BEING TOUGH, STAYING GOOD, AND PLAYING INSIDE THE BOX:

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC CASE STUDY OF ONE BOY'S MULTIMODAL TEXTMAKING

by

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Abstract

This study of multimodal textmaking is focused on how resources from home and from school are used by one child in the middle years of elementary school. Kyle[1] is the primary participant in this ethnographic case study, which spanned two school years. Analysis focused on how texts change, how resources and identities are constructed and reconstructed, and which texts and textmaking practices are valued and which are not. In response to the need to understand more fully how hybrid or 'relocalized' (Pennycook, 2010) texts are made, this study undertook an examination of a wide range of textmaking processes. Kyle's use of the cultural resources of professional wrestling, amongst others, to make narrative and performative hybrid texts, is traced. His 'rescripting' of everyday experiences, in playful and parodic ways, is explored. Kyle's writing within a mandated writing process, performance-based assessment is also examined and a sociocultural understanding of creativity is proposed.

Insight into permeability of home and school boundaries is offered. An expanded definition of text to include multimodal forms suggests that all texts are multimodal, but also that many children are excluded from successful textmaking at school because the modes, forms, and resources with which they are familiar or have had success, are not included amongst the valued texts at school (Luke, 1997; Marsh, 2006; Nixon & Comber, 2006). Powerful practices and interpersonal influences are made visible in a way that is not possible when only polished or final versions of texts are considered. The potentials and possibilities offered by play and improvisation within textmaking, both in and out of school, are emphasized.

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[1] The name, Kyle, is a pseudonym for the focal participant in the study, and was chosen by him. All names of students, teachers, and family members are pseudonyms.

Preface

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

"Viewers, do not try this at home" (Transcript, Mar 6 09)

The quote above, transcribed from my audio-recorder one night after spending the day in Kyle's class, planted a seed for me to notice the kinds of textual elements with which Kyle played and constructed texts. During the first weeks of my research project at Kyle's school, I would go home in the evenings and rewrite my hastily written observational notes and would listen to audio-recordings. I had been getting to know Kyle and his classmates in Grade 3 since December, and I took on many roles during the school day; teacher's assistant, playmate at recess and lunchtime, student helper, observer and note-taker, and teacher consultant. Initially conceived of as a study of multimodal textmaking that considered identities as integral elements, I expected to gather data about children drafting and re-drafting texts and to observe that process in an in depth fashion. Multimodality, here, refers to the multiple modes of expression available through print, visuals, gestures, and sound, for example (Kress, 2000, 2003; Stein, 2008). My use of the term 'textmaking', alongside the term 'multimodal', is intended to include a wide range of textual forms (e.g., speech acts, drafts, paintings, photographs, essays) and the process of making these texts. In retrospect, the texts I imagined I would see were fairly conventional school texts, pieces of writing, illustrations for student-made books, art projects, and perhaps some digital texts. I imagined observing some texts being made at home, potentially in online spaces, and also conventional paper-and-pencil drawings, and perhaps other texts made from arts and crafts materials.

Because I took an active role in the classroom from the beginning, I was not always able to observe every moment of my focal participant's textmaking. Early on, I introduced data collection tools such as a digital camera and digital audio-recorder. Kyle agreed that I could

leave an audio-recorder on next to him in class or in the computer lab while he was working. As I listened to audio-recordings in the evening, I was intrigued by comments Kyle peppered through his conversations with his peers or his talk as he worked on his own. I heard "viewers, do not try this at home" (Transcript, Mar 6 09) while Kyle was trying to figure out how to spell a word while writing a poem in the computer lab, "there's 10,000 watching at home, and these viewers want to see more action" (Transcript, Mar 9 09) while he was working on in a computer spelling program and "every fan out there that's watching me, this is the best" (Transcript, Mar 9 09) while he was writing a poem with his classmate, Roger. I wondered if Kyle was imagining me as his audience or if the presence of the recorder evoked his performances, which I later connected to his interest in professional wrestling. His playful commentary struck me as a potential source of investigation for the textmaking I wanted to explore. Visits to Kyle's home over the next two years, in addition to numerous classroom visits and one-on-one conversations offered opportunities to follow Kyle's interest in professional wrestling as well as more conventional interests and texts.

This study of multimodal textmaking is focused on how resources from home and from school are used by one child in the middle years of elementary school. Analysis focused on how texts change, how resources and identities are constructed and reconstructed, and which texts and textmaking practices are valued and which are not. In response to the need to understand more fully how hybrid or 'relocalized' (Pennycook, 2010) texts are made, this study undertook an examination of a wide range of textmaking processes. Kyle's use of the cultural resources of professional wrestling, amongst others, to make narrative and performative hybrid texts, is traced. His 'rescripting' of everyday experiences, in playful and parodic ways, is explored.

Kyle's writing within a mandated writing process, performance-based assessment is also examined and a sociocultural understanding of creativity is proposed.

