interview and revisit the pre-interview.

CHAPTER 4 // PRE-INTERVIEW

Session One: October 2014

The pre-session, or session one, set the stage for the three iterations. The first meeting with participants took place at the head office of the English Montreal School Board. All participants were present. The group included six teachers, three teachers from two elementary schools each, two per cycle, the Ethics and Religious Culture / Sex Education consultant and myself. I introduced the research and explained the consent forms they would be requested to sign if they wished to participate (a sample of this consent form can be found in my Appendix B). When it came to signing the consent forms for my research, only one participant wished to remain anonymous. For this reason, I will refer to my participants as participants and not by name. After introducing the Design Cycle Phases, participants agreed with the structure set for our sessions. I conducted my pre-interview, inviting my participants to answer the questions I had prepared (found in Appendix C). The questions were structured in what Van Den Hoonaard (2012) outlines as an interview guide and open-ended questions. The interview went well and I changed one question on the spot to adjust to participants' reactions, which would be described as an active interview (Van Den Hoonaard, 2012). The group of participants were amicable with each other, thus a good sign for group dynamics.

After the interview, the participants reviewed the resources recommended by the team involved in the previous PDIG. The group had a discussion of the themes for the three LESs they were to build and decided on three themes: Gender stereotypes, Diverse Families, and Bullying.

The group decided to collectively write a letter to parents that would be signed by the principal and provided to parents of students in the classes in which participants would pilot their lessons. The group spent time deliberating on "how much do we say?" in this letter. Participants collaboratively drafted the letter to parents, informing them of the project and its objectives. The process of writing the letter included a group discussion and group exploratory activities of on-line resources such as the Anti-Homophobia Day website, Homophobius website, etc. This letter, in the end, was signed by the School Board and sent to all parents of students who were part of the PDIG project (a copy of this letter can be found in Appendix E).

In the second half of the day, participants were invited to attend diversity-training session from The Homoparental Family Coalition of Quebec (whom later became the LGBT Family Coalition of Quebec). Session by the Coalition produced great discussion, broke down some preconceived misguided assumptions, and provided clarification of language. All participants attended, as well as other interested teachers, principals, English Montreal School Board employees, and two of my committee members. Participants completed a survey after the session by the Family Coalition.

Since all six teachers are not visual arts specialists, they requested that I provide an introductory visual arts professional development workshop during Session Two.

Pre-Interview

The chapter outlines the recurring ideas that were at the forefront of my participant's minds as they began the journey of creating LGBTQ sensitive Visual Arts Lessons, as revealed through the pre-interviews that I conducted at the start of Session one. The pre-interviews were coded in the following manner: I read over the transcripts (while listening to the audio) and used colours to highlight key themes that emerged. I created categories and took notes on how often these themes were mentioned and how they were spoken about, giving them context on the way in which each participant spoke about them, constantly comparing and contrasting the findings. The pre-interview mainly consisted of participants sharing what they thought were the most important aspects of the project and the roadblocks they expected to encounter. The three diagrams found in this chapter illustrate their answers. The first diagram, Figure 3, is a pie chart that illustrates the frequency of their answers regarding important aspects. The second diagram, Figure 4, lists the categories in order of the amount of space they occupy on the pie chart. The next diagram in this chapter, Figure 5, illustrates the expected roadblocks participants expected to face, as shared during the pre-interview.

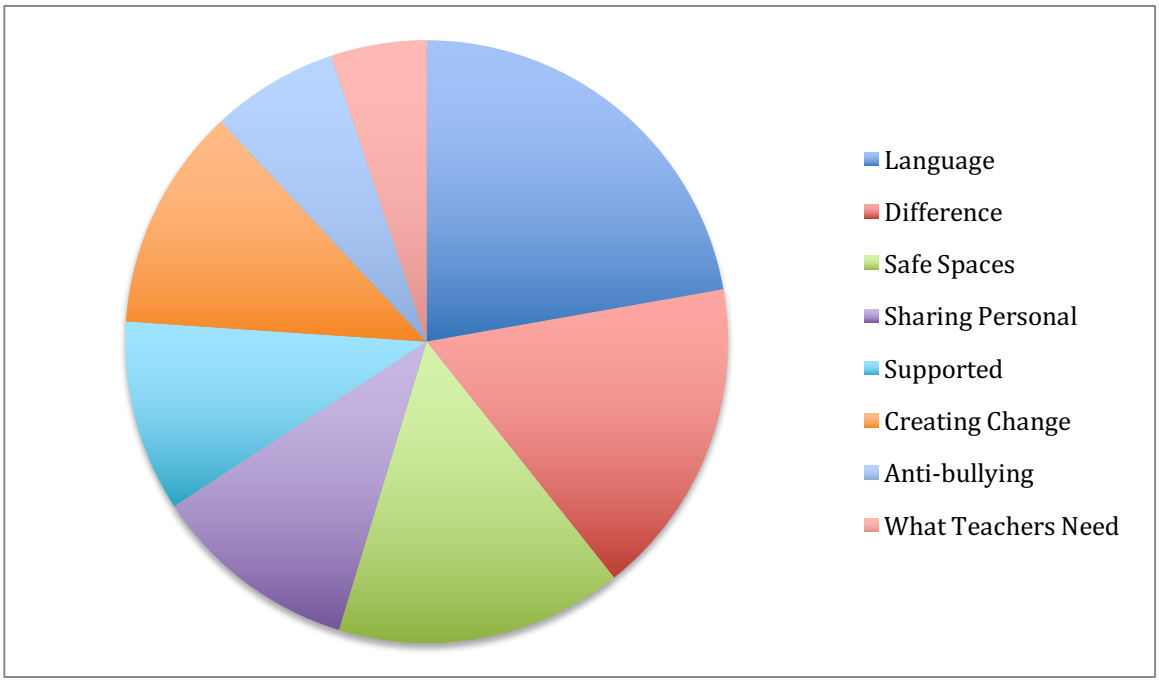

Figure 3. Pre-interview recurrent themes.

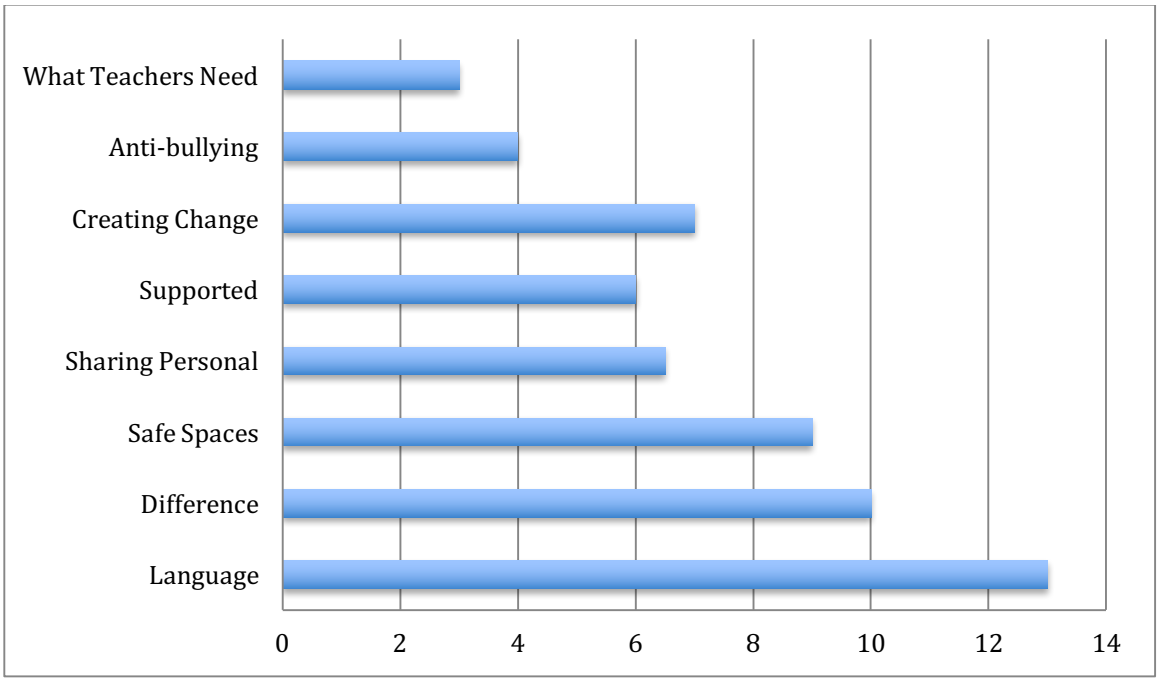

Figure 4. Pre-interview recurrent themes.

The rest of this chapter is divided into the above categories. In each category the accompanying common themes, descriptions, and detailed accounts of participants'

responses in regards to these themes, is shared. The chapter concludes with a section that is a summary of the survey that participants completed after attending the LGBT Family Coalition workshop during Session One. Information shared in this survey demonstrated how participants concerns shifted after having a session that answered some of their initial concerns/questions.

Learning Appropriate Language

Hesitation / Subject Specific Language. A consistent finding was the hesitation around subject specific language. It is also interesting to note that after my initial coding of my written transcripts, I listened to the audio of the interviews once more: The hesitation on subject-specific language reoccurred in more places than I originally found in my first round of constant comparisons. This finding can be divided into two parts: the first being the demonstrated hesitation on the use of words my participants experienced when answering certain questions during the interview process, and the second being my participants expressing their hesitation of using the "wrong" language in their classrooms.

The first part can be considered when identifying participants' breaths within the utterance, noticeable silences, or experiencing hesitation in the form of stumbling on their choice of words that disrupted their flow of speech. Was this because the group was sensitive to the fact that there were two self-identifying queer people in the room (one teacher participant and myself) whom they did not want to offend, or was it because they were already aware that certain language can be problematic when attempting to do the kind of work they were setting out to do? An example of this type of hesitation can be found in the following example regarding the word *accepting,* and in the way the participant quickly changes the topic: "accepting people, <sigh>, that's almost a bad word, <brth> I don't know, why do they need to be accepted, it should be automatic, but anyways". In other cases, participants would address that they were using tentative terms to refer to subjects that they seemed to not have the language: "Toutes les façons, <brth> d'être- on va appeler ça comme ça" ("All ways of, <brth> being, we will give it that name").

The second part focuses on teachers not having the right language to use with their students. Participants shared that they were worried that they "de pas avoir les bons mots" (would not have the right words) and would "hate to use the wrong words" in

class. The idea of the “right words” arose as a constant concern and projected a struggle that my participants were afraid they would encounter during the process of the project. They expressed that the subject matter did not worry them, but the use of the “right” words in the classroom did: "how do I say it <brth> um <sil> ? See! I'm already having trouble finding my words <sil> I want to make sure my words are, I say what I mean and mean what I say [when I’m in front of the classroom]". These findings shaped many of the conversations that would take place in further sessions, as participants clearly asked to be made comfortable with the subject-specific language: “d'avoir le bon lexique c'est assez important avoir” (to have the right vocabulary glossary, it is very important). One of the participants shared this thought, “if [these seven participants] are comfortable with the subject and [still] struggle with language, imagine the teachers that are not even open to the subject?” This sentiment seemed to be agreed by all. Participants had an understanding that they were only at the very start of a long journey to inclusive education being delivered by teachers who understood the importance and power of the use and misuse of language.

Labeling & Categorizing. One of my participants shared the idea that he felt as though it was too bad that there had to be categories referred to the fact that we are "just people.” Another participant struggled as she used the word normal, and questioned its use “ça va être normal” (It will become normal).

Demystifying Differences

Differences. One of the first trending words that seemed to be used by my participants was the word ‘difference’. The word appeared to be the most frequently used word when participants were answering question one, as all seven participants used it. Question one requested participants to share why they had accepted to be part of the project.

One teacher shared they wanted to be part of this project to expose students to difference and help their students become more open to difference*s*. Another teacher shared that they wanted demystify things for our students, expose students to the world of difference*,* and to help students “comprehend the incomprehensible.” Another teacher used the word difference by referring to it as part of helping students to self-identity. This participant shared that identity doesn't have to just be about sexual orientation but about

all the *different* ways that we express ourselves. Overall it seemed that the participants wanted to provide space for their students to explore difference*s* between people, whether it is about the diversity that often includes colour, race, gender and sexual orientation, or difference in people's likes, dislikes, choices, etc.

Only one teacher used the word difference in a different manner. She expressed, "I'm more interested in knowing or showing students that they we are more similar than different."

Generally the many ways in which the word difference was used seemed to be rooted in normalization of difference. Teachers seemed eager to approach the topic of differences and aid students in the process of normalizing them. The frequent use of the word caused me to ask myself questions such as *what is* difference*? If different means "not the same" then does "the same" mean normal? If one speaks about differences are they actively Othering?* If this is the case then perhaps participants are starting from a heteronormative lens, but are actively engaging in the questioning of *normal.* This demonstrated that participating in this work is an act of wanting understanding and of wanting to create change.

Gender Stereotypes. I was surprised that the topic of gender stereotypes was not raised at a more frequent rate, though perhaps this was my own bias, understanding that many cases of homophobic bullying stems from non-gender confirmative traits or actions (for example: one student saying to a boy, "you play basketball like a girl, you must be gay"). Only two participants used these words in their responses and both expressed that one of their goals was to challenge gender stereotypes in their classrooms. One participant shared that she has spoken to her own children to help them understand that for Halloween they can be a ninja if they are a girl and a princess if they are a boy. However, during the discussion of possible lesson themes, the group raised the topic of gender stereotypes as an option. The possibility of gender stereotypes as a theme allowed participants to be more comfortable with the types of lessons they would enact, as they would be LGBTQ sensitive and inclusive in nature. One participant shared that his comfort level rose as the lessons would not necessarily be about sexuality directly.

Creating Safe Spaces for Students to Not Feel Alone

When participants began to share that creating a safe space or a space of acceptance was at the forefront of their minds, it triggered many questions for me. This notion of a safe space brought us the questions of: *Can one create a safe space? Can we only create safer spaces? How does one create a safe space?*

The participant who holds the Sex Education Consultant role at the school board level particularly shared much on the topic of creating safe spaces. Her response to many questions included details regarding students that are being bullied, harassed and do not feel safe in our schools. She shared that this type of project is really needed to make ours schools safer.

One participant emphasized that he hoped to create a *safe* environment that is "safe not just for kids but [also] for teachers." Many participants emphasized the need to create the space for students who were struggling to not feel alone. Many participants mentioned that they experienced the need for safe space as a result of having gay friends. An example of this is shared sentiment can be found in the following quote: "my friends came to Montreal because they found acceptance in Montreal and in its gay community".

However, when the word acceptance was used by several participants, it did not necessarily describe absolute acceptance. A few participants shared that when they were younger, queer people were accepted, but they also shared that there were still times when they were "not allowed speaking about it" or "had to avoid the topic" around certain family members. So it seemed that the word acceptance was used as a non-absolute term.

Sharing the Personal / Inviting Teacher and Students Lives into the Classroom

Sharing the Personal. A heated dialogue took place around the idea of participants sharing their own experiences with their students during the course of implementing the lessons. Check and Ballard (2014) refer to this as "inviting the self into the classroom" or:

> standpoint strategies include sharing our lives—inviting students and our lives into the classroom (testimonies), witnessing stories, inviting artists to class to tell their stories, and testifying and witnessing our/students/artists' writing and art (p. 11).

This standpoint for Check and Ballard (2014) is inspired by the work of Christensen, in her chapter “Where I’m From: Inviting Students’ Lives Into the Classroom” found in Rethinking our classrooms: Teaching for Equity and Justice, Volume 2.

Participants had various ideas in response to the question, “how *personal* should one get?” One participant shared her thoughts on how the dialogue during our sessions should mirror what will happen in the classroom: "The sharing of how we are raised is probably one of the most meaningful things that has happened at this table in light of, if we could only have our students hear that this “I thought I was alone.” She went on to express the importance of having intelligent and open-minded conversations, and that this act of conversation “is very personal".

Overall the participants seemed to disagree with the participant who advocated for not making the class discussions personal, about themselves or students. The other participants insisted that the classroom be made a safe space, as possible, for teachers and students to share. The participant adjusted her argument by saying the teachers should not force students to share: "It is fine line between making sure you keep it general and allowing them a safe space to share what they want to say.”

Identifying their own Otherness. Much to my surprise, it seemed that many of the participants wanted to share that they themselves had an experience where they felt as an “other” in their lives. I asked myself, *“If someone personally experiences some form of discrimination can they possibility understand other forms better on some level?”*

One participant shared "mon mari est mexicain et puis il vient à Montréal et puis c'est ça, mais en famille ils sont contraires de moi" (my husband is Mexican, and he came to Montreal and well that’s it, but my family is the opposite of me). Thus describing her otherness as a result of her marriage. This was compounded by the fact that her family is not supportive of the marriage.

Another participant shared: "Oh yeah my mother is a feminist, you know, women's rights". Thus she shared that her mother experienced otherness and the notion of equal rights.

One participant shared that she questioned her own sexual orientation at a younger age and said she wants to provide a space for students to feel safe and know that

they are not alone when they're asking such questions. She wanted to transform her negative experience of otherness by creating positive safer spaces for her students.

One participant shared her experience with what she identified as her "experience with race," being a Jewish child in a "black neighborhood" the 1970s in Washington, DC. This participant shared this experience of the fight for equal rights as her own experiences with otherness.

Another participant shared that because he is a male teacher in a primary school, he has experienced some discrimination and otherness. Certain parents have reacted to that fact and deemed it abnormal [to be a male elementary school teacher] and have questioned his reasons for choosing this profession.

One participant, who identifies as a gay man, shared that as an elementary school student he was affected by watching three students in his class being ostracized by being removed from Catholic Religion classes. They were sent to Moral Education class. This participant experienced both being an other and watching others being othered.

Not-so-straight Friends. One of the interview questions invited participants to share about their own backgrounds and how they grew up. Much to my surprise, participants quickly revealed if they knew anyone who was *gay*. At this point during the process the word *gay* was used. The words lesbian, bisexual, queer, transgender, etc. were not part of participants' everyday vocabulary.

One participant spoke about how he was brought up in a Catholic school system, and even though sexual orientation was not directly addressed, he was left with openness to the world. He also shared that he now has gay friends.

Another participant spoke about being brought up by very homophobic and racist parents, but now she is surrounded by people from all sorts of orientations.

Two participants shared that they had, growing up, *gay* people around the house and *gay* people in their family. However, one mentioned that this was only an issue and was hidden when their grandmother was around.

One participant shared that *homosexuality* was never spoken about, and she never felt comfortable speaking to her parents about it. When questioning her own identity at a young age she felt very alone.

The last participant identified himself as a gay man. He said he had a very

difficult path growing up, but is out to everyone. However, on one side of his family it is "not spoken about".

Though my question sparked participants sharing about their own queer friends, it was actually about their own upbringing, I thought it was interesting that they specifically shared that they have gay friends and therefore have links to gay people.

Religion. The topic of religion brought up two questions. The first question that solicited a response referring to religion was related to participants' background. All members addressed which, if any, religion they were raised in. There were various opinions of this having a negative or positive impact on them.

One participant, who shared that she was Protestant, spoke about being brought up in the rare circumstances of being both religious and really open, thus a positive outcome.

Most other participants mentioned that they were brought up in Catholic school systems, families or environments. The participant who mentioned that she was questioning her own identity at an early age felt alone because her parents were religious and she did not feel safe speaking to them about it.

One participant spoke about the fact that he was sent to an ultra-religious school in Ontario which he described as a juvenile detention center where "the bars were Jesus and sins". He shared this being a negative outcome to his religious centered education, and a form of oppression he experienced.

The second question that solicited a response was the question of possible roadblocks that participants anticipated in implementing the lessons they were to create. A few participants were afraid that certain parents, of certain religions, would object to the project. They were experiencing a similar fear that took place as when the Ethics and Religious Culture program was introduced a few years ago, though the reaction was less than anticipated. Participants from one of the schools debated if Jewish parents who made up the School Parents Committee at their school would tolerate the project. But they reassured each other that the focus of the project was to be inclusive and would be supported by different governing entities.

Support by Governing Bodies

Legislation, Policies and Support. Although the legislation and policies that support the work of my participants were available to them, they did regard them as important. They seemed content with knowing that they were there, but did not engage in dialogue about them. Two participants briefly mentioned that these documents helped them feel supported as the government includes these topics in their curriculum, and that "someone sanctioned that idea" of our project being funded (referring to the fact that teachers were released thanks to a PDIG Grant to participate in this project).

Prevalence in the Media. Only one participant addressed this during the first interview stating, "I see that it's real push the media, showing two dads." It was addressed with great weight of giving permission to address it in the classroom, as media literacy is a prescribed topic for teachers to address in the Quebec Educational Plan.

Creating Change in the Classroom

Creating Change. All the participants expressed that they wanted to create some kind of change, and many participants used the word change when expressing themselves. Ideas of change were articulated in variety of ways.

Participants shared that they wanted "help [students] come to terms with differences and that they don't understand well" and they "feel as if [they] can help children become open to differences and people, and that is […] role of the teacher," thus changing students' perceptions and influencing understanding.

Another participant, using the term change, expressed she wanted to change students' perceptions of stereotypes and make these changes in small steps "Je vais essayer de trouver des façons de changer les stéréotypes et essaie de faire un changement au niveau des élèves, les petites étapes" (I will try to find ways to change stereotypes and try to make a change on the level of my students, little steps at a time).

One participant expressed that she wanted to be part of the change that is already taking place within the field. She spoke about how her parents made a difference in the 1980s that allowed for teachers to receive summer pay, and that she also wanted to be part of something that had an important impact on teaching. She also expressed that, "c'est de mettre un terrain qui est absolument de démystifier les élèves pour leurs montrer qu'ils ne sont pas seuls" (it is to make the path that absolutely demystifies the idea for

students that they are not alone), thus helping students learn that they are not alone in understanding themselves and their sexual identity. These sentiments of self-identity were also echoed by another participant when she expressed that she hoped she could create a space where children were allowed to talk about fundamental issues of identity at an earlier stage, so they grow up with a better sense of who they are. She expressed that she feels that older students today don't necessarily have that fundamental self-identifying foundation. She voiced that if this kind of groundwork is done now it would help students through their struggle.

Another participant emphasized that she hoped to change the focus that our society has when approaching such subject matter: "society [is] focusing on the wrong things and what we need most in the world is to create more empathy and focusing on love and having it constantly discussed in school and part of everyday language."

The one teacher who self-identified as gay spoke about wanting to create an environment that would allow students to feel less of the harmful things he felt growing up. He stated that "though [he does] see huge, incredible changes [in society, he] still think(s) that we [through this project] could be the catalyst to make more of those changes happen faster", even if it's through small changes: "it may just be a breeze of wind in a sail, but at least it's a breeze."

Love, Empathy & Acceptance. Only one participant directly addressed the ideas of love, empathy, and acceptance, but many of my participants alluded to these themes without using those actual words. The participant that did use these words shared that she wanted her focus to be about "embracing the world as it is" and spoke about "allowing love, empathy and positivity into our classrooms" and "working inclusively." The idea of working inclusively seemed to be the direction that participants wished to take, as they expressed that they wished to create LGBTQ sensitive / inclusive curriculum, as opposed to curriculum that if focused only on LGBTQ issues. This was the first indication that teachers were more comfortable with weaving in the supporting LGBTQ aspects into their lessons.

Aid in the Fight Against Bullying

Discrimination & Bullying. In what ways does discrimination reveal itself? Perhaps this question can best be answered by the multiple ways that violence occurs towards LGBTQ people. Check and Ballard (2014) refer to violence as three fold. They define the first as emotional violence and describe it as "not feeling safe in the classroom" (p. 6). Students fear parents cutting them off emotionally and/or economically and also fear being alienated by peers. The second is defined as intellectual violence and described as the "omission and misrepresentation of content and material" (p. 7) as LGBTQ facts and histories are often misrepresented, whitewashed or ignored during art lessons. The authors provide stories of how two of their students attended certain classes that had LGBTQ related material within the course textbooks, but this material was not addressed during class time. Check and Ballard define the third category as physical violence, but do not describe it any further than to say it is something that *"*we are all too aware of …. [and it] occurs daily to LGBTQ persons" (p. 7).

Which type of violence did my participants hope to address? They wanted to address all three. Participants described students that are being discriminated against, bullied, and harassed at school. One participant shared that she thought this was happening earlier in students' lives because many of them have so much coming at them including "the images, the ideas of discrimination, the bullying, the fear, all of it" and that is part of the teacher's role to help them dissect these things. Many of the participants sentiments can be reflected one participant's words: "A society that tolerates one form of discrimination, it's a slippery slope, and it will tolerate another form."

During the initial interview the use of the word "fairy" was discussed, but was not deemed as a negative word by the participant who mentioned it. She shared that "fairy" was used to describe a *very nice guy* but she did not consider this a homophobic word. The discussion circled around this word being heard as a child, and how some LGBTQ communities were reclaiming words such as this one. But even as communities reclaim words, if people outside the communities use them they can still be problematic.

Identity. I thought the discussion of identity would come up more than it did during this initial interview, but only one participant spoke to great lengths about it. She spoke about how identity allows people to freely express themselves in different ways.

She wanted to address with her students the questions of “who am I ?” and “where do I fit in?” The only other time this term was used was when one participant self-identified as a gay man and when one participant mentioned that she questioned her own identity at a young age.

What Teachers Need

One of the common threads that brought this group of educators together was the mutual belief that the work they were about to create was needed, as it would attempt to address the gap in what was available to elementary teachers. Participants shared this concern by expressing the need for a “tool set” and wanting to “to feel safe bringing with up resources to do that." One participant expressed the concern for needing teaching materials, such as the book that included two mothers that would permit her to teach about the topic in a “less provocative explosive way,” as she could include this book along with books during a lesson about diverse families.

Roadblocks/Concerns

The following image illustrates the participants’ concerns before beginning the project:

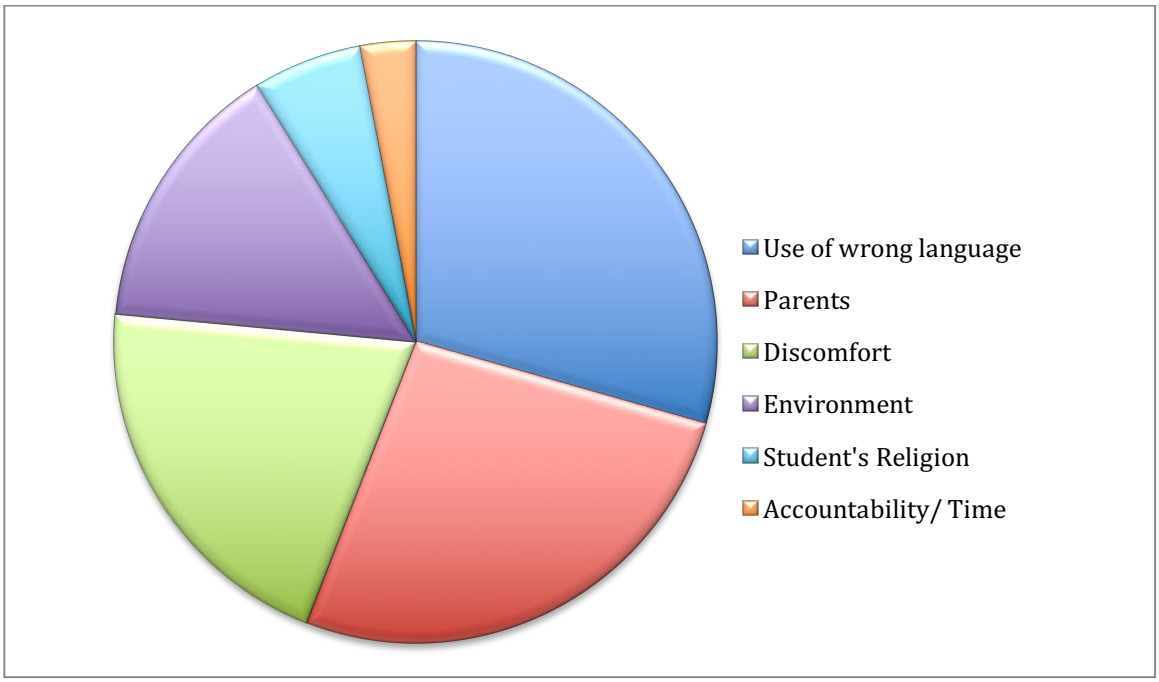

Figure 5. Concerns/Expected roadblocks after pre-interview.

When I questioned the group about the possible roadblocks they thought they might encounter, the group reflected and shared: parents, accountability, comfort level, being able to answer questions, religion, creating a safe environment and time commitment. Figure 5 shows the frequency with which these themes came up during the interview. The group decided collectively to write a letter to parents to avoid some of these anticipated roadblocks. Importantly, this letter would be signed and sent by the principals of both schools involved. The letter would share links to legislation and the link to the Quebec curriculum. This letter would be an information letter for parents and not a permission form.

The following descriptions provide more detailed accounts of participants' responses in regards to the parents and discomfort categories, the second and third biggest concerns. Use of language, the most frequent category, has been spoken about in detail in the previous section, therefore will not be re-discussed in this section.

Parents Factor.

Parents were amongst the most addressed topics during the initial interview and this concern manifested itself in four different ways. The first was that certain participants suggested that parents should be involved in some way. The second, some said that ensuring that parents becoming aware that these topics would be addressed in the classroom: "parents and [other] teachers like to know that you've gone to a workshop about the topic." The third concern was participants needing to be able to walk the fine line of not dismissing what parents have shared with their children, as students will quickly divulge what their parents believe in, and thus it becomes "very tricky for [teachers] to navigate" parents' beliefs. But the most striking of the parental comments were the concerns that parents would think that the self-identified gay teacher would be "pushing his own agenda" and that he was "recruiting", though he objects to those kinds of words and that kind of work. Other participants also addressed this concern sharing that they felt they had enough foundation to defend that it was not an agenda but part of curriculum. One participant shared her view that "the role of a parent is to convey values, and no parent wants their kid to be discriminated against" as part of this foundation.

Another roadblock that was shared was that another parental issue might be raised concerning the fact that only certain groups were participating in the project and "not the

majority of the school, or the private school down the street."

Fear and Discomfort.

Perhaps there is a link between these two words. When looking up the definition of both these words in the Webster dictionary they both include in their definitions, the word "worried". Therefore both fear and discomfort worry a person because of something that is in opposition to their comfort and ease. This made me come to these two questions: *Is this perhaps the theme and "raison d'être" of this project for these participants? Was it to attempt to aid in extinguishing fear and discomfort of teaching inclusive LGBTQ lessons in their classrooms, schools, parents and perhaps themselves?*

Participants expressed that they were comfortable with the subject matter, but that they were not at yet at ease with teaching inclusively. They expressed that their comfort level may increase when they had the right language to use in class and to address student questions.

One participant articulated his hypothetical fear of teaching at a higher level than the one at which he was currently teaching. He said that as a self-identified gay man he may have been uncomfortable or have a very high level of discomfort with teaching the subject matter. He was concerned that even though he was actually working at a younger level and felt fine, it could be misinterpreted as him pushing the gay agenda. Another participant echoed this; He shared that he wasn't uncomfortable with the subject matter, but uncomfortable with the possibility of outside reactions to him bringing this into his classroom.

Several participants agreed that in order to combat discomfort, knowing the right language and how to address questions was important. One participant shared that "we live in fear based society" and her "discomfort is not so much with delivery and sharing and being a facilitator but with how [she will] respond to responses of [her] students". The participant who held the role as a consultant at the school board level shared that many teachers were afraid of the Sex Education program and that much of her work was addressing this fear. She reassured the group that Governing Boards don't decide on legislation, thus the fear or discomfort that Governing Board members may have about the topics addressed in this project would not be allowed to be put into action.

Survey after LGBT Family Coalition Training

As a part of the process, participants were invited to attend a training session by the LGBT Family Coalition of Quebec, for the afternoon. This session provided statistical information, clarification on myths, and a general foundation of knowledge regarding LGBT families in Quebec.

After the session I requested that participants complete a five-question questionnaire. These questions asked about the session in particular, but several participants answered the questions with information from the morning group Session One as well. Five of six participants completed the survey. Many of the themes raised echoed those in from the previous section of this chapter (see Figure 4 and Figure 5).

The first question asked the participants if they had any concerns. One participant responded by writing that he had no concerns, and stated that he felt supported. One participant shared that she was interested in learning about homoparental families' experiences, which echoed the fourth most common response listed in Figure 4, the importance of sharing the personal. Another participant responded that she was concerned about finding effective ways of guiding/facilitating discussions in her classroom surrounding homophobia, while maintaining a safe environment for students, which echoed the 3rd most common response in Figure 4, safe space. Another participant who was curious to know if the material presented would be relevant, useful and classroom ready, which brought up a new concern of finding and building relevant materials.