Purpose of the Study

When textual resources (e.g., televised professional wrestling, video games, cartoons, and music) that are viewed as belonging to a home domain cross over to another domain such as a classroom where school-sanctioned texts like journals, essays, and fictional stories in print form predominate, the hybrid textual forms that result are often jarring and raise questions of appropriateness and value (Alvermann, 2012; Kelly, 1997; Marsh, 2006). Although many educators and researchers acknowledge the importance of including out-of-school resources (i.e., especially languages and customs) as children's funds of knowledge (e. g., Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzales, 2005/1992; MacCleod, 2004; Pahl, 2007a), this acknowledgement and integration occurs in a wide range of manners, some more perfunctory and others more meaningful.

In the process of understanding how texts and resources move across time and space it is crucial to consider how they might change and with what consequences. What happens across time and space and across home and school needs to be more fully theorized and empirically investigated (Baynham, 2004; Gutiérrez, 2010; Hull & Schultz, 2001). In order to better understand the value of including community literacy resources in a range of possible forms and for a multitude of purposes, it is necessary to look closely at how identities are made along the processes of textmaking.

I draw on the research of Dyson (2003) about children's texts as remixes of popular culture forms and Hicks' (2002) particular stories of a boy and a girl across their early literacy experiences at home and at school. Insight into permeability of home and school boundaries is

offered. An expanded definition of text to include multimodal forms suggests that all texts are multimodal, but also that many children are excluded from successful textmaking at school because the modes, forms, and resources with which they are familiar or have had success, are not included amongst the valued texts at school (Luke, 1997; Marsh, 2006; Nixon & Comber, 2006). Powerful practices and interpersonal influences are made visible in a way that is not possible when only polished or final versions of texts are considered. The potentials and possibilities offered by play and improvisation within textmaking, both in and out of school, are emphasized.

Research Questions

An examination of Kyle's textmaking processes, during his time in Grade 3 and Grade 4, focused on the following research questions:

1. What multimodal resources (e.g., visual, print, gestural, auditory) and identities are used by children engaged in text-making across time and space?
2. How do children use resources and identities to produce multimodal texts (i.e., engage in multimodal practices) and textmaking (and social) identities?

Through these questions, and an in depth examination of the ways in which particular texts were made across time and space, I document how Kyle used multimodal textmaking resources in hybrid and creative ways to construct texts, and also to construct social and literate identities. Integral to this examination was a focus on process, or the drafting of texts, and the ways in which others influenced the kinds of texts that Kyle was able to make, and the ways in which texts were used. At the same time, Kyle's identities and texts were always in-process and multiple, and the boundaries between home and school are seen as ultimately permeable.

Although Kyle engaged in many multimodal forms of textmaking, what follows in this dissertation is an analysis of how he used the textual resources of professional wrestling to construct texts at home and at school and also how he drafted an essay under a prescribed writing assessment.

Initially written as three separate manuscripts, the chapters that form the body of this dissertation look at three separate framings of the data collected and analyzed, and have their own distinct yet overlapping theoretical and conceptual approaches and reviews of research. For this reason, the theory, review of research, and methodology sections in this introduction are overviews that present more global introductions to the components that will be discussed in each chapter. The content of each manuscript is discussed at the end of this chapter.

Theoretical Frames

This examination of textmaking practices across home and school assumes that all texts are multimodal, that creativity can be viewed as an everyday process, and that this creativity also happens when hybrid, relocalized forms of texts are produced. Theoretically, the analysis that follows is grounded in a sociocultural perspective that assumes that text production happens through participation in the social world (e.g., Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985). Using a sociocultural framing of identity construction, in this project I assume that identities are like narratives (Moje, Luke, Davies & Street, 2009) and are constantly constructed and re-constructed (Holland, Lachiotte, Skinner & Cain, 1998; McCarthey & Moje, 2002) or revised through the cycles or processes of textmaking. By this line of reasoning, identities are not fixed but are potentially multiple and changing although somewhat constrained or bounded within literate practices (Rowsell & Pahl, 2007).

Multimodal Textmaking Practices

Here, the term *text* is used to bracket the multimodal drafts that are produced. Text is defined as a form of meaning making that comprises multiple modes of expression. As Kress suggests, "communication—whatever the mode—always happens as *text*" (Kress, 2003, p. 47). Textual modes could include gesture, print, visual modes (i.e., photographs, drawings), dance, and oral forms of expression. Multimodality is defined as a range of possible expressive modes such as the visual (e.g., drawing, painting, photo making, and video), print (e.g., books, newspapers, magazines, and environmental print), gestural (e.g., miming, pointing, acting out), dramatic (e.g., role-playing, improvisation, formal acting), and oral (e.g., informal talk, public speaking) (Kress 2000, 2003; Stein, 2008). Considering the idea that all texts are multimodal, Stein argues, "A multimodal theory of communication holds that meaning is made, always, in the many different modes and media that make up a communicative ensemble" (2008, p. 14). A communicative ensemble evokes how the elements of an orchestra work to produce a performed piece of music or the way that the performers in a play or a film might come together with many others (i.e., working with lighting, costume, sound, etc.) to produce a work. Although Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) brought these ideas to the forefront, others (e.g. Dyson, 1982; Harste, Woodward & Burke, 1984; Siegel, 1984) have been arguing for consideration of multimodality, even within conventional texts, for some time. If all texts are considered multimodal, even print-based texts, one can also consider the multiple modes of expression inherent in one text (Bearne, & Wolstencroft, 2007; Kress, 2000, The New London Group, 1996).