The second question asked participants how they felt about the subject matter before, during and after the session. Participants generally stated that they were comfortable with the subject and motivated to begin the work of creating age appropriate lessons, which echoed the 3rd most common response in Figure 5. One participant repeated the sentiment of wanting to use proper language, which echoed the 1st most common response on Figure 4. Another participate shared that they were surprised at that the topic of homosexuality and homophobia is not openly discussed on a regular basis in schools, and felt surprised at the number of myths that are prominent in our communities surrounding homosexuality; This raised a new concern about basic LGBTQ knowledge of the average person. The ideas of it being helpful to hear anecdotal stories and have

open discussions in a group setting were once again included in participants' responses, again echoing the 3rd most common response in Figure 4. One participant shared that the research (or lack thereof) will be an important thing for stimulating dialogue and changing policy with the educational and government systems, which linked to feeling supported by governing bodies, the 5th most common response in Figure 4.

The third question asked participants to share what they deemed as the biggest takeaway from the session. Participants shared that their biggest takeaways were learning that the Quebec Educational Program backs up the teaching because it's integrated in the curriculum (which is again linked to feeling supported by governing bodies). The Quebec Educational Plan or QEP (Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport [MELS] ,2001) for elementary schools lists sexuality as part of the Educational Aim of the Broad Area of Learning of Health and Well Being: ``To ensure that students adopt a self-monitoring procedure concerning the development of good living habits related to health, well-being, sexuality and safety``. Since we are in a culture of success for all, this goal would encompass all different students; The QEP lists differences as gender, race, sexual orientation, preferences, and social condition.

They also said anti-homophobia measures are essential and pertinent in reducing hate in our world (the 7th most common response in Figure 4). They noted that the LGBT homoparental resource kit that would be provided was important (echoing the 8th item listed, "it's What Teachers Need", in Figure 4). They also shared that it provided information on prejudices, allowed them to start thinking about their work, and that there are no differences between homosexual and heterosexual families.

The fourth question asked participants if they feel better prepared after the session to begin the lessons. Most participants responded with a definite yes. One participate said she felt prepared to a certain degree but would like a more concrete framework to use as a springboard to integrate the topic into the classroom, echoing the new concern of finding and building relevant materials. The notion of open discussion was once again addressed. The participant that shared this noted that the open discussions that took place "had formed bonds that will foster future discussions in the group and in [their] work communities."

The fifth question asked participants if they thought the session was inspiring and if it would inform their approach. Participants shared that the session would indeed inform their approach at addressing the topic in their classrooms and aid them to "entrer dans ce mandate" (enter into the mandate). Two participants shared that workshop was "eye-opening." Another participant shared that she now felt like she had a place to go to "find answers to respond to the children's or parent's [questions]". Another participant shared that the day was filled with thought-provoking activities. Finally, another participant shared that "The best thing about the workshop was to see the commitment to acceptance and social change". These detailed explanations can be summarized by the data already listed in the Figure 4 and the updated Concerns diagram below, Figure 6.

The frequency of answers in the Importance pyramid diagram remained constant, reflecting that participants responses to the survey and their answers to the questions raised in the interview were consistent, with an average increase of 1-2 points for each section. Two new concerns were raised by the survey: finding and building relevant materials, and the lack of basic LGBTQ knowledge of the average person.

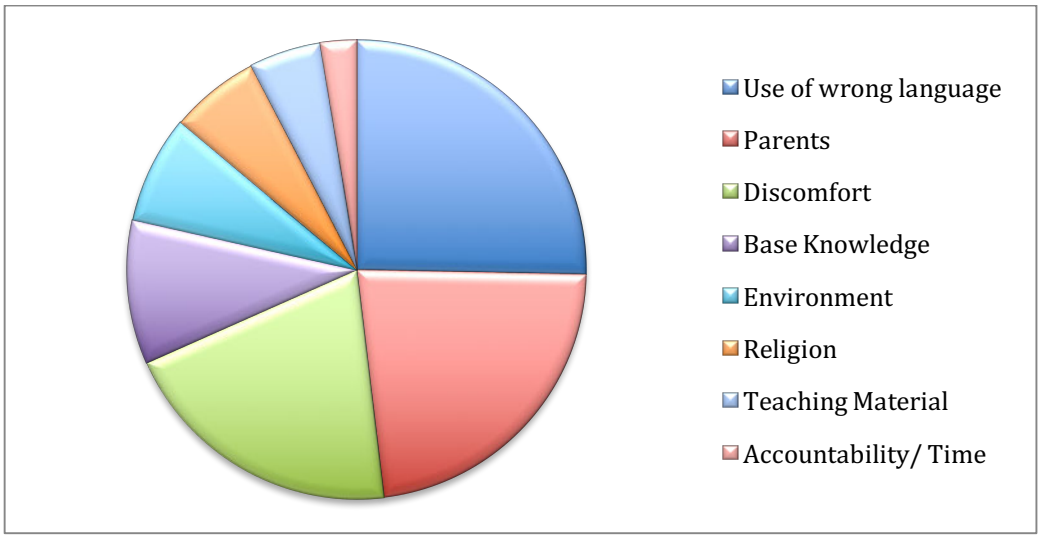

Figure 6. Updated concerns/Frequency of expected roadblocks after session one.

CHAPTER FIVE // ITERATIONS

Session Two: January 2015

The second session marked the beginning of the first iteration. It was held in the Art Education Graduate Student Studio, as per request for a more centralized location by participants. Once all participants arrived, I provided the requested *Introduction to the Visual Arts for Elementary Schools* professional development workshop. This workshop outlined how to construct a visual arts lesson, create a rubric, and pace lessons in accordance with the Quebec Educational Program. I also shared the resources from the first PDIG.

After the visual art presentation, the group had a discussion about the difference between sex and gender and gender stereotypes. Participants then paired off according to cycle and reviewed available age-appropriate books and resources. The pairs collaboratively brainstormed, planned and designed the arts lessons on gender stereotypes. The ERC/Sex-Ed Consultant and I answered questions as they came up. Three LESs were produced, one per cycle, one per team, thus competing steps 1-3 (see Figure 2) of the first iteration. Participants left with copies of the logs and I asked them to test the lessons they created during Session Two in their classrooms and then complete their first log after teaching the lessons, thus completing steps 3 and 4 (see Figure 2) of the first iterations. The art lessons invited students to engage in several artistic learning activities resulting in the following final projects: Cycle One students created a colouring book for the kindergarten students that debunked gender stereotypes; Cycle Two students created collage self-portraits that challenged future career choices; Cycle Three students created advertisements with an image and a slogan showing an existing gender stereotype being broken.

Session 3: Feb 2015

The third meeting with participants was also held in the Art Education Graduate Student Studio. The group included five elementary teachers (one teacher sent regrets due to illness), the Ethics and Religious Culture / Sex Education consultant, and myself. Once participants arrived they shared their thoughts on how the LES went, about their experience of delivering the LES in the classroom, and the resulting artworks.

After sharing about their experiences, participants engaged in a group discussion regarding the issues and questions that arose during their time teaching. This is where I provided clarification and information to help them better understand terms, and queer-related issues. The group revisited the conversation of gender and the difference between sex and gender, gender identity, and gender expression. I shared a personal story about a conversation that I had with a new friend on Facebook story regarding a Ruby Rose's video (2014) 'Break Free'. The video follows Ruby as she performs a hegemonic version of a woman (soft, delicate, using makeup, and dressed in a dress, with perfect skin, long hair, etc.) and transforms into a hegemonic version of male (aggressive, no makeup with short hair, tattoos, smoking, and dressed in jeans, rolled-up dress shirt, t-shirt, etc.). My new friend on Facebook, who admittedly had limited knowledge of transgender people, thought that this video would provide transgender people with the space to perform the gender they identified with without the need transition or identify as transgender. I engaged the conversation around the difference between one gender being permitted to perform (Butler, 2006) as another, or queerly perform, while still maintaining one's gender identity, versus identifying as a different gender than the one was assigned at birth. We watched the video as a group. This provided the basis for a group discussion of transgender identity. Participants were not aware of the statistics around trans issues. For example: In January 2015, HRC Foundation, in partnership with Trans People of Color Coalition (TPOCC), released an issue brief. According to this brief "the levels of violence and harassment transgender people face – particularly transgender women and transgender women of color – constitute a national crisis […] At the time of this report, at least seven transgender women have been murdered in the United States during 2015" (Miller, 2015).

Once participants felt that all their questions were answered, they were then invited to adjust their arts lessons/LES, thus completing steps 6 and 7 of the first iteration cycle (see Figure 2). A detailed summary of these arts lessons can be found in the Appendix D.

Building on their arts lessons, I invited participants to engage in the second iteration of the cycle. Age appropriate resources were made available on the next chosen topic, family diversity. A group discussion took place on families, as well as the

terminology that would be used and focused on for the second LES. Cycle teams then collaboratively brainstormed, planned and designed the arts lessons on family diversity. The ERC/Sex-Ed Consultant and I answered questions as they came up. Three LES were produced, one per cycle, one per team, thus completing steps 1-3 (see Figure 2) of the second iteration. Participants left with copies of the logs and were asked to test the lessons they created during Session 3 in their classrooms and then complete their second logs after teaching the arts lessons, thus completing steps 3 and 4 (see Figure 2) of the second iterations. The art lessons invited students to engage in several artistic learning activities resulting in the following final projects: Cycle One students created playing cards, a more inclusive adaptation of the *Family Card Game*; Cycle Two students created collages depicting different types of families; Cycle Three students created a quilt depicting different types of families.

Session 4: March 2014

The fourth meeting with participants was also held in the Art Education Graduate Student Studio. All participants attended this session and shared arts lesson results. After this sharing session, the participants engaged in a group discussed regarding the issues and questions that arose during their time teaching. Once participants felt that all their questions were answered, they were then invited to adjust their arts lessons/LES, thus completing steps 6 and 7 of the second iteration cycle (see Figure 2). A detailed summary of these arts lessons can be found in the Appendix D. Building on their arts lessons, I invited participants to engage in building the third iteration of the cycle. Age appropriate resources were made available on the next chosen topic, bullying. A group discussion and sharing session then took place on bullying to help focus participants for the third LES. The group had a discussion about allowing their students to mythologize when creating work about bullying, which would allow their students to share personal stories without fear, and expand on them. Participants also wanted to discuss the recent local story hitting the news "Bry Bitar, Montreal LGBT teen, sparks school uniform revolution" (Okeke, 2015). A student named Bry at Royal West Academy shared their story on the news about requesting to wear the uniform of their choice. Bry, assigned male at birth, but identifying as female androgynous and preferring "they/them/their" pronouns, was then allowed wear the skirt. The boys at their school wanted to also wear it in solidarity, but

were not permitted. Participants discussed including information about transgender identity in this set of LESs. This sparked the conversation amongst participants on the following topics: “boys pants” vs. “girl pants”, the use of labels, and friends vs. allies. The group watched the clip *To This Day* (Koyczan, 2013) and *Love Has No Labels | Diversity & Inclusion* (Ad Council, 2015). All participants were moved by the later clip, as it provided a clear vision for the lesson plan for group that *Love is Love* and this coloured the session.

Knowing that I had attended LGBTQ sessions at the National Art Education Association conference in New Orleans, participants also requested that I share highlights with the group. We discussed the upcoming important dates that would affect LGBTQ people in the USA, the date that gay marriage would be decided upon, upcoming court rulings on Proposition 8 (called the California Marriage Protection Act) and same-sex marriage in the USA. This sparked great discussions about Canadian Laws in regards to LGBT peoples, and how they differ from those of other countries, and other members of the LGBT community (i.e. law that affect gay people may not have any impact on the transgender community, etc.).

Cycle teams then collaboratively brainstormed, planned and designed the arts lessons on bullying. The ERC/Sex-Ed Consultant and I answered questions as they came up. Three LESs were produced, one per cycle, one per team, thus completing steps 1-3 (see Figure 2) of the third iteration. Participants left with copies of the logs and were asked to test the lessons they created during Session Four in their classrooms and then complete their third log after teaching the lessons, thus completing steps 3 and 4 (see Figure 2) of the third iterations. The art lessons invited students to engage in several artistic learning activities resulting in the following final projects: Cycle One students created marionettes and role-played various bulling situations; Cycle Two students created group stories or short skits about bullying, some of which were transformed into graphic illustrations, while others were acted out; Cycle Three students created anti-bullying campaign posters.

Iterations

During Session Two the first set of LESs were co-created by the two participants that taught corresponding Cycle levels, resulting in three LESs (one per cycle). After Session Two all participants were invited to implement their co-created LES in their classrooms. After the implementation of the LES in their classroom, participants were invited to complete a log. A sample log can be viewed in the Appendix C; it includes questions based on their observations and reflections regarding the LES. This procedure was repeated two more times resulting in the second and third set of LESs, totalling nine LESs (three Cycle One LESs, three Cycle Two LESs, and three Cycle Three LESs) and eighteen Logs (one per participant, per LES taught, thus three total for each of the six participants).

I coded the eighteen logs and the three major themes emerged: successes / strengths of the lessons, roadblocks encountered, and changes made / advice given. Participants had, overall, more to share regarding the strengths of the LESs and the changes they could see as a result of the LESs compared to roadblocks hit. This is illustrated in Figure 7 below.

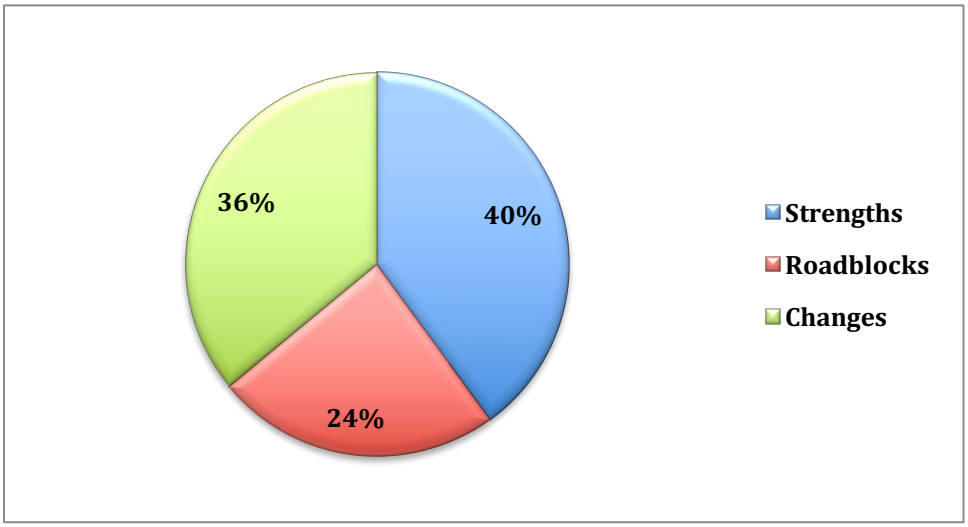

Figure 7. Participant's focus for logs.

The rest of this chapter is divided by Log and into these three themes. Figure 8, 9 and 10 demonstrate the most common themes for each category.

First Set of Logs: After Gender Stereotypes LES (Log 1)

Strengths

From the data, I identified nine strengths listed in the first set of logs (Log 1).

Gained knowledge and engaged by content. Half the participants shared that they thought the strengths of implementing the lessons were that their students became capable of identifying stereotypes, were engaged and motivated by the lessons, and began debunking traditional notions of what woman vs. men could do (it was revealed that students were heavily influenced by their families). One participant said he was surprised that some of his students were "shocked" when they learned certain gender stereotypes, as they thought they were absurd. Another participant echoed this, but the difference was that upon further investigation, students realized that they did in fact have preconceived gender stereotypical notions. Another participant also said her students were confused at first by certain gender stereotypes.

Discussion. Four participants shared that the strength of the lesson was that the students participated in the rich discussion that was sparked by the lesson.

Explore own knowledge. One participant shared that the lesson permitted students the time to explore their own knowledge of gender and stereotypes.

Anti-bullying. One participant shared that this type of lesson would benefit students in the younger age categories who find themselves being bullied based on the activities they engage in and enjoy, as they do not fit their gender norm.

Importance of lesson. One participant shared that this LES will become part of her yearly routine teaching Cycle One. Another participant commented that he wished he were exposed to this type of project at school when he was growing up.

Inviting students' lives into the classroom. Many participants shared how insightful they felt the lessons were, as they provided a window into their student's thoughts and feelings.

Art as engagement. One participant shared that they were pleased with the strength of the drawing lesson and how it equally engaged his students.

Resources. One participant shared that the recommended book was helpful to have as a tool.

Beyond planned content. One participant allowed students who were beyond the task to engage in conversation about other types of stereotypes.

Roadblocks

From the data, I identified four roadblocks listed in the first set of logs (Log 1).

Time. Two participants commented that they had created the lessons to be too long, and felt constrained by time. Many participants commented on making the LES shorter.

Student resistance. Two participants shared that they experienced initial resistance by a few of their male students.

Lack of Previous Knowledge. Many participants also suggested that more time should spend on concept clarity prior to more complex tasks. Half the participants reflected that there was gap of knowledge and that there was a need for a pre-lesson prior to the one planned. The form of these pre-lessons varied and needed adjustments according to each individual classroom population: a pre-lesson on how to have a group discussion (coaching students on how to disagree); a pre-lesson on careers; and a pre-lesson on DNA and the genetic difference between male and females.

Lack of exposure to art making. Participants suggested having clearer instructions for art making, possibly even making an example to refer to.

Changes

From the data, I identified five Changes listed in the first set of logs (Log 1).

Students' behaviour. Two participants noticed a change in their student's behaviour after this LES. One participant also noticed a difference in her students play habits, as her students began engaging more in play with members of the opposite sex.

Student sensitivity to 'normativity'. Students were being vigilante in "supervising" their teacher choice of language and actions. Students commented on one teacher's choice of gendered typical stickers given to them (princesses to the girls, and cars to the boys) and on the other teacher's actions of assuming it was the "boys who were making all the noise." One participant's students would point it out if she used gender stereotypical examples in her teaching, echoed this same idea of "supervising."

One participant noticed a change in their student's observational skills. Students began pointing out women and men in non-traditional careers in the books and texts used in class.

Student use of language. One participant commented that her students began using the words sex and gender correctly.

Classroom and participant's practices. One participant reported a change in her own approach, and dedicated time to creating a class where students felt they could share their opinion.

Participants' use of language. One participant also shared that she has become hyperaware of her own language choice. She also began recognising the root of her own usage of certain words, as they were taught to her at a young age.

Second Set of Logs: Family Diversity (Log 2)

Strengths

From the data, I identified the seven strengths listed in the second set of logs (Log 2).

Resources. Three participants commented on the successful use of various resources used in this LES: The use of picture books, newspaper articles, news clips, and animated video clips.

Explore own knowledge. From the answers shared in the logs, it seems as though half the participants' students, those teaching in the urban school already had previous knowledge regarding diverse families. One participant shared that her students knew some of the content, but benefited by learning the correct language. Another participant echoed this sentiment by sharing that this LES provided students the space to express prior knowledge.

Gained knowledge and engaged by content. Two of the participants from the rural school mentioned that this was the first time their students to were exposed to information about family diversity. Two participants expressed students enjoying identifying diverse families and using the proper vocabulary words. Two participants commented that their students, though aware that there are differences, were not familiar with the vocabulary. One participant shared that his students did not seem interested beyond their own family, though they had fun playing the card game that was relevant to

the content of the lesson. One participant expressed satisfaction that the students were able to learn language to identify their understanding.

Discussion. Discussion was listed as the biggest strengths by three participants. One participant mentioned that students raised the question of polygamy: "students grasped the concepts of the various existing family types. Some students got caught up on the idea of "polygamy" and if it is considered a type of family. We talked about the legalities of it, and that polygamy does exist in society."

Art as engagement. Two participants shared that using art was a way to give access to students who may have challenges expressing themselves, as art provides them space to voice their opinion in a non-standard way. Another participant expressed his newfound discovery of the power of video and images as vehicles for inspiring understanding. She shared this question in her log, "Is the point that the art itself is an agent of change?"

Inviting students' lives into the classroom. Half the participants highlighted this as a strength. Participants shared that students were engaged by the permission the LES granted them in sharing about their own families, connecting the knowledge learned in class to their own families and to the people in their community. One participant shared that her students showed pride in their families, and began supporting others during discussions.

New skills. One participant shared that her students also shared their delight to use the sewing skills their art teacher had just taught them. Another participant echoed a similar sentiment, saying that was the first sewing experience for many of her students.

Roadblocks

From the data, I identified four roadblocks listed in the second set of logs (Log 2).

Time. Half of the participants shared an issue with the timing of the lesson, either that the lesson took too long and/or lacked timing. Three participants commented that they would take more time with the art making the next time. One other participant also commented on keeping an eye on the length of lesson, but because she said the younger students will lose interest if the lesson is too long. One participant suggested more time for group discussion.

Lack of lesson preparedness. Many of the participants shared roadblocks as a result of the unforeseen need of extra planning: One participant did not anticipate his students' excited behaviour around the structure of lesson that distracted from the lesson. He also miscalculated measurements and shared that the board games were too large to store and that the cards were too small for students to draw with detail. One participant hit a roadblock as the card game played out, but students quickly came up with a solution to solve the issue and adjusted accordingly. Two participants shared that they did not plan ahead for assessment, and were caught unable to verify the learning of all students. One participant shared that she had already placed a poster in her class that included all the answers; this threw off her brainstorming session.

Lack of previous knowledge. Two participants shared that they would have needed a pre-lesson to define what a family is. One participant suggested having a pre-lesson on definitions of family next time.

Lesson had little impact. Though this response was the opposite compared to the other five participants, including the other participant who taught the same grade as him, one participant shared the following:

> The students were remarkably unaffected (even perhaps uninterested) about the definitions of various families. Even my student from a male homoparental family didn't particularly react, or share, after the Tango Makes Three story or during the activity. I believe in the first grade, they are possibly too young to associate the makeup of a family with thoughts of strangeness.

Changes

From the data, I identified five changes listed in the second set of logs (Log 2).

Student sensitivity to 'normativity'. One participant shared that her students demonstrated that they understand the topic of homosexuality better now, as it has been normalized for them. She shared that they now express the need to defend differences. One of the participants shared that her students were now more sensitive to stereotypes, and now more open to speaking about their families "C'est comme si leur crainte d'être « à part » c'était dissipée" (It is as if their fear of being "special" was dispelled).

Student use of language. One participant shared that her students are now aware of the types of families, especially in their favourite TV shows. They now use the proper language to speak about this and are more aware of their peer's families and "seem to be reflecting more on the premise that a family is made of love, and not sex or gender."

Classroom environment. One participant shared that a visiting teacher, who identifies as gay, was so struck by the atmosphere of openness and how open the students became in her classroom environment.

Participant insights. One of the participants shared that the LES leads to her having insight into how open-minded her students are and how they are living in a world much different than the one from when she was young.

Classroom & participant's practices. One participant decided to change the approach to the lesson. She shared that by inviting a fellow teacher to be a guest speaker (a single parent with an adopted child) the knowledge of this LES was solidified. Another participant mentioned that this lesson is now part of her year plan. Another participant described becoming emotional after the viewing of one of the resource videos when one of his special needs students talked about how the video made him sad. The participant had to take a minute to compose himself, and then the class had a discussion about why he reacted the way he did. He shared that he thought it was important for his students to see that it was acceptable for a grown man to become emotional.

Third Set of Logs: Anti-Bullying LES (Log 3)

Strengths

From the data, I identified five strengths listed in the third set of logs (Log 3).

Art as engagement. One of the participants shared that the strength of the lesson was that students were engaged by the artmaking (puppet making): because students worked in pairs, there was less pressure to perform in front for the group. Another participant echoed that the students were engaged by the artful lesson. Two other participants shared that part of their success was bringing in other media into the classroom (a video clip). One of the participants shared that he extending the project into a video log would be great with additional time. Another participant shared how strong the student's response was to the artwork.

Discussions. Two of the participants shared that the students were very involved in the class discussions.

Inviting students' lives into the classroom. The idea of students sharing their personal stories was once again raised as strength of the LES. One participant shared the success of allowing students to mythologize their stories. This allowed students to invite their lives into the classroom while simultaneously providing some safe boundaries to sharing. One of the participants shared how students used their own lives and queer people in their lives to share and add to the conversations.

Gained knowledge and engaged by content. One of the participants shared that students were very cooperative during the lessons and engaged by content. One of the participants shared that students sphere of understanding of bullying was opened. One of the participants commented on her students having fun and being engaged. Another participant shared the importance of students now understanding what bullying is (acknowledging the bystander, etc.). One of the participants shared that a highlight was students learning the difference between bullying and teasing.

Peer support. Two of the participants mentioned that they used the students who accomplished the task ahead, or already understood the concept being taught, to act as peer support for other students.

Roadblocks

From the data, I identified five roadblocks listed in the third set of logs (Log 3).

Lack of exposure to art making. One of the participants expressed that his students became a reactive audience, very giggly as they prepared their skits. They had not been previously exposed to this type of art making. The skits became less focused, even if his students demonstrated proficiency in understanding in the topic. One of the participants commented that since some students were "better artists than others" she would focus the lesson on story development instead. She shared that she would drop the artmaking because students' work was "below grade level." She reflected that she would replace the artmaking by traditional story writing. She thought that the students were too focused on the actual drawing and lost the message and content of work.

Time. The other participant shared concern with the logistics of creating a safe space and allowing students to perform on the same day of skit creation. He reflected that he would keep tighter timelines, schedules, and deadlines for his students. One of the participants shared that it took her a few tries to get her students ready to focus and talk about the topic. Two participants commented that they would have provided more time to students to work. Another participant shared that she would give more time to students to choose and practice the dialogue for the skits. Another participant mentioned that the LES took place at time of year that was difficult, as it was exam prep-time.

Lack of lesson preparedness. One of the participants noted that he should have observed their rehearsal to check for the mastery of objectives, prior to performance.

Lack of previous knowledge. One of the participants commented that she would include a pre-lesson with a more compressive definition of bullying vs teasing. Another participant shared that she would also like to include more details about the topic of Transgender people in the Québec context, as it is still an unknown topic to students and they were engaged by the discussion.

Student Resistance. One of the participants shared the following:

> "I have one student that often makes racist and negative comments about any "different" group. In the end, I do not allow him to participate in the shared class discussion. I always give him the opportunity to talk to me one-on-one. I do this (honestly) to protect others from his verbal assaults. I doubt our "open-minded" conversations shift his thinking at all."

Changes

From the data, I identified five changes listed in the third set of logs (Log 3).

Student use of language. One of the participants shared that students are being more attentive and sensitive with their words and actions towards each other. They are also standing up against bullying linked to gender stereotypes.

Students' behaviour. One participant commented on her students' change in awareness when it came to bullying: students now understood they had a responsibility as a bystander.

Students opening up. One of the participants stated that her students are now more frequently sharing personal stories.

Student sensitivity to 'normativity'. One participant overheard students' conversations where they encouraged each other to ask for help and seek help through other resources when it came to bullying (such as encouraging each other to call kids help phone).

Participants insights. One of the participants mentioned that though she saw no changes in behaviour, she did notice that she became aware that the student artwork that was more detailed were those where students spent more time drawing (and were hooked by content). This was the same participant who thought her students were "below grade level" with their drawing skills.

Summary

The frequency of subcategories, found in participants' logs, can be viewed in the following three diagrams, Figure 8, 9 and 10. They are separated into the three main categories of Strengths, Roadblocks and Changes.

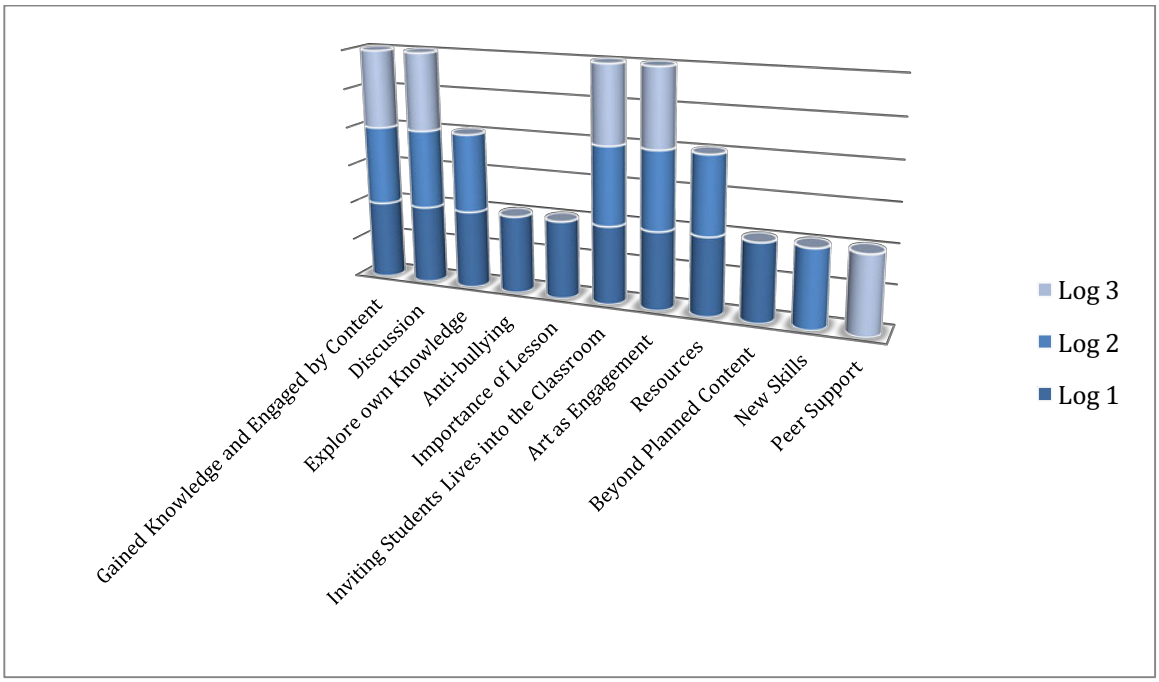

Figure 8. Strengths subcategories/Logs.

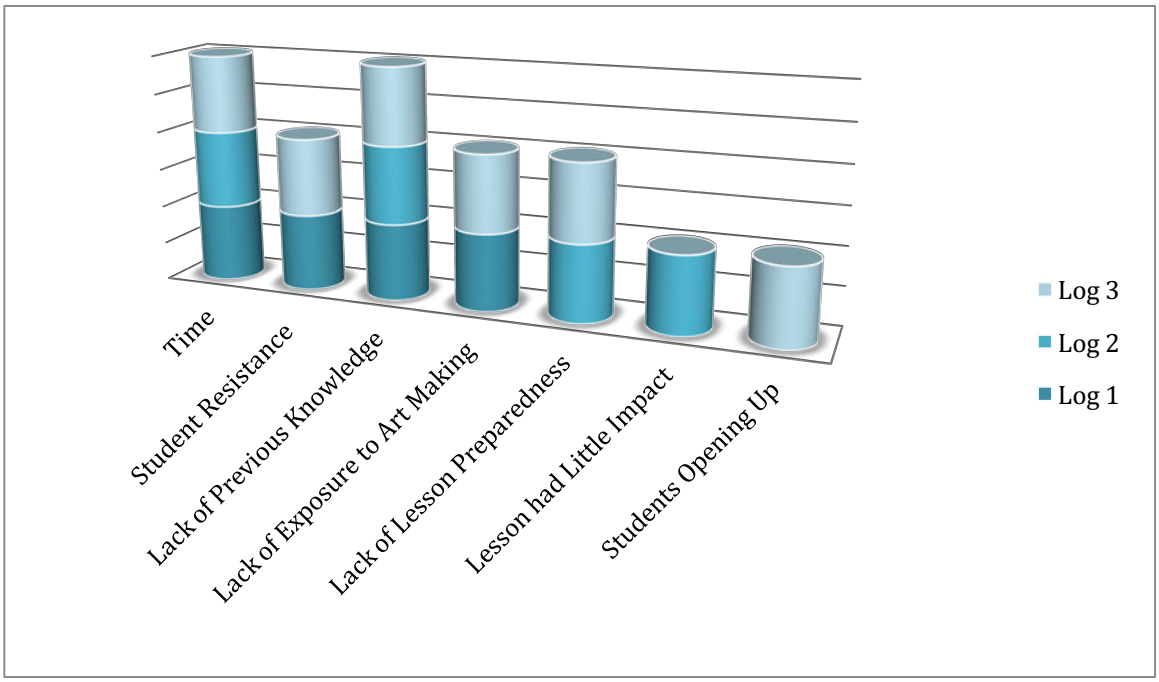

Figure 9. Roadblocks subcategories/Logs.