The making of multimodal texts is a communicative process, wherein textmakers express ideas through both the content and the form of the texts they make. What is absent from semiotic consideration, for the most part, is an "understanding of what people make of the space between

multiple modes" (Siegel & Panofsky, 2009, p. 101). Here, Siegel and Panofsky refer to what happens during the process of multimodal textmaking as the modes develop in relation to each other. In response to this concern, Siegel and Panofsky (2009) turn to sociocultural theory to provide meanings beyond multimodal analysis (or an examination of 'site of appearance', 'display', 'narrative', and 'genre) that might account for texts' origins as well as "what human beings do as organized in activities that are practiced by social groups" (p. 105). Although one may often consider texts as finished products, such as a published novel, a publicly hung painting, or a choreographed dance work performed for an audience, here texts-in-process or drafts are considered as texts, that are worthy of examination for the influences that are rendered invisible when one looks only at final products.

Rather than see texts as conventionally print-based, an expanded definition of text to include multimodal forms and modes is used here. This decision is based partly upon the belief that all texts are multimodal (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996) but also that many children are excluded from successful textmaking at school because the modes, forms, and resources with which they are familiar and with which they have had success, are not included amongst the valued texts at school (Luke, 1997; Marsh, 2006; Nixon & Comber, 2006). Children who are successful in producing non-print-based forms such as drawings or speech can be included in classroom textmaking if understanding is expanded to include multimodal forms.

These texts come about as a result of textmaking practices, practices that are influenced by the time and space of textmaking. The texts are possible within the kinds of practices that occur at particular moments in time and space. A practice, according to Scribner and Cole (1981) is "a recurrent, goal-directed sequence of activities using a particular technology and particular systems of knowledge" and that "tasks that individuals engage in constitute a social practice

when they are directed to socially recognized goals and make use of a shared technology and knowledge system" (p. 236). Practices can be defined as goal-directed, recurrent patterns that are particular to the kind of work being done. For example, within classrooms, certain ways of doing reading and writing might predominate over others. Within settings outside of classrooms, other sets of practices might predominate.

Taking the lead from sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985), I contend that the ways things are done is a social process, defined by the people who are doing it. Connected to this definition of practices is Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept, community of practice, where a group of individuals come together with a shared commitment or for a shared purpose, in order to do the work they do more effectively and to support each other. Teachers in a particular school working for common goals or a group of artists exploring a new medium or style might have particular modes of apprenticeship, particular kinds of practices in which members engage, and various purposes towards which they work. Also connected to New Literacy Studies (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Heath, 1983, Street, 1984), sociocultural theory defines literacy practices as the ways in which literacy is carried out in particular social groups. Opening up the notion of practices to consider change and variability within and across practices, movement across time and space, a modified definition of practice is possible. Practices, like identities and texts, will change over time and across space. The passage of time and changes in space that occur simultaneously mean that a fixed notion of context is not possible or useful. Practices are forward looking because they are socially constructed; they experience ebb and flow (Luke & Wood, 2009: Pennycook, 2010).

Hybrid, Recycled Texts

Just as our utterances always reflect traces of other utterances, our multimodal texts borrow elements from and speak to each other. Bakhtin (1986) wrote, "I live in a world of others' words" (p. 143). In this project, multimodal texts are viewed as co-constructions that resonate with the voices of others. These texts are always multi-voiced, ventriloquating the voices and texts of the people and other texts with whom and with which connections are made. These texts and voices are additional intertextual resources upon which multimodal textmakers draw.

The re-use or recycling of texts and textual resources is integral to textmaking in contemporary settings. In the analysis that follows across the chapters, various concepts (i.e., remix, relocalization, rescripting) are used to make explicit and to express the creativity implicit in textmaking. Dyson (2003) refers to popular culture texts as textual toys, and the multimodal texts that children produce from their integration of popular culture literacy practices into classroom literacy practices as remixes. Drawing on Bakhtin, Dyson presents children's remixes as heteroglossic, hybrid, and literate forms. She examined how Grade 1 African-American children borrowed and 'remixed' popular culture resources (i.e., movies, sports, cartoons, music) from their lives outside of school to create their beginning writing at school. Their teacher encouraged this borrowing of community resources as a way to create drawn and written texts in their classroom and brought some of these resources (e.g., music) explicitly into the classroom. The re-invention of culture that happens when apparently contradictory cultures coincide is a hybrid, creative process and has also been described as syncretism (Duranti & Ochs, 1996). Syncretism refers to hybrid forms described as "the fluid and creative interaction of words, ideas

and practices to create a dynamic fruitful and positive whole" (Gregory, Long & Volk, 2004, p. 4).

Remix can be viewed as the literacy of the 21st century (Lessig, 2009) and even though texts are always borrowed or built upon the texts of others who have come before, this borrowing is not always explicitly acknowledged. Remix and modification of popular culture forms can be seen in the world of hip hop where words and tunes and sounds are adopted and adapted to make meaning in local time and space (Clarke & Hiscock, 2005; Newman, 2005; Pennycook, 2010). In out-of-school time and space, especially in the online world, mash-ups and remixes are pervasive. In hybrid texts, the form, the contents, the features, or the affordances of a textual form might be used and changed in new or unexpected ways.

An examination of hybridity, as it applies to literary and textual forms, allows for a critique of the dichotomies of domains often seen in opposition, such as home and school. Instead of seeing home-school boundaries as separate, Dyson (2003) describes them as permeable. The distinctions between social languages, in Bakhtin's (1981) terms, are not fixed and influence each other in fluid and reciprocal ways. Social languages focus on linguistic details as well as aspects of intertextuality and multi-voicedness, wherein many voices are made visible through utterances. Bulfin and North (2007) contend:

> Rather than approach home and school as very different spaces and the practices of young people in these different spaces as having little relevance to each other, Bakhtin's theory of the dialogical nature of language highlights the dynamic and constitutive relationship between home and school literacy practices as a site of continual negotiation and exchange (p. 248).

The overlaps and possibilities for new forms are potentially exciting and productive spaces (Gregory et al., 2004). Children's multimodal texts may reflect this hybridity to greater or lesser degrees as they remix multimodal resources across and within time and space. Bakhtin's conceptions of hybridity, multi-voicedness, his explanation of social languages, and the ways that they are valued differently, help to address these concerns about connections across home and school. The remixing of texts and textual resources can be viewed as a form of play, sometimes entering the realm of parody, and often going beyond acceptable norms for schools and classrooms, in ways that can be described as carnivalesque (Bakhtin, 1984; Buckingham, 2003). The invocation of *carnival*, a "bawdy and bizarre" place (Vadeboncoeur, 2005, p. 144) and a marginal unofficial space, may occur when norms are challenged and potentially inverted.

Building on the notion of remix, originally stated as recontextualization, Pennycook (2007; 2010) uses the term *relocalization* to describe how global linguistic and textual forms might be changed and used in new locales to construct meaning. Commenting on the nature of creativity, and seeing repetition of forms as creative, Pennycook argues that the relocalization of forms, that is, the repetition of a form in another time and space, is a creative and productive act. It is creative because it is a performance, a deliberate performance, and the new time and space of this performance is what brings new meaning and what makes it creative. In this new time and space, new meanings are attributed. These hybrid forms are changed because of the locale in which they are performed, their history and the ways that they comment on local conditions. In a similar way, one can playfully create while textmaking and can 'rescript' ones' life as one performs and re-uses textual resources (Appadurai, 1996; Medina, 2010; Soep, 2005). This rescripting or remixing, as a playful and productive process, may not be available to children in classrooms within conventionally valued practices such as writing print texts.

Textmaking Processes

Intricately connected with the consideration of practices and texts as social, is an emphasis on the processes, in addition to the products, of textmaking. Current educational practice places a high value on written or print-based texts (e.g., Collins, 1995; Honan, 2008; Millard, 2006), and upon stages or phases of drafting and re-drafting of these texts (e.g., Chang, 2012; Fleming, 1993; Pritchard & Honeycutt, 2007). In this study, the focus is on the drafting of multimodal texts across time and space, or the history of a text, and the kinds of decisions and influences along the way, influences that are rendered invisible when one considers and values only final drafts. Because texts are considered broadly, in multimodal terms, (for example, as an instance of speech or a performance) it is possible to gather more types of information about texts as they are being formed. In classrooms, an examination of process might allow us to see the impacts of classroom literacy practices as well as literacy practices originating outside of schools, in homes and communities. Practices and meaning-making resources from a range of sources can be used in making new texts.

Sociocultural theory, focused on learning through engagement with others, through practices, is ideally suited for the examination of textmaking histories (Siegel & Panofsky, 2009). Drawing upon psychology and anthropology, sociocultural theory describes thinking and learning as both social and historical rather than individual (Cook-Gumperz, 1986; Gregory et al., 2004; Wertsch, 1985). A study of the processes of making texts allow for a detailed accounting of how texts happen, what meanings are created and even lost along the way. Learning and cultural production operate hand in hand.

Identities and Texts

During the remixing and redrafting of textual forms, texts are not the only things that are being remade. Social identities are constantly developed and being remade, or re-invented or revised much like a text. In this project, 'identity' is used to describe a kind of narrative that is being constructed or told by textmakers and that considers the socially constructed influences on how one acts (Moje et al., 2009). Children who are making multimodal texts might simultaneously employ and construct new identities for example, as a boy, as a son, as a writer, as an athlete, or as a certain kind of person. Some of these identities might appear through fleeting narrative performances, in "stories that people tell about themselves and others as a kind of 'gel'" (McCarthey & Moje, 2002) that engage and consider audiences as they are performed (Goffman, 1959). These allow for the appearance of coherence and might become sedimented and also appear more fixed over time (Rowsell & Pahl, 2007). These identities may reflect descriptions placed on one by others and "stories we tell about ourselves" (Mishler, 1999, p. 428), and, as such, are able to be re-written. Like Butler (1999) who describes subjectivities as always performed and contingent, in this analysis, identities are seen as moving and changing but also in relation to textmaking practices.