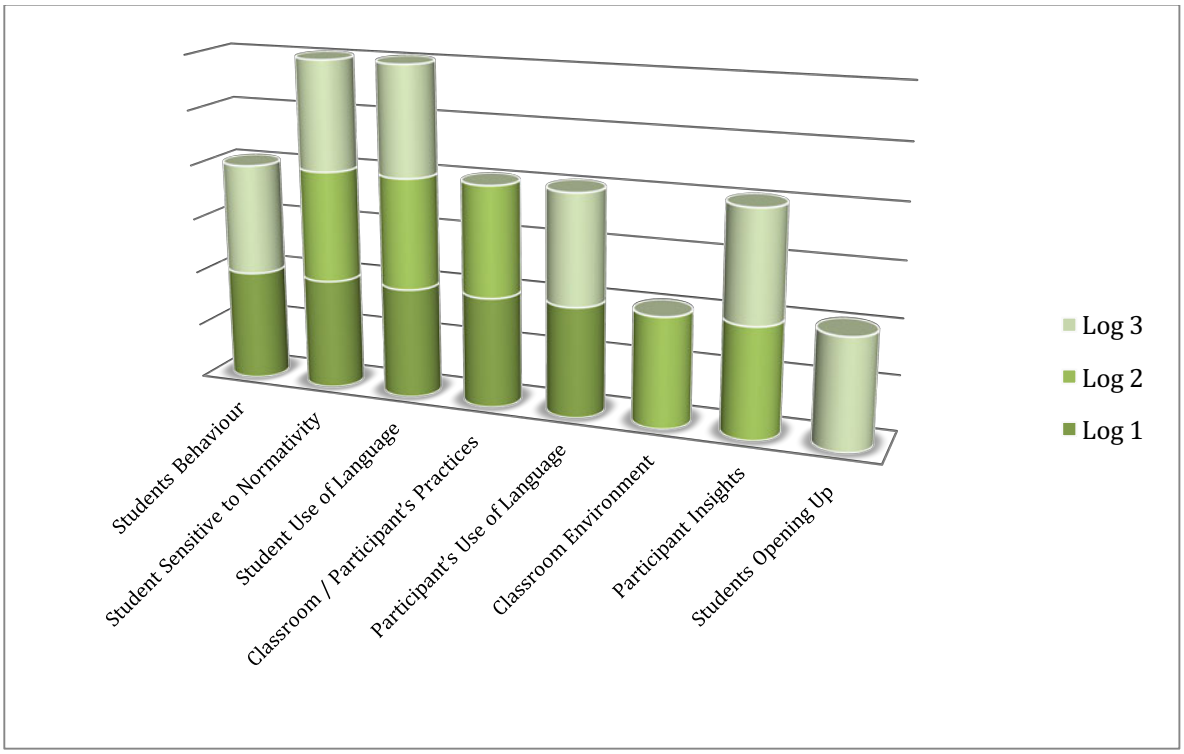

Figure 10. Changes subcategories/Logs.

Figures 8, 9 and 10 help identify and indicate what would need to be addressed if one was to implement these lessons again. These will be explored further in the conclusion chapter, along with the results of the Chapter Four and Chapter Six, which explore participants reflections during Session 5 and the post-interviews, the last part of the research cycle.

CHAPTER SIX: FINAL INTERVIEW

Session 5: May 2015

The fifth meeting with participants also took place in the Art Education Graduate Student Studio. All participants were present and shared lesson results. After this sharing session, the participants engaged in a group discussion regarding the issues and questions that arose during their time teaching. A group discussion took place on the topic of intersex and non-binary identities. Because the story had just hit the media, participants also had a discussion about the Diane Sawyer interview with Jenner (2015, April 24). It is important to note that I am only using her family name as discussion took place prior to her sharing her chosen name, Caitlin Jenner.

Once participants felt that all their questions were answered, I invited participants to adjust their arts lessons/LES, thus completing steps 6 and 7 of the third iteration cycle (see Figure 2). A detailed summary of these arts lessons can be found in the Appendix D.

The second part of the session included the one-on-one interviews and the group post-interview, reflecting on the entire process. The team also looked at the PDIG report questions and discussed answers collaboratively.

Final interview

The following outlines the recurring themes as revealed through the post-interviews that took place at the end of Session Five. The post-interview was coded in the following manner: I read over the transcripts (while listening to the audio) and used colours to highlight key themes that emerged. I revisited the categories from the pre-interview, and placed my findings into these categories. Most of the themes easily fit into the previous categories, but two new categories emerged. Figure 11 and Figure 12 illustrate the frequency of occurrence of these categories:

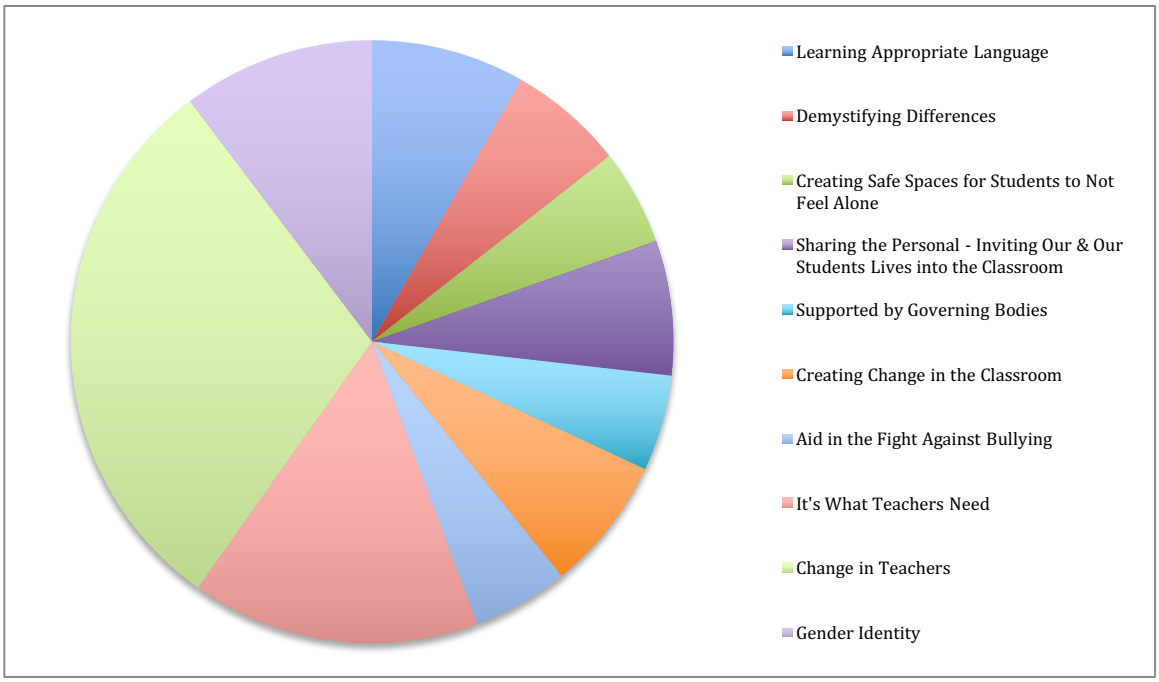

Figure 11. Post-interview recurrent themes.

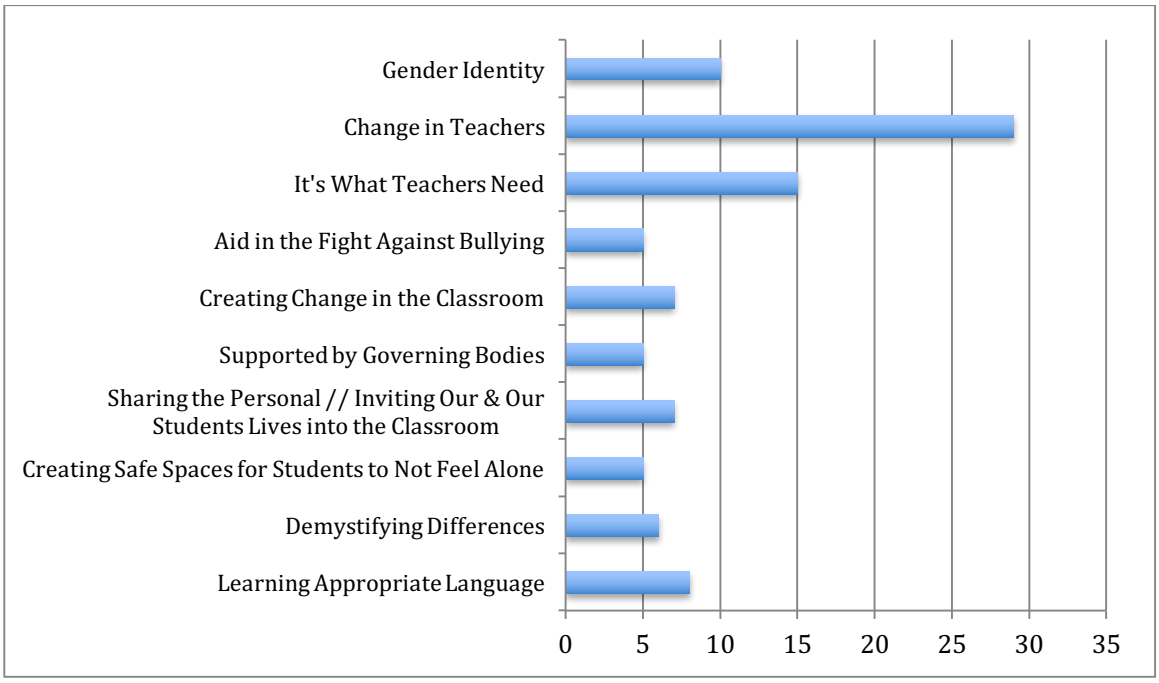

Figure 12. Post-interview recurrent themes.

The post-interview mainly consisted of participants sharing what they thought were the most important aspects of the project and the advice they would give/take if they were to implement these elementary lessons again. The advice will be more closely investigated in the Conclusion chapter and in Figure 11 (found in the Conclusion chapter). This chapter is divided into the same major categories as the Pre-Interview chapter, plus two additional categories from the newly emerged themes within the data. In each category the accompanying common themes, descriptions, and detailed accounts of participants' responses in regards to these themes, is shared. The chapter concludes with a section that addresses the actual encountered roadblocks and what the shift was from the anticipated roadblocks shifted, Figure 12.

Learning Appropriate Language

Need for flexibility of not knowing. Participants shared that there was a need for them to be flexible in their teaching, as they had to grant themselves permission to not have the answers to every question that may be asked by their students. A discussion ensued about working time into lessons that would allow the teacher to look up the information that they needed. For example, one participant sent me an email with the question, "how do I explain queer to my grade 5 students?" Participants also took note of questions during the lesson and asked them at our scheduled sessions. A suggestion was made to have a question forum available for teachers to post their questions between sessions.

Awareness of own language. One participant shared that she was definitely more aware of the words she uses in the classroom and often readjusts her vocabulary, such as not referring to a homosexual person as "choosing" to be homosexual. She shared that this new approach now comes more naturally since she is more informed. She also said that the posters she put up in the back of the room (that list the definitions used in the lessons) are still up on the wall and students are still referring to them once the lessons were complete. She usually changes the posters in her classroom every month, but she hasn't with these posters since her students are still engaged by them.

Definitions/glossary of terms. Participants repeated throughout the last interview that a need for definitions and understanding of vocabulary was "a big one". They agreed that a glossary of definitions is something that is needed for this type of project. All

participants agreed that this would have been a good thing to co-create and develop together, even suggesting the creation of one for each cycle. One participant shared that even though he prepared himself for the part of each lesson where the students would engage in developing definitions, students' explanations of their definitions actually informed his own definition of the terms. He believed that a pre-made glossary would be necessary, but with keeping in mind that it can grow and be adjusted by student insight, as he pushed for the importance of the students being co-creators of their learning. He argued for this flexibility and fluidly. Other participants raised the sentiment of learning from students as well. This sentiment mirrors queering, as even definitions are not static, but are instead in flux.

Demystifying Differences

Stereotypes. One participant shared that he realized during the implementation of the lessons, that for his first graders, the focus on stereotypes was really important. He shared that the focus on family diversity seemed almost irrelevant to them. Though they seemed very open and accepting to all the concepts of family diversity, they didn't seem particularly interested in the topic. The word stereotypes became part of their class vocabulary. The use of new language was echoed as an achieved goal by another participant, who shared that her goal was to open her students' horizons and give them language that they would appropriate (language her students are using and reusing, especially when describing families and gender stereotypes).

Bringing up the Gay. One participant repeated that he was brought up with homosexual people in his surroundings, and was aware that there were alternative lifestyles to the norm, but he was surprised that his students didn't seem shocked by anything.

Already normal. One participant shared that the highlighting moment for her was when she realized that when she used the word *homosexual* in her class, the students already knew the word and knew what she was talking about, and that the word itself was "normal" for them. She attributed it to the new generation. Another participant shared that this was a highlight for her as well. She recognized how open her students actually were.

Clear ideas of self. One participant shared that the highlighting moment for her was recognizing that her students have a very clear idea of who they are, and their identity. She wasn't expecting that.

Oh, I'm alone in my judgement? One participant shared that the highlighting moment for him was when he was able to witness one of his students realize that he was alone in his closed-minded view of gender stereotypes. The participant shared that it was actually the student's classmates that invited him to take a look within himself and ask, "why do I have these beliefs? Are these beliefs actually mine?" The participant shared that he watched as a shift happen, within the student, though the participant wasn't sure that the changes were permanent.

Creating Safe Spaces for Students to Not Feel Alone

Discussions with respect, a challenge. One participant was pleased that his students were very open-minded; he was also shocked at how petty and impolite students were with each other when talking about their opinions. He explained that they were very open to the ideas of things, but when it touched too close to home or when it challenged their beliefs or opinions they could be very resistant.

I belong. One participant shared that the highlighting moment for her was when one of her students, who is usually very closed off, became proud and opened up when he shared that he was part of every type of family discussed in class. He beamed with pride and shared with his class the make-up of his family.

Contextualizing the judgment. One participant shared that a highlighting moment for him was when one of his students, a little boy with long hair, experienced judgement when they went on a school outing to a large Cabane-a-Sucre. There was at least one other school visiting at the same time and during the meal he asked for permission to go to the washroom and he came back a little bit upset. There were boys in the washroom who told him to get out because they thought he was a girl. The student shared with the participant, "You know that's a stereotype to think that only girls can have long hair." The participant shared that as a highlighting moment for him because the student was able to turn what could have been a very traumatic situation into a less traumatic one, because of previous lessons in class. The student was able to contextualize

it and reason for himself that 'it's not my fault that this happened. It's their closed mindedness, and it was their problem, not mine.'

Schools as traditional gender groupers. Though these lessons helped participants battle their own gender stereotyping in the classroom, additional discussions took place regarding how schools were the worst culprits for gendering. Though no longer abided by, one of the two schools that participants taught at still had a 'boys' entrance' and a 'girls' entrance'. It was concluded that the culture of gender stereotypes is deeply rooted in schooling. Traditionally, schools will separate students into lines of girls and lines of boys. The ERC/Sex Ed consultant raised a student safety issue that has been arising in high schools around traditional approaches to gender. She shared the story of a gay student who informed the spiritual animator that he did not want to share a hotel room with other boys on a school trip because he didn't feel safe. This is a good example of how we must re-examine traditional gender approaches in schools.

Sharing the Personal // Inviting Our & Our Students Lives into the Classroom

Being Queer. Since one of the participants was openly gay, he shared that he thought it was interesting to "see something that we take for granted perhaps, things we know, ways of thinking perhaps, that some of you may have been exposed to." He was speaking to the idea that being part or not being part of a group does not permit us to make assumptions of what someone's knowledge base is.

Being themselves. One participant shared that the highlighting moment for her was recognizing that these types of lessons (lessons that invited students to share their own lives, discuss their ideas) provided a space for all her students to feel comfortable. She recognized sudden changes in behaviour and that students' demeanour was calmer. She went on to share that this was especially prevalent for those who do not usually do well academically, as it removed pressure that they had to be "good at something," gave them permission to share, and allowed them to recognise that they were not alone in their differences. She overheard students share that they were surprised that they were not the only students with certain kinds of families.

Getting to know each other better. One participant shared that the highlighting moment for him was the opportunity to get to know his students better and to see them become part of the discussion, inform each other, be actively part of the classroom

learning, and construct knowledge together. He also shared it was a highlight to see how they challenged just how open they thought they were. When discussing gender, students shared that they thought that anyone could do or be anything they want. Through the book that was used and the discussion that followed, they realized that they'd been misinformed in many different ways, and challenged themselves to truly be open to breaking stereotypes. This idea of being "informed" can be linked to the work of Judith Butler (1990) and the idea of gender being a performance in which you are given a script on how to act.

Learning from our students. Participants came to understand that if they invited students to share during discussion, that students brought much more to the table than expected. One participant shared the important moments that took place when a student would bring something up that she did not predict or plan for, allowing for students to drive the lesson.

Support by Governing Bodies

Participants expressed the importance that co-writing the letter to parents had on their experience. They agreed that having a clear message directly from the School Board and their Principal made their work easier. They shared that being supported by governing bodies was a key factor to the project's success.