The ways in which power circulates through the construction of identities might be influenced by value placed on particular textual forms in classrooms and the ways in which particular practices and resources are valued across time and space. In a current climate of high stakes assessment and accountability, what is valued by educators, by policy makers, and by children and families may be even more important and also more constrained (Bourne, 2002; Linn, 200; Murphy, 1997). The kinds of texts and processes that are most highly valued are assessed, especially in standardized or mandated settings (Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000;

Hargreaves, 2005). Formative and inquiry-based assessment is viewed as informal and is rarely reported to parents, the public or policy-makers (Falk, Ort & Moirs, 2007; Fehring, 2005). Assessment of learning processes is time-consuming but many educators have developed methods that they believe are productive and that inform student learning (Soep, 2006; Whitlock & Nanvati, 2012). Classroom teaching and norms amongst children can become focused upon the forms and expectations for assessment (Reay & Wiliam, 1999; Dutro, Kazemi & Balf, 2004).

Expectations (of teachers, parents, and peers, for example) for boys and girls have implications for how individual boys and girls might adopt or reject literacy practices that are perceived as more or less feminine or more or less masculine (e.g., Alloway & Gilbert, 1997, Gilbert, 1992; Millard, 1997). The same behaviour can be interpreted differently depending on whether it is exhibited by a boy or a girl (Nichols, 2002). For example, teachers may tolerate aggressive behaviour more from a boy than from a girl (Keddie, 2005, 2006; Robinson, 1992). Boys' resistance to classroom literacy practices that they perceive as feminized and contradictory to notions of hegemonic masculinity is often described in educational research (e.g., Connell, 1996; Lassonde, 2006; Newkirk, 2000). Girls, in contrast, often are described as more compliant than boys and as more successful readers and writers, within the particular literacy practices in their classrooms (e.g. Lewis, 2001; McCarthey, 2002; Renold, 2001). In contrast to educators' and popular impressions of gender differences between boys and girls with respect to literacy, other researchers from large-scale quantitative studies (White, 2007) and small-scale qualitative studies (Watson, 2011) argue that when differences are examined closely and when class is considered, the differences between boys and girls (especially with respect to reading) is negligible. Socioeconomic status has a much larger impact on literacy scores than does gender (Collins, Kenway & McLeod, 2000; Skelton & Francis, 2005). At the same time, boys rank

consistently lower than girls on literacy measures – although these comparisons are not always statistically significant – when one looks at literacy achievement and scores of boys and girls of similar socioeconomic status (Alloway & Gilbert, 1997; Teese, Davies, Charlton & Polesel, 1995). Critics of homogenizing perspectives on the 'boy problem' in literacy still continue to express concern for low-income boys, especially, boys from racial and ethnic minorities (Mead, 2006; Watson, 2011). If gendered identities for boys and girls are complicated through discussions of popular culture forms, these discussions hold the potential to be productive spaces for exploration.

Identities, Texts, and Textmaking Practices at Home and at School: Review of Research

This project builds on the work of others who have examined the influences of home and out-of-school resources on literacy practices, and the ways in which home and school might work together, or not (Heath, 1983; Hicks, 2002; Dyson, 2003). Lack of cohesion between literate practices and identities across home and school connects the work of these researchers. Heath (1983), in her canonical ethnography, studied the language and literacy practices of working class Caucasian children and working-class African-American children, as well as middle-class children whose literacy practices more closely matched school practices. She pointed out how practices varied amongst people at local levels, and how movement from home to school was not easily bridged for all children. Hicks' (2002) ethnographic study followed two young children, a boy and a girl, from their preschool years through some of the beginning years of school. Although both came from very supportive families, the distance between what was valued by families, the kinds of school literacy support they could give their children, and the expectations of school increased over time and the children were only able to achieve minimal literate success, as measured by the school. Through her work on children's remixes of popular

culture practices as they use sports texts, popular song lyrics, and popular movies, Dyson (2003) described how elements of out-of-school texts were used by children as resources in their beginning textmaking practices. A group of children in a Grade 1 class used their everyday resources to create beginning multimodal texts, primarily in drawn and written form. Their teacher encouraged the use of these highly motivating community-based textual resources as children created new forms, or *remixes*. These three researchers focused on the ways in which children used language to become literate beings and studied closely the resources from out-of-school time and space as well as the kinds of literate work being done at school.

In this research, integral elements are both how texts travel across home and school, and how home and community literacy practices might be valued or not at school. Also, how children think of themselves as makers of texts influences how they might succeed, or not, and these identifications may run counter to the expectations of best practices approaches to teaching writing (Compton-Lilly, 2006; Dutro et al., 2004; Lassonde, 2006). Within particular moments in time and space, there are constraints that act upon textmakers, and that influence the resources they use and the kinds of texts that they make (Bourne, 2002; McCarthey, 2002; Murphy, 1997).

In classrooms, particular kinds of texts seem to be preferred. In the current climate of assessment, the testing of children's textmaking, and, in particular, their reading and writing, is pervasive in North American classrooms (Graham & Neu, 2004; Tremblay, Ross & Berthelot, 2002). In some cases, testing is standardized and, in others, performance-based assessments are used. Even performance-based assessments, which are meant to mirror the day-to-day writing processes in classrooms, may have shortcomings and constrain children's textmaking in ways that are more or less expected (Dutro et al., 2004; Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000; Valli & Chambliss, 2007). Ultimately, even these assessments, although they encourage drafting and

conferencing, are more focused on product than process (Bourne, 2002; Lund, 2008). Ongoing

formative assessment, in the form of checklists, rubric analysis (where numbers or descriptors

based on specific criteria are assigned), conventional grading, individual conferences, and

classroom feedback about writing competence, and yearly summative assessment, in the form of

report cards, school, district and provincial assessments, potentially influence how children

perceive themselves as writers. Many assessments mandated by government bodies and/or by

school districts require high standards that all children may find difficult to reach (Linn, 2000)

and rather than encourage learning, punish these children and the schools within which they

work. Children's access to successful identities as writers may be influenced by the labels applied

to them throughout the assessment of their writing progress (Dyson, 2003; Martello, 2003;

Murphy, 1997). Instructional and institutional practices and values at school influence children's

positions of acceptance, resistance, or negotiation of literacy practices (e.g. Alloway & Gilbert,

1997; Compton-Lilly, 2006; McCarthey, 2002).

School spaces may be experienced differently by different children; unfairly putting low-

income children at a disadvantage for literacy learning (Panofsky, 2003). Children's cultural

practices are valued differently in their classrooms and may have implications for their

participation in classroom practices. Classroom writing may be narrowly defined or more

flexible (Dutro et al., 2004) but the assessment of children's writing appears to use fixed

discourses and standards of writing. What it means to be a writer in a classroom is influenced by

these practices and often only allows for restricted access to writing roles for some children

(Bourne, 2002). Schools often value a narrow range of literacy practices that may not be equally

accessible or useful to all of its community members (e.g. Murphy, 1997; The New London

Group, 1996; Street, 1984). Children often adopt the discourse and expectations of assessment, regardless of the intent of the assessment (Reay & Wiliam, 1999).

Even when children are provided with classroom support for writing, particular kinds of messages may be interpreted and applied in unexpected ways. For example, in one ethnographic study of three children's writing development, Max, a boy in fifth grade interpreted support from a classroom aide and teacher's queries about his clarity of meaning to indicate that he was not a strong writer, even when standardized assessment scores indicated otherwise (Dutro, Kazemi, & Balf, 2006). Another child, who was seen by all as a more successful writer, was unable to produce work in a testing situation when she was required to produce a brainstorming plan. An analysis of events and processes and a close look at writing assessment might make visible the ways in which developing writers are influenced in particular ways.

Everyday Culture and Everyday Resources for Textmaking

When children are asked to produce texts in classrooms, they have to draw on their experiences and personal resources, whether these resources originate inside or outside the classroom. When children produce texts outside of classrooms they also have to draw on personal experiences and resources although these may be less constrained in form and subject matter than in classrooms. Children seem to do well in classrooms when their literacy practices align closely with those of their teachers (Buckingham & Harvey, 2001; Lassonde, 2006; McCarthey, 2002). If this is so, children from low-income families may be somewhat disadvantaged. This is a difficult argument to make, as it risks essentializing working class and low-income children as well as children from affluent backgrounds (Hicks, 2002, 2005; Walkerdine, Lucey, & Melody, 2002).

Any discussion of social class seems to simplify and overgeneralize as much as it elucidates. Two of the bodies of literacy research on whom many of my arguments lean, choose opposing approaches to this discussion of class. Anne Haas Dyson (2003) does not refer to her participants in any type of class-based way although they are almost exclusively low-income African-American children in the United States. Deborah Hicks (2002), in contrast, uses the term working-class to describe her participants and to describe her own upbringing. She addresses the contradictions of the term *working-class* head on, yet uses it to describe an aspect of the struggles her participants experience at school. She states, "I do not think that modern communities, rural or urban, are fixed in terms of class identities…Still, there were unique struggles I faced as a learner who later encountered academic discourses and values that initially seemed foreign and dislocating" (2002, p. 4). Bakhtin (1981, 1986) described language as inherently social. Speech genres—ways of speaking—are stable types of utterances that exist in many forms and can be found within social languages: "a discourse peculiar to a specific stratum of society (professional, age group, etc.) within a given social system at a given time" (Wertsch, 1985, p. 57). These more and less valued discourses and more and less valued texts come into play in any discussion of the kinds of popular culture forms that are adopted and those that are not, in schools and classrooms.