Creating Change in the Classroom

Changes in students. One participant shared that her students do not allow a gender stereotype to take place without calling it out, whether it be in class comments, texts they read, videos watched in class, etc. She also noticed that she has stopped saying certain jokes to her students, as her students consider them gendered.

Awareness of normativity. One participant said that he also noticed that the lessons informed students' views on narratives read in class. He shared that students now look for whether the story has a girl doing strictly 'girl things' or a boy doing strictly 'boy things'. He also noticed that the stories that are typically used in the dramatic arts are often gender stereotyped. Another participant said that he did not notice any changes in his own teaching, but that he now sees students using a more inclusive and appropriate vocabulary. Furthermore, he shared that he caught himself adjusting the colours he would

use for a math bar graph lesson in class, when the group was comparing boys' answers and girls' answers (he decided to not use blue and pink).

Take further action. Participants expressed that this type of work should not be isolated to just these lessons, but should be on-going. Thus, a change is required in approaches to teaching and being in the classroom.

Aid in the Fight Against Bullying

Identity. One participant shared that her students were focused on self-identity, how they identify within the structure of the family, and within gender stereotypes. Her expressed that he wished he had more time to open it up to how they identify others and how to respect others.

Need for knowledge/For all teachers? When the group of participants were asked if all teachers should teach these types of lessons, there was a large negative reaction by almost all participants. One participant shared that a teachers' individual beliefs or religion may prevent them from doing so. Another participant shared that if all teachers are asked to teach these lessons, there would be parts that would be taught incorrectly, and therefore it is better to have it as optional instead of imposing it onto teachers. This was again echoed by another participant who shared the importance of expertise and of exposure. He shared that he would be uncomfortable with a teacher grabbing a lesson off the internet and implementing it without having some sort of an understanding of what could go wrong, what could go well, what words to use. Another participant shared that he believed all teachers would benefit from some training on the topic beforehand.

Another participant compared it to the Ethics and Religious Cultures program, and how many teachers do not want to teach it.

One participant disagreed with the group. He shared that he believed that the cycle one activities that he prepared could be used by anyone, even if they were, for example, rigidly Muslim or Catholic. He shared that the discussions that are part of the lessons could possibly help teachers grow and that the children's response to these ideas would help them become more open-minded. He labelled the lessons prepared as 'soft subjects' and expressed that a bigger expertise was not needed. He shared his belief that "as teachers of a public system, we must represent this topic [in our classrooms], which is

a human rights topic" and reminded the group that homosexuality is not recognized as a crime or a sin in our country.

The ERC/Sex Ed consultant also jumped in and shared how many people were afraid of the ERC program when it first was implemented. Teachers feared that it was going to 'open a can of worms', and that people were not going to be able to put aside their personal convictions and teach with any kind of professionalism. However she shared that there hasn't been nearly as many of these cases as was anticipated:

> Most teachers are able to put aside their own beliefs, they realize it's not appropriate to start spouting anti-Semitic things in the classroom […] most teachers realize that already, so you know even your homophobes are gonna realize, okay I can't teach that, so I would suspect that it would actually go smoother than you think. And I think that by leaving it by choice [is not okay], again I'm a sex ed consultant so this is a huge thing. Who is gonna teach sex ed? Do we make it part of the program? Do people leave the profession in droves because they can't deal? And in fact I would say if you really do appeal to people's professionalism, and say look there's a need for this to be addressed in the classroom because it's a safety issue, again we need to make it safer for kids. We take all comers in the public school and therefore our curriculum has to reflect that, so I'm actually quite hopeful from my ERC experience, that even our die hard you know, people who are adamantly against it in their private life might be able to find a way to work.

She also suggested that there be teachers in the school that would be "team leaders" on the topic who could be a support system for all other teachers. This notion was highly agreed upon by the majority of the group, and shifted their response. Other systems were discussed on how to get the teachers that are most comfortable teaching the topic into the classrooms, such as a rotary system.

This discussion made me reflect on the following questions: *Should all teachers be permitted to teach all subjects? Why do untrained teachers teach the Visual Arts? Why is the topic of gender more recognized as only being taught by teachers that are comfortable with the topic? What does this say about our educational society norms?*

What Teachers Need

Resource person. Participants expressed the importance of having a facilitator as a resource. Someone who was available to respond to their questions. Also having the allocated time, such as the sessions, to ask these questions. This echoed the advantage of doing Design Based Research, of being able to rework aspects of the project while moving through the steps. Participants shared:

> One of the unexpected things [to address the question of] resources is when I had emailed you about the word queer and how to use it and that became a very important point for me to be able to relate to [my students]. So that was a resource from yourself. Like I felt like I had to go back, stop, and learn.
>
> Also the structure that facilitated, you're a very good facilitator, you know when to stop us, you know when to let us go, but you also have time constraints, and you also had a lot to accomplish for your research.
>
> I thought it was a great model, that you came, you planned your lessons together, you had the time […] so that you can think about it work together, work collaboratively, and then go off and do it, come back and talk about it. I think that's an excellent model.

Insights. One participant shared that students were already ahead of where she thought they would be, and that they had already achieved what she thought she would teach them. I asked myself: *Is this not an indication that teachers should "test students' basic knowledge" and create a baseline assessment even when it comes to more subjective subject matter?*

There also seemed a common occurrence of the idea of open minds, and helping create open-mindedness in students, or being surprised by their open mindedness.

Base knowledge/Teaching material. All participants were presented with a variety of resources that were vetted by teachers by the previous PDIG and were provided a training session by The Quebec LGBT Family Coalition. Participants unanimously agreed that the training session was important and highlighted which other resources were the most helpful.

The question of which resources were the most helpful and what was missing was asked. Participants who taught Cycle 3 shared what resources they thought were the most helpful in teaching their lessons: The Quebec LGBT Family Coalition Family Diversity Poster, and video clips from The Quebec LGBT Family Coalition Family teacher kit.

The picture books seemed to be an important resource for the participants. One participant, who taught Cycle 2, shared "Every Family is Special" was an important resource for her. The other participant, who taught Cycle 2, shared that the most essential resource was the book " À Quoi Tu Joues. He also commented that he got his hand on an English copy of the book, which was very different and he predicted that he would have taught differently had he had the English copy. He said this actually allowed for a critical discussion with his students about book design with his students. He also mentioned having access to on-line resources was crucial to address things as they came up. This participant shared that his colleague in Cycle 3 was one of his biggest resources, as they took the opportunity to discuss ideas and ensure that things would be modulated work to match the age groups.

One participant, who taught Cycle 1, shared that the most essential resource was the book "Tango Makes Three". He shared that this was his strongest tool in the fight against homophobia, as it shared homosexuality in nature with animals. He pointed out that this is a powerful way to share that homosexuality is not a choice or a lifestyle, in an age-appropriate way, and it counters the argument that homosexuality is not natural. The other participant who teaches Cycle 1 wished that there was a French children's book that could have been used as a resource for the bullying unit.

Participants also shared how the introduction to teaching the Visual Arts that I provided was also helpful since they don't necessarily have training in this area. It provided the basic language and terminology needed. One participant said it provided her a new venue to think and see art as an area of learning, instead of just an add-on.

Advantages of collaboration on the project. Participants requested that these comments be anonymous, thus this section will be left anonymously and I will use gender-neutral pronouns:

One participant shared that they enjoyed having the time and tools to work together. They had hoped that more preparatory work would have been completed in the

time spent together in the sessions, instead of individually. They shared that it was frustrating having to do things on their own, and complained that their partner from the other school always rushed through the meetings and was often out of touch between meetings.

Two participants shared that they enjoyed getting insight on how a different school functions, school culture in another school, and seeing how teachers in other schools collaborate with each other. One participant shared that other participants who were always thinking about new ways to teach inspired them. They also said they would have liked a scheduled exchange with the other participant from the other school they were working. They shared that the group discussions are what resonated with them. For future workshops they suggested to take more time with the Transgender topic, because this was an area they would have liked more information on, especially on how to speak specifically to elementary students about it.

Another participant shared that they thought the time together was beneficial in terms of learning and brainstorming ideas, but admitted to working better alone. They thought this was important because it would take into account their own school culture, classroom culture, teaching style, and population. They also suggested that the pairing of partners be done with similar school situations. Finally, they suggested taking time with their partner to go over what happened in the lesson, prior to sharing with the group.

Another participant also shared that they did not consider themselves to be a good collaborator. They mentioned that it might be a good idea to include the principal in the initial training sessions to help infuse the school with the ideas.

Another participant explained that they felt lucky to be working with such an engaged group and that they 'clicked' very well with their partner from the other school. They worked well together and they respected each other's differences. They thought the time together to share and discuss was a vital part of the process. They also suggested for the next time around that a timeline be created that clarifies expectations for everyone involved, and ensures everyone is completing steps and coming to meetings prepared. The suggestion of discussing the Q in LGBTQ and word queer was raised to be part of the future work. The participant also suggested having a bank of available rubrics for the

art assignments, since they had not taught art before. The need for additional support in the arts was echoed by another participant.

All participants labeled the group discussions as the most important part of the sessions. The group also realized that we were constantly sharing the importance of inviting students' lives into the classroom as a huge contributor to the success of the lessons, but essentially the group was inviting their own lives into the sessions, which had a huge impact on the success of the work.

Change in Teachers

Teachers' learning. Three participants shared that they accomplished more learning themselves than expected. One participant shared, "I'm learning things, we are learning things that not a lot of people are comfortable talking about, learning how to become more comfortable, is I think an important facet that I didn't think of before." Participants shared that they learned about how at ease students can be with queer related topics in comparison to their teachers, and how much more their students know now in contrast to when they were their students' age.

One participant shared that she was under the assumption that she knew the right vocabulary, but she expressed that she gained so much by being part of this project, and learning the correct terms. Another participant shared how surprised she was at how open-minded the students in her school really were. The same participant shared that she was enlightened when she realized she had something to learn herself, especially in regards to the topic of transgender identity.

Goal changed/Resources for other teachers/Allies and leaders

Participants shared that they would adjust the initial goals for the project in hindsight, and establish one of the goals as 'becoming resources for the other teachers in our buildings'. One participant explained that other teachers approach him and ask questions such as "how would you talk about… what's the right word you would use for this?" One participant shared that though they now consider themselves an ally, "that is not enough [to make a difference]." She shared that the type of change needed in pedagogy needs to be on going, and cannot be just three LESs. She expressed that she would like to keep this type of work going and help educate other teachers. She also often found herself encouraging other teachers, and helping them see that it is "not so scary" to

teach these types of lessons. The participant shared that when other teachers expressed their fear of making a mistake, saying the wrong thing, or misguiding the students, she would reassure them that if they have a good plan to follow and a good understanding themselves the fear is reduced. She also informed them that it is okay to come back to questions they don't know the answer to. The ERC/Sex Ed consultant called this modelling.

Be the change you want to see. Participants discussed other ways to get more visibility for this work. One idea that was shared was encouraging events, such as asking the librarian to display family diversity books, around May 17th, National Anti-Homophobia Day or having The Quebec LGBT Family Coalition give a workshop to the whole school staff on a professional development day. One participant suggested that the meetings happen at the school, instead of outside the school, and then inviting other teachers to hear mini-presentations of the projects as they are happening.

Discomfort can be positive, instead of a roadblock. During the initial interview, the words discomfort and fear were raised. This was once again addressed in the final interview, but often in a different way. Many participants shared that the time that was invested in discussions together, in sharing, in making sure that they understood the key vocabulary, allowed them to feel more comfortable and confident in teaching the topic. One participant shared that the prouder she became of being part of the team, and the richer discussions that were had by the group, the more comfortable she became. She also shared that she was able to reach a point of comfort when she allowed students to see when she didn't know something: "even realizing when I got uncomfortable and I didn't know [the answer to their question] that it was ok to tell the kids, you know what, I'm unsure. Let me just double check on that and I will get back to you' [and] knowing that I had a support system here". Another participant echoed this same sentiment and shared that she learned half of what she taught in class during the sessions together; this allowed her to feel confident with the material. Two participants shared that they felt that their comfort level was already high and did not change. For the most part, participants identified discomfort as a positive place to launch into knowledge!

Changes in approach. One participant shared that she has realized the impact the project has had on her own approach, as she didn't realize how much Cycle One had deep gender stereotypes built into the system. At the start of the year she would set out blue copy books for the boys and pink copy books for the girls, but she reflected on this and the next round she added green and yellow and allowed them to choose. She mentioned it was really the small things, even making sure when she set up play stations in her classroom that she didn't, for example, only call over the girls to make necklaces. She also shared that she found herself paying more attention to LGBTQ issues in the news; though she deemed the stories not age appropriate for her students, they aided her when she would have discussions with other teachers.

Proud to be an ally. Participants expressed that they felt a change in the way they worked within the context of queering their lessons. One participant shared that the more involved she got, the more proud she became of being part of the work that was being done, and the more comfortable she became as an ally.

Gender Identity

Transgender. The group did not set out to address the topic of transgender identity, it became part of the group sessions organically. Perhaps in order to understand gender stereotypes, the group had to discuss at length the difference between gender and sex, thus the topic of transgender identity naturally was used as an example to help guide our definitions. One participant shared that transgender identity should be the next area that needs to be focused on in education for teachers and students. She shared the alarming statistic of transgender youth attempt suicide as part of the argument that this is an area that needs teacher's focus.

Misinformation from media. Participants discussed that media, such as the movie Ace Ventura, can have a negative influence on perceptions of transgender individuals. Participants discussed the negative transgender representation in this movie and how this has an impact on the misunderstanding of transgender people.

Roadblocks

Participants were pleased to share that much of what they anticipated as roadblocks did not occur. In the previous section of this chapter, the theme that describes the anticipated roadblock of discomfort was viewed as a positive rather than a negative. A great example of this shift can be seen with one participant, when she expressed her shift in approaching roadblocks, and not seeing them as negative. She shared that she appreciated them because "that's when she learned the most", when they were provided time and space to question, struggle, and discover solutions together.

Participants agreed that a Glossary of Definitions is something that is needed for this type of project, but they expressed that they were less threatened by not having the answers on the spot as they thought they would be, and that discovering the knowledge together as a group and/or together with students was a positive thing.

Below you will find some details about the only two roadblocks that were addressed by participants as still being roadblocks: parents and time. Out of six participants, only one had a student's parent take any kind of 'action'.

Parents. One participant shared that one family asked graciously not to have their children involved because they wanted to teach their children those issues themselves. Beyond this incident she never had any negative responses from a parent.

One participant shared that he was disappointed that he didn't hear much from his student who comes from a homoparental family. Neither the student, nor his parents mentioned anything. The participant would have liked a thank you, but attributed it to the fact that perhaps it was a non-issue, which he deemed fantastic.

All other participants were pleased to share that they received nothing but great feedback from parents. The rest of the group shared that they did not have any parents complain or take any other kind of negative action. They also all agreed that the letter that was sent to parents informing them of the project helped, as it gave all the information that parents required and did not leave room for parents to find gaps.

One participant shared that she received an email from a parent that their child was coming home and the first thing they would do was share what they learned in these lessons that day; the parent was quite pleased. The participant was complimented that she

was leading the way on the topic, and that the work was changing these students' lives and making it easier to express themselves.

Two participants shared that they also received positive feedback from parents, from lunch monitors, from students in other grades, etc. who stopped to look at the artwork from the lessons that they displayed in the hallway.

One participant shared that he received multiple thank you and emails from parents. He was very pleased to receive one email in particular from a mother who is also a teacher at Lower Canada College, a local private school, and who shared that she would like to start teaching similar lessons.

Time. The issue of time was identified as a roadblock for all participants. One participant shared that the lessons were too time consuming, and they should have been done earlier in the school year. This is a solution suggested to provide more time to focus at a time of year that does not have the pressure associated with end of year results looming. Another participant said she had to re-adjust when lessons became longer than expected, especially those around definitions, but shared that this was not negative. She was not complaining that the lessons were too time consuming, but rather that she wished she had more time to go into the amount of detail required by her students.

One participant said that it was a positive aspect to be able to see students develop their ideas over a longer period of time on a certain topic, since the lessons were spread over the year, instead of just one smaller time period. For this participant, the long time span of planning together, returning to the class to teach, and then repeating, created positive results. Another participant suggested that these types of lessons should be ongoing throughout the year.

One participant shared that an important lesson she learned was to not spend too much time pre-planning lessons. Instead she said she shifted and allowed students to lead the flow of the lessons. She shared that her time was better spent looking into what they needed as they needed it.

Summary

It is clear that the anticipated roadblocks often presented themselves more as challenges to overcome as a group. The following diagram, Figure 13, illustrates the two major roadblocks discussed in the post-interview and their classifications as either positive or negative.

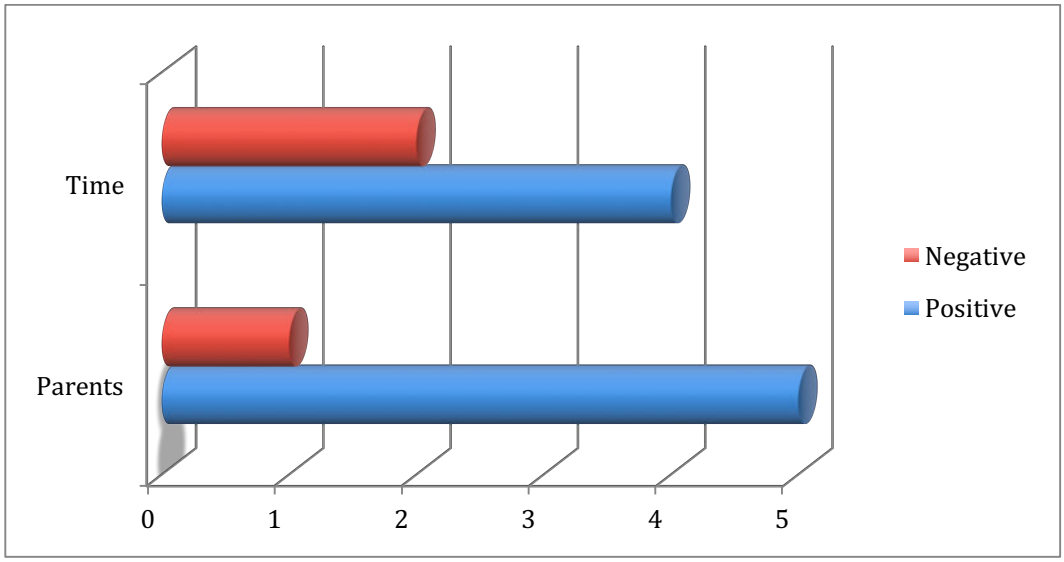

Figure 13. Post-interview roadblocks.

In the next chapter the advice the participants would give/take if they were to implement these lessons again will be explored, as well as further discussing the two new categories that emerged in this chapter: changes in the teacher and the focus on gender identity.

CHAPTER SEVEN // CONCLUSION

Summary

As this thesis work is concluded it is important to examine the shift in teachers as they queered their elementary visual arts content, design, and LES implementation. It is also essential to discuss the impact the project had on their approach to teaching in general, and share their reflections on best practices. This chapter will conclude with a revisiting of the word queer/queering and address how this thesis answers the research question.

Roadblocks

Examining the shift in anticipated roadblocks and actual roadblocks is one of the most significant trends found in the data. Anticipated roadblocks were: fear of using the wrong language / lack of correct vocabulary, parents' resistance, discomfort, lack of base knowledge, resistance of school environment, students'/parents' religion, lack of or access to teaching material and accountability/time. Of these anticipated roadblocks, only two were concluded as actual roadblocks. Participants shared that the discomfort roadblock was not experienced as negative, as they become comfortable with not knowing something in the moment and seeking the answer together with the student (allowing the curriculum to be student-led). The only two roadblocks that were confirmed as roadblocks were time, and parents, and only three participants addressed these as negative. This summary of roadblocks is illustrated in Figure 14 (note that roadblocks not mentioned in the post-interview is at 0 frequency):

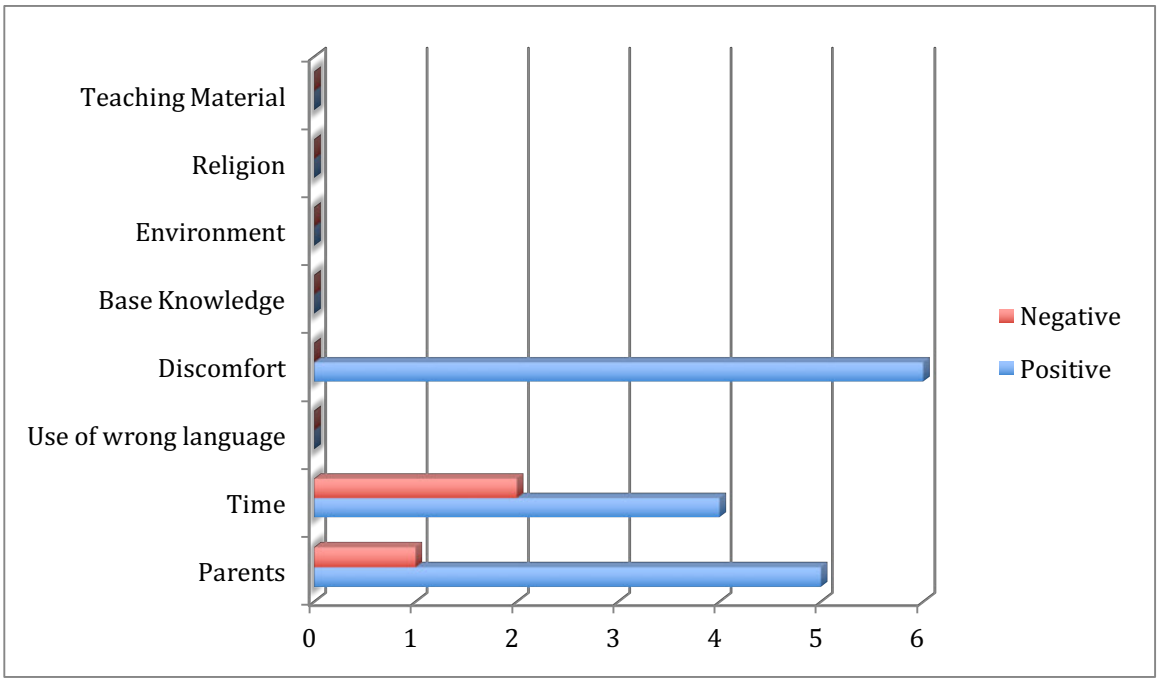

Figure 14. Roadblocks.

When reviewing the data from teachers' logs, which they completed after implementing each of the lessons created, it is essential to note that teachers had more to share on strengths of the lessons and the positive changes that were created as a result, in comparison to the roadblocks they encountered. For most part the roadblocks were lack of time and one incidence of parents. The most common strengths included: students gaining new knowledge and being engaged by content, discussion as a key component of the LESs, authentic student-centered art as strong form of student engagement, and the importance of inviting student's lives into the classroom. The most common changes they noted were students' new use of appropriate language and student sensitivity to normativity.

Shifts in Importance of Work for Participants

When comparing the themes that emerged from the Pre-Interview compared to the Post-Interview we can recognize the shift in approach or 'raison d'être' for participants. The following chart, Figure 15, lists the themes in each category and permits us to highlight the shifts in themes. We can also see the two new categories emerge in the post-interview, categories that participants did not expect.

Pre-Interview	Post-interview
Learning Appropriate Language	**Learning Appropriate Language**
○ Hesitation / Subject Specific Language ○ Labeling & Categorizing	○ Need for Flexibility of Not Knowing ○ Awareness of Own Language ○ Definitions // Glossary of Terms
Demystifying Differences	**Demystifying Differences**
○ Difference ○ Gender Stereotypes	○ Stereotypes ○ Bringing up the Gay ○ Already Normal ○ Clear Ideas of Self ○ Oh, I'm alone in my Judgement?
Creating Safe Spaces for Students to Not Feel Alone	**Creating Safe Spaces for Students to Not Feel Alone**
○ Safety & Acceptance	○ Discussions with Respect, A Challenge ○ I belong ○ Contextualizing the Judgment ○ Schools as Traditional Gender Grouper
Sharing the Personal // Inviting Teachers & Students Lives into the Classroom	**Sharing the Personal // Inviting Our & Our Students Lives into the Classroom**
○ Sharing the Personal ○ Identifying their own Otherness ○ Not-so-straight Friends ○ Religion	○ Being Queer ○ Being Themselves ○ Getting to Know Each Other Better ○ Learning from Our Students
Supported by Governing Bodies	**Supported by Governing Bodies**
○ Legislation, Policies and Support ○ But it's all Over the Media	○ Letter to Parents

Creating Change in the Classroom	**Creating Change in the Classroom**
○ Creating Change ○ Love, Empathy & Acceptance	○ Changes in Students ○ Awareness of Normativity ○ Take Further Action
Aid in the Fight Against Bullying	**Aid in the Fight Against Bullying**
○ Discrimination & Bullying ○ Identity	○ Identity ○ Need for Knowledge // For All Teachers?
It's What Teachers Need	**It's What Teachers Need**
○ It's What Teachers Need	○ Resource Person ○ Insights ○ Base Knowledge // Teaching Material ○ Advantages of Collaboration on the Project
	Change in Teachers
	○ Teachers Learning ○ Goal Changed // Resources for Other Teachers // Allies and Leaders ○ Be the Change you Want to See ○ Discomfort (As a positive, instead of a roadblock) ○ Changes in Approach ○ Proud to be an Ally
	Gender Identity
	○ Transgender ○ Misinformation from Media

Figure 15. Pre-interview vs post-interview themes.

Participants focus (determined by the frequency of the topic coming up during the interview) went from being concerned about the proper use and knowledge of language, dispelling difference, creating safe space and creating change in the classroom (see

Figure 4) to shifting their focus to the change it had on themselves, realizing that the type of resources developed and used in this project is what teachers need, and discussing that gender identity is important. They continued to agree that proper use and knowledge of language was important.

Future Research

The two new categories of themes that emerged in the post-interview inform what should be taken as the next step in this type of research. Participants were not expecting to discover change in themselves and their own practices. The shift in participants went from wanting to create a more inclusive and safer space for their immediate students, to additionally discovering that they became allies and leaders in their school. They realized that the approach to teaching in a queer, inclusive, and diverse space would bleed beyond the initial LESs and into their everyday teaching practices. This new set of knowledge is reflected in the following section. I suggest this as a further area of research, a more self-reflective approach when teaching queerly.

The second area that I would suggest for further research is working with elementary school teachers as they work with ideas of gender identity and transgender identity. These topics came up organically through this work, but I believe that they could be developed further. Participants did discuss transgender representation in the media briefly, and I believe that this can be taken further by applying the DBR that I designed, following the Best Practices found below, and including transgender specific resources such as Clayman's (2016) "I'm Supposed to Relate to This? A Trans Woman on Issues of Identification with Trans Moving Images".

Best Practices

When discussing if all teachers should be given such LESs to teach, participants concluded that it was important to have certain frameworks in place to deliver these lessons successfully. Essentially, they deemed it important to understand what queering meant, and that without this foundation or framework, the essential purpose of these LESs would be lost. Participants shared advice and the following Figure 16 illustrates these into a Best Practice list for anyone who would like to take on such projects in their classrooms:

Figure 16. Best practices for queering curriculum.

The last point listed on the best practices list is one of setting the stage or foundation of the work. Figure 17 re-illustrates this point:

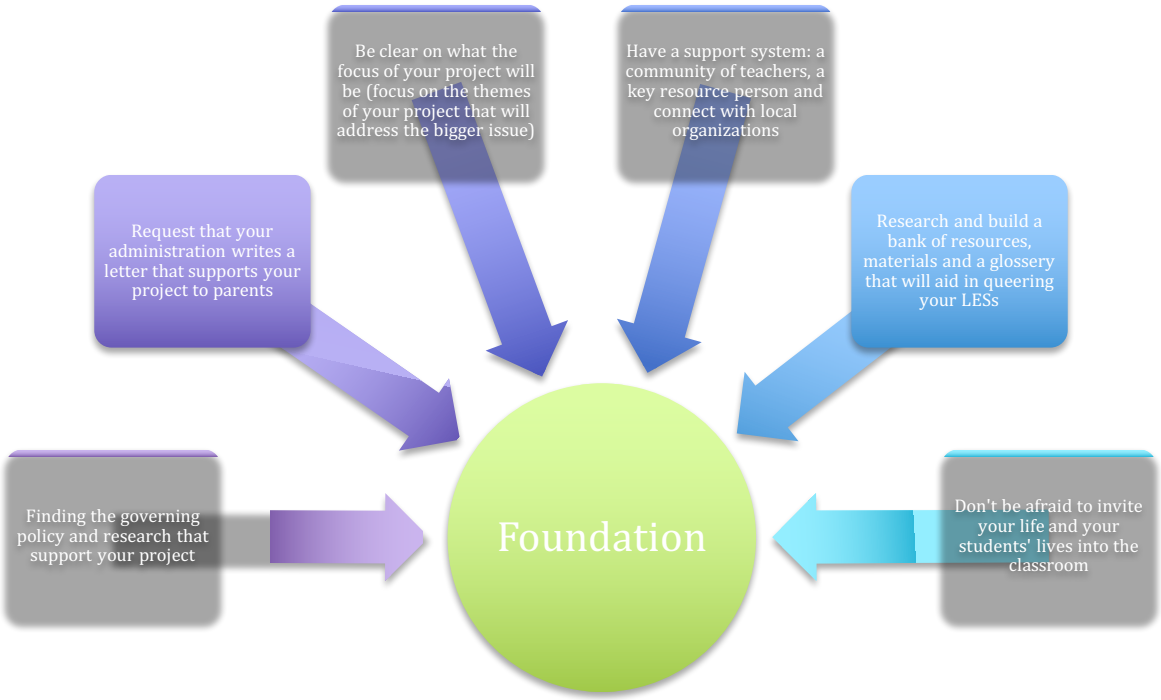

Figure 17. Foundation for queering curriculum.

Queering

When examining how this thesis answers the question *how can queering contribute to elementary schoolteacher's understanding and classroom practice, as they design and implement LGBTQ sensitive visual arts curriculum?* it is important to take a step back and revisit what queering is.

It is best to begin by re-entering into the understanding of the word queer by calling back to the Literature Review. Smith (1996) defines queer as "a strategy, an attitude, a reference to other identities and a new self-understanding" (p. 280). As a strategy, queer is about disrupting the system. As an attitude, queer marks a growing lack of faith in the institutions of the state, in political procedures, in the press, the education system, policing the law. As a new understanding, queer articulates a radical questioning of social and cultural norms. The work done by participants in their LESs keeps in mind queer as strategy, an attitude, and a new understanding, while celebrating difference, and breaking heteronormative binaries. Teachers set out to reclaim/reterritorializing their public space, their classrooms, by changing oppressive heteronormative spaces into safe queer spaces, which according to Lauren and Freeman (1996) in their article From Queer Nationality, *The Material Queer*, is one of the ways to describe what queering is.

So how does queering contribute to elementary schoolteachers understanding and classroom practice, as they design and implement LGBTQ sensitive visual arts curriculum? It does so by allowing teachers to challenge what is considered normativity, shifting their approach. It provides them the foundation of relevant language to allow them to push against heteronormativity, and approach designing curriculum in ways that create more inclusive classrooms for all their students, regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, or the family constructs they come from. It permits them to be flexibility with being uncomfortable in "not knowing everything", but be comfortable enough with the idea that they can find the answers needed. It helps them acknowledge that there may be roadblocks in queering, but that these roadblocks are manageable when equipped with the right foundation, tools, and the idea that it is not impossible work, though it is vital work for the safety of <u>all</u> our students.

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APPENDIICES

APPENDIX A // COPY OF ETHICS

Concordia

CERTIFICATION OF ETHICAL ACCEPTABILITY
FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

Name of Applicant:	Melissa-Ann Ledo
Department:	Faculty of Fine Arts\Art Education
Agency:	N/A
Title of Project:	Investing the Possibilities: Motivated Teachers Create LGBTQ sensitive Visual Arts Elementary Curricula and Reflect on its Implementation

Certification Number: 30003611

Valid From: October 15, 2014 to: October 14, 2015

The members of the University Human Research Ethics Committee have examined the application for a grant to support the above-named project, and consider the experimental procedures, as outlined by the applicant, to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

Dr. James Pfaus, Chair, University Human Research Ethics Committee

APPENDIX B // SAMPLE CONSENT FORM

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN Investing the Possibilities: Motivated Teachers Create LGBTQ sensitive Visual Arts Elementary Curricula and Reflect on its Implementation

I understand that I have been asked to participate in a research project being conducted by Melissa-Ann Ledo (*514)569-8819 mledo@emsb.qc.ca,* of Art Education of Concordia University under the supervision of Dr. Lorrie Blair of Art Education Department of Concordia University (Tel.: 514-848-2424 ext. 4642 Email: lorrie.blair@concordia.ca)

A. PURPOSE

I have been informed that the purpose of the research is to investigate the possibilities of building a LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Queer/Questioning) sensitive elementary Visual Arts cross-curriculum curricula, within the framework of the Quebec Education Program (QEP) Visual arts and ERC (Ethics and Religious Culture) programs and its related evaluation criteria. I am apart of a group of educators from the English Montreal School Board, have decided to build a curricula for their students and this process is what will be studied in this research. The research will be focused on the creation process and not the lessons.