Furthermore, regardless of my hesitancy to use a singular term to describe experiences that are undoubtedly varied, many low-income, often working-class, children struggle in schools and this trend has been found in many settings and at all levels of education (e.g., Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988; Milton, 2008). In Canada, the achievement gaps between working-class children and middle class children widen as they move through school (Lytton & Pyryt, 1998). Canadians are often seen as having equal opportunities, regardless of the fact that 19% of all

children from ages 0-14 live below the Canadian poverty line and many poor children are struggling at school (Beswick & Sloat, 2006; Canadian Council on Social Development, 2007a, 2007b). Although social class is a problematic organizing concept, I recognize it as a useful way to signify a difference in the ways that practices are often valued. The analysis that follows is focused on valued literacy practices and those practices that are less valued.

Up to this point, I have used the term *popular culture* in a general sense to describe a wide range of elements of mass media with which children engage, typically outside of school. However, it is neither possible nor desirable to view popular culture as a singular entity. As Alvermann and Hong-Xu (2003) contend, "trying to define popular culture is like nailing gelatin to a wall" (p. 146). In *Literacy Moves On*, an edited volume that focuses on popular culture, new technologies, and critical literacy, Evans (2005) reports that children's out-of-school interests can be seen as comprised of five major categories: film and video, television shows, computer games, toys, and other. These concrete categories encapsulate a wide range of media forms. Within and across these forms, there are many possible characters, themes, and narratives, from the television show (and related products) of Dora the Explorer, to professional wrestling video games (for off-line consoles) produced by World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc., to interactive and online participation in virtual environments such as Second Life. Popular culture is constantly shifting and changing – what was considered low culture yesterday can become high culture today.

Because of the wide range of possibilities for texts and resources under the umbrella term, popular culture, I intend to use the term *everyday culture,* as Alvermann and Hong-Xu (2003) describe it. Their definition of *everyday culture* recognizes the changing nature of popular culture and the role that it plays in children's everyday lives. Distinct from the three other

approaches they describe—1) popular culture as detrimental and a waste of students' time; 2) popular culture as a source of critique whereby the student learns to see through media illusions and become resistant to its influence; and 3) popular culture as pleasure without opportunities for critique—*the everyday culture* approach integrates critique and experiences of pleasure in ways that Alvermann and Hong-Xu describe as reflexive. Thinking of children's engagement with popular cultural forms as everyday culture recognizes the daily experiences of forms within children's lives. Everyday culture, as a concept, also recognizes the integral part that these cultural forms play in children's everyday lives, as elements that are neither separate nor separable.

At the same time, without the explanation of the term, as above, the phrase everyday culture may seem as vague or inclusive as the term popular culture. I also use it here for its resonance in related research in the fields of literacy, identity, and resources across home and school. The phrase everyday culture resonates with the *childhood culture* of Dyson's (2003) accounts of children's remix of out-of-school culture with early writing at school, Hicks (2002) recognition of literacy as something that children do as integral to all elements of their lives, Knobel's (1998) examination of *everyday literacies* in the lives of children in upper elementary grades, to name a few. In this up-close examination of the everyday experiences of one child across time and space, the notion of everyday culture suits this snapshot of experiences.

Through children's everyday lives they can engage with particular media forms, some of which are more taboo in school settings than others and many of which are seen as inappropriate for school (Kendrick & McKay, 2004; Marsh, 2006). Although many classrooms use digital tools for learning and constructing texts, many of these forms change as they enter school, and become more regulated and hierarchical (Moss, 2001). Some forms of children's everyday

culture do not go easily to school although there are more and more instances of children using digital tools for school purposes (for example, the viewing of You-tube videos, research using websites, watching popular films, etc.). Video games, for example, and sports involving fighting are often viewed as too violent and, it seems, teachers' lack of knowledge in these areas may contribute to their lack of openness to these particular media forms (Lambirth, 2003; Marsh, 2006). Schools and educational policymakers may encourage activities related to media literacy and/or critical literacy, although these focus primarily on decoding or exposing messages that are not immediately obvious so they do not become mindless recipients of the messages of mass media (e.g. Ontario Ministry of Education, 2006). Rather than becoming critical consumers on the one hand or accepting children's engagement with cultural forms in a romanticized and uncritical fashion, Buckingham (2003), like Alvermann (2012), suggests that both critique and acknowledgement of pleasure are necessary. In the instances where everyday cultural forms are included in classrooms, engagement among students is rated highly (e.g., Carrington, 2005; Dyson, 2003; Shegar & Weninger, 2010). In order for children's everyday culture to be included, teachers need to be willing to learn about these cultural forms and have to be willing to accept children as more knowledgeable about some cultural forms than they are. This adventure into children's culture is not without challenges, as students may resist teachers' interest, playful and parodic engagements may challenge school authority, and students' engagement in critique may be difficult to achieve (Buckingham, 2003).

In her suggestions for the possibilities offered by everyday culture, Dolby (2003) calls for an examination of "the power of the everyday" (p. 276), where everyday culture is viewed as a site where understanding can be reshaped. Everyday culture is a source of pleasure for participants in contemporary society and a possible source of pleasure in schools. Kelly (1997)

elaborates on this notion of struggle: "the popular must be seen as a site of contradictory practices, the complexities of which pose possibilities and promise as well as entrapment" (23). For those who view aspects of popular culture as pervasive and compelling, it is a place of great potential for exploration with children.