B. PROCEDURES

- I understand that I will work collaboratively to create LESs/lesson plans that I teach them in my class.
- I understand that the meetings will take place during meeting times at the school board during work hours.
- I understand that I will be interviewed by Melissa-Ann Ledo twice, once at the beginning and once at the end of the process.
- I understand that I will be asked to complete and share logs/surveys with Melissa-Ann Ledo.

C. RISKS AND BENEFITS

- I understand that there are no foreseeable risks associated with this study. If I feel emotional discomfort at any time I am free to decline answering the question that may have triggered the discomfort. I am also free to suspend or end the interview at any time if I so wish.

D. CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

- I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at anytime without negative consequences.

- I understand that the data from this study may be published.

- I understand that my participation in this study is **Participant Choice**:
    - I will be able to choose which level of disclosure they wish for their real identity.

I HAVE CAREFULLY STUDIED THE ABOVE AND UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT. I FREELY CONSENT AND VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

NAME (please print) _____

SIGNATURE _____

If at any time you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Manager, Research Ethics, Concordia University, 514.848.2424 ex. 7481 oor.ethics@concordia.ca

If at any time you have questions about the proposed research, please contact the study's Principal Investigator : Melissa-Ann Ledo (*514)569-8819 mledo@emsb.qc.ca,* of Art Education of Concordia University under the supervision of Dr. Lorrie Blair of Art Education Department of Concordia University (Tel.: 514-848-2424 ext. 4642 Email: lorrie.blair@concordia.ca)

APPENDIX C // SAMPLE LOG, INTERVIEW QUESTIONS & SURVEY

Name:_____

Teacher Log

Title of LES: _____
Number of lessons:_____
Number of students:_____
Grade Level of Students:_____

Pre-LES focus questions:

1. What do you want your students to learn as a result of this LES?
   _____
2. How will you know they have learned it?
   _____
3. What subjects domains will be addressed in this LES (i.e. Visual Arts, Math, etc.)
   _____
4. What form of evaluation(s) will you use? What evaluation criteria do you plan on addressing?
   _____
   _____

Post-LES focus questions:

5. What were the strengths of implementing the lessons?
   _____
   _____
6. What problems/roadblocks did you encounter with implementing the lessons?
   _____
   _____
7. Have you been doing anything differently since the lessons were implemented? Have you noticed your students doing anything differently since the lessons were implemented?
   _____
   _____
   _____
8. Would you do these lessons again? If so, would you change anything
   _____
   _____

9. Did this lesson give you insight on how to structure the next LES?

10. Did you encounter any students <u>not</u> attaining the goal you set out? How did you address this? (Differentiation)

11. Did you encounter any students whom <u>already</u> attained the goal you set out? How did you address this? (Enrichment)

12. Any further comments or ideas:

Pre-Interview Guide

Tell me about yourself / what do you teach?

What was it that brought you here?

What do you want to accomplish in being a part of this?

What would you say is your comfort level with the topic?

What do you predict the roadblocks will be?

Post-Interview Questions

- Who are you and where are you coming from (does anybody want to add to the answer that you have already given)?

- You were also asked what do you want to accomplish as being part of this project and have you accomplished what you think you set off to accomplish/ or/and did your goals change or adapt during the process?

- You were asked about your comfort level in the first meeting, and the question is how has that changed, and how can that inform us to help others get comfortable?

- Did the focus of the work change?

- What are some of the solutions that we can offer to teachers as they implement this project?

- Do you think that all teachers should implement this project?

- You were asked the question what do you predict the roadblocks would be? Were they what you thought they would be and would you have, did you encounter what you thought you would encounter in terms of roadblocks?

- What was a highlight of the project?

- What resources did you use? What did you discover on your own?

- Speaking about the sessions together, is this something that you think that all teachers should experience before teaching? How would you have structured these five sessions any differently?

- Did you find the visual arts 101 that I gave you guys informative? Did using guiding questions help?

- Would you do this project again? If so, is there something you would change the next time?

- Have you been doing anything different in your class since the project was implemented?

Keep in mind: The interview will focus on how we can better prepare teachers for teaching such lessons – go over 5 descriptions of 5 days together

Individual Questions:

Describe what it was like working collaboratively. What could have been put into place to help facilitate this process?

What would you have us do differently if we were to repeat this process with another group, what did you discover was missing in your "bank of tools"?

What was the most helpful part of the time spent with your colleges here? How can this type of time be enriched?

Group Questions:

During 1st group interview you were asked: Who are you and where are you coming from, which I don't think have changed much since then. You were also asked "what do you want to accomplish in being a part of this". Have you accomplished what you think you set off to accomplish? Did your goals change or adapt during the process?

You were asked about your comfort level on the topic. How has this changed? How can that inform us on how to help others get comfortable? What are some solutions that we can offer other teachers as they implement this type of project? (Do you think all teachers should implement this project? Why/why not?)

You were asked, "What do you predict the roadblocks will be". Were they the roadblocks you encountered? How would you have liked to address them? What would you have needed?

What were the highlights and unexpected moments you encountered? How can we use these moments as indications of what to focus future pd sessions.

How did you feel about the subject matter before, during and after the creation process?

Out of the resources that were made available, which were the most useful? Which resources did you discover in your own research? Did your students question/indicate something that was missing form your lessons? Did the info sessions (LGBT Families & Visual Arts 101) aid in your understanding?

Would you do this project again, if so, would you change anything the next time? Have you been doing anything differently in your class since the project was implemented?

If this process was repeated, how would you change/adjust the sessions we had together?

Teacher Log : Facilitating Anti-Homophobia Initiatives in Elementary Schools

Lesson:
Grade Level:

1. What were the strengths of implementing the lesson?

2. What problems have did you encounter with implementing the lesson? The weaknesses? The roadblocks?

3. Have you been doing anything differently in your class since the lesson was implemented?

4. Would you do this lesson again, if so, would you change anything the next time you implement it?

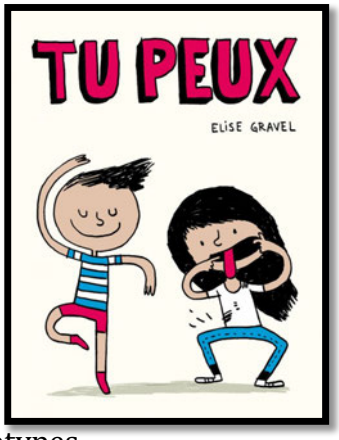
5. Other Notes:

APPENDIX D // SUMMARY OF LESSONS

How Do I Explain Queer to My Grade 5 Students?
Overview of Teacher's Unit Plans

Francois Lukawecki & Catherine Legault // Aaron Prosser & Tanya Steinberg // Patrizia Battaglia & Genevieve Lepori // Anne-Marie DeSilva

"...combating homophobia in the secondary schools has revealed that the intervention must begin sooner, at the elementary level, before discriminatory attitudes and behaviours become entrenched."
Prosser et al., 2013



LES One // Unit Plan One
Gender Stereotypes // Grade 1 & 2

- The two Cycle One teachers created a Visual Art, ERC, French and Mathematics LES called *Stéréotypes de genres.*

- The teacher's goals were focused on:
  - Having their students learn the term *stereotype*
  - Sensitising their students to gender stereotypes
  - Guiding students to be able to identify gender stereotypes
  - Having students learn how gender stereotypes can affect them and those around them negatively.

- This LES was composed of five lessons that challenged gender stereotypes.
  - play centres
  - marionette play
  - reading a book called "Tu Peux"
  - Improvisation
  - creating a colouring book for the kindergarten students that debunks gender stereotypes.

LES One // Unit Plan One
Gender Stereotypes // Grade 3 & 4

- The two Cycle Two teachers created an English, ERC and Visual arts LES called *Careers and Gender*.
- The teacher's goals were focused on having students:
  - Investigate the different careers that are predominantly occupied by one gender;
  - Recognize the limitations stereotypes place on women and men in the work force;
  - Examine the lives of famous and men who have succeeded in challenging the limitations placed on various gender-specific jobs;
  - Identify their own unexamined views on gender stereotypes in the workplace;
  - To gain an understanding and appreciation to the diversity in the types of professions that are/should be open to both men and women

- This LES was composed of four lessons:
  - brainstorming careers by sketching and naming the people in those professions
  - discussing why certain genders were chosen
  - reading a book called À quoi tu joues?" and discussing professional individuals who have broken gender stereotypes with their profession
  - creating collage self-portraits that challenges future career choices

LES One // Unit Plan One
Gender Stereotypes // Grade 5 & 6

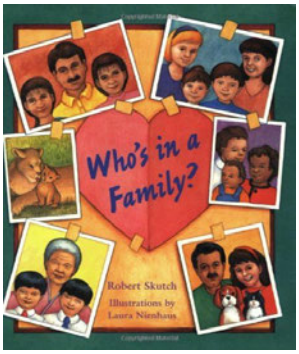
- The two Cycle 3 teachers created an ERC, Language Arts and Visual Arts LES called *Gender Stereotypes*.

- The goal for the participants was to have their students:
  - Recognize societal / traditional stereotypes
  - Learn the difference between gender and sex
  - Open their ideas of gender, sex,
  - Think about possible future career paths.

This LES was divided into steps:

- inviting students to complete a stereotype true/false quiz and discussing the students' answers;
- introducing and comparing the vocabulary words sex, gender and stereotype;
- inviting students to list common gender stereotypes on chart paper, explore existing gender stereotypes in magazines, and to create a collage that depicts gender stereotypes using the magazine's images and words.
- discussion with students about where stereotypes come from, introducing them to the Quebec Charter of Human Rights, and prompting students to pay attention to how there is no mention of stereotypes in the law.
- reviewing advertisements that break existing gender stereotypes in the media and inviting students to create their own ad with an image and a slogan showing an existing gender stereotype being broken.

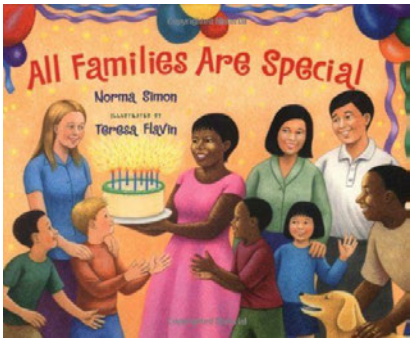
LES One // Unit Plan Two
Family Diversity // Grade 1 & 2



- The participants who teach Cycle One created a Visual arts, Ethics and Religious Culture, French and Mathematics lesson called *Les divers types de familles.*

- The goal of this LES was to:
  - Introduce and sensitize students to the various types of families
  - Have students be able use proper vocabulary to name the various types of families
  - Encourage respecting/accepting various types of families

- This LES was divided into two lessons.
  - the first lesson has students reflecting on their own family make-up, reading the book *Who's in a family ?* and discuss the various types of families found in the book taking note son the Smartboard.
  - the second lesson invites students to create playing cards an adaptation of the *Family Card Game.* Once their cards are complete the students are invited to play the game.



LES One // Unit Plan Two
Family Diversity // Grade 3 & 4

- The participants who teach Cycle Two created an English Language Arts and Visual Arts LES called *Family Diversity.*

- The main goal of this lesson is to:
  - Open up students to different types of families
  - Have students identify the diverse types of family structure
  - Have students become comfortable with using the vocabulary and terminology associated with family diversity, both inclusive and direct.

- This LES was divided in several steps
  - group activity: define "Family", come to a class definition;
  - reading the book *All Families are Special* by Norma Simon to introduce the idea of family diversity // Watching the clip "Love has no Labels" by Ad Council.
  - group brainstorming session to identify different types of families they have seen and what different types of families look like;
  - introduction to the vocabulary & different definitions of families and whole class discussion;
  - collage activity depicting different types of families, followed by whole class discussion of work.

LES One // Unit Plan Two
Family Diversity // Grade 5 & 6

- The participants who teach Cycle 3 created an Ethics and Religious Culture, Language Arts, and Visual Arts LES

- The main goals of this lesson are to have students:
  - Discuss what it means to be a family
  - Become aware and list the many possible combinations of families that exist in our society using the proper vocabulary words
  - Explore the idea that families are diverse

- This LES was divided in several steps:
  - discussion on the many possible combinations of families that exist in our society using the proper vocabulary words
  - discussion on the cultural value, history and approaches of quilting.
  - introducing the students on how to thread a sewing needle with yarn and sew.

- reviewing the various types of families, choose a type of family that is different from theirs, and drawing & colouring this family on white paper.
- gluing drawings to felt squares and sewing them together to hang up on display in the school.

LES One // Unit Plan Three
Anti-bullying // Grade 1 & 2

- The two Cycle 1 teachers created a Visual Art, ERC, French and Mathematics LES called *L'intimidation.*

- The teacher's goals were focused on sensitising their students to the following ideas:
  - Teasing is hurtful;
  - A situation is not resolved if both parties don't talk about it;
  - Gender stereotypes are often used to tease or bully;
  - There are multiple solutions to being teased;
  - Silent bystanders are part of the problem.

- This LES was composed of three lessons:
  - discussions on being bullied for not fitting gender norms and the difference between teasing and bullying,
  - creation of a marionette,
  - role-playing in players of a bully situation.

LES One // Unit Plan Three
Anti-bullying // Grade 3 & 4

- The two Cycle 2 teachers created a Visual Art, Dramatic Arts, ERC and/or English Language Arts LES called *Bullying.*

- The teacher's goals were focused on
  - Raising awareness around the issue of bullying and the different types of aggression and bullying that takes place in the school
  - Guiding students though telling an authentic story (personal or made up) that addresses the issue of "feeling less than,"
  - Having students identify and build new forms of personal empowerment that strengthen the individual's self-esteem in the fight against bullying.
  - Having students to be aware of their responses to aggressive situations and how to take *smart* action.

- This LES was composed of six parts:
    - watching videos such as *To This Day*, by Shane Koyzan
    - discussions about bullying (option of sharing their own experiences in a safe environment)
    - vocabulary exploration (bully, victim, bystander)
    - group story writing/short skit that could be inspired by real situations or mythologized (includes dialogue, setting, etc.),
    - graphic illustration of stories, and presentation of work.
    - acting out short skits.

LES One // Unit Plan Three
Anti-bullying // Grade 5 & 6

- The two Cycle 3 teachers created a ERC, Language Arts and Visual Arts LES called *Bullying.*

- The teachers' goals were focused on:
    - students learning the definitions and characteristics of bully, victim, and bystander;
    - students discovering safe places from bullying;
    - students learning the long term consequences of bullying especially homophobic and transphobic bullying;
    - having students discover who to see for help when bullying occurs.

- This LES was composed of seven sections:
    - discussions on teasing/making fun because of a stereotype and on type of family,
    - exploring the definitions of bullying and intimidation,
    - discussion on why people become bullies,
    - where does bullying occur,
    - exploring the story of Bry Bitar, a transgender teen from a local school and watching CBC video,
    - discussion of where to seek help
    - creating campaign posters

APPENDIX E // COPY OF LETTER TO PARENTS / GUARDIANS

Commission scolaire English-Montréal
English Montreal School Board

February , 2015

Dear Families and Guardians;

Over the next several months, your child's class will participate in a pilot project that will address **gender stereotypes, family diversity** and **bullying,** as part of a larger anti-homophobia initiative.

This project is developed in support of Bill 56, an anti-bullying law passed by the Ministry of Education in the spring of 2012, which is supported by the EMSB and the demands of the Quebec Education Plan. A major goal in our school's MESA (Management Educational Success Agreement) is to establish a safe and healthy school environment, including addressing bullying and discrimination issues.

In an effort to meet these mandates, your child's class will be participating in a series of age-appropriate lessons, activities and discussions on the aforementioned topics, in an effort to address and combat homophobia.

Diversity training and anti-homophobia workshops funded by the ministère de l'éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS), will be provided to your child's teacher.

For more information on this topic, and how it relates to our students' lives, refer to www.homophobius.com, or contact the school's administration. Information about Bill 56 can also be found on the Ministry of Education's website at http://www.assnat.qc.ca/

Thank you,

Alessandra Furfaro, Director

Pedagogical Services

PDIG Project Team: Catherine Legault, Aaron Prosser, Patrizia Battaglia – Royal Vale; François Lukawecki, Tanya Steinberg, Geneviève Lepori – Bancroft; Anne-Marie De Silva, Melissa Ann Ledo – Educational Consultants