Methodology

Ethnographic Research: Children and Literacy

Often inspired by Shirley Brice Heath's (1983) pioneering ethnographic work, *Ways with Words*, there has been a proliferation of qualitative and ethnographic research in the area of children's literacy (e.g., Hicks, 2002; Nixon & Comber, 2006; Pahl, 2003). Language and literacy researchers have used ethnographic methods to examine a wide range of questions in diverse family and community settings (e.g., Heath, 1983; Street, 1984; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988). For those who research how children become participants in literate practices in both school and out-of-school time and space, many have chosen to study the practices of small groups of children over long periods of time (e.g., Dyson, 2003a; Purcell-Gates, 1995). Some researchers have focused more specifically on the literacy practices of a small group of children (e.g., Davies, 1993; McCarthey, 2002) or one or two children (e.g., Hicks, 2002; Kendrick, 2003). Although many of these ethnographic studies have been conducted in schools, an interest in out-of-school literacy has become more common (e.g., Li, 2007; Pahl, 2005; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988). Also, both the multimodal and everyday literacies in children's lives have been the subject of inquiry (Knobel, 1999). This study builds specifically upon the research of Dyson (2003) and Hicks (2002), particularly interested in the literacy narratives and trajectories of children from low-income and/or minority backgrounds.

A Case Study Approach: One Case, Many Narratives

In this case study, I use a combination of ethnographic (e.g., Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; LeCompte, Preissle & Tesch, 1993) and case study methodologies (e.g., Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Merriam, 1988; Stake, 2005). Ethnography has its roots in anthropology and has been used widely in literacy research, particularly by researchers trained in both anthropology and linguistics (Heath & Street, 2008). Ethnographic methods enable a researcher to study the culture of a particular group of students, a classroom, or a school (Eisenhart, 2001; Patton, 2002), and allow the researcher to participate in and observe literacy practices, and to examine textual processes and texts as artefacts.

The unit of study here is a child's multimodal textmaking practices and as Merriam (1988) explains, "an ethnographic case study, then, is more than an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a social unit or phenomenon. It is a sociocultural analysis of the unit of study" (p. 23). By defining the parameters around a single case, or several cases, the researcher is able to explore a particular case; here a child's multimodal textmaking practices, in more depth (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Van Wynsberghe & Khan, 2007). Dyson and Genishi (2005) explain the decision to focus on a case as "an interest in the local particulars of some abstract social phenomenon" (p. 3) where one wants to look deeply at a case and its surroundings. Although there is intrinsic interest in this particular case, I am interested in the instrumental possibilities for this case to illustrate a particular phenomenon (Stake, 2005) or to resonate with other cases and environments.

An ethnographic approach to single cases is exemplified in Kendrick's (2003) research with one young girl who was an English Language Learner in her first year of school. The researcher becomes the young girl's playmate and documents her beginning literacy

development and her play over one year. In a similar fashion, Hicks (2002) researched the early

literacy learning of one working-class boy and one working-class girl as they moved through

their first three years of school. Hicks describes her retellings of their stories of early literacy as a

focus on "the smallness of situated lives" (p. 33). She argues for the richness of this approach for

theorizing about power relations because of the ways in which one can trace histories and the

shaping of practices and of subjectivities through the everyday observation of these relations.

The current study is conducted in this tradition.

Participant and Background

The site for this research is an inner-city school on the east coast of Canada where I

taught for six years. The school is a neighbourhood school that primarily serves families living in

public housing. Many families whose children attend this school work at minimum wage jobs or

are supported through government social assistance. All of the children are eligible to receive the

school lunch program and most do. The school has an image in the local media as a low achiever

in provincial assessments and rates below average in provincial standings. It has been a frequent

location for vandalism and thefts. On the other hand, staff turnover is low and the administration

has been consistent for the last ten years.

Amongst ethnographic researchers of children's literacy, there is often a participant or

participants with whom the researcher makes an easy connection (e.g., Dyson, 2003; Hicks,

2002). Because of the intensely personal nature of this work and the often intimate relationships

that are often made, the interest of the participants and their families in ongoing participation is

crucial, and participants are often chosen because of already-established relationships, new

relationships that are made through old ones, or through connections with communities, families,

or schools (e.g., Heath, 1983; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988). Kyle, my study participant, was

selected partly because I had already established a connection with the family. I had taught his

thirteen year-old brother five years prior and had been a drama coach for his now nineteen year-

old brother eight or nine years before.

During my initial pilot study, I wanted to focus my energy on students in the city-funded

housing development that the school served. This continues to be my focus as I explore the

implications of the multimodal resources available to children as they construct texts. Although

formal sampling is sometimes used in case study research, in this research I chose participants in

a manner described by Stake (2005): "The researcher examines various interests in the

phenomenon, selecting a case of some typicality but leaning toward those cases that seem to

offer *opportunity to learn*" (p. 451). I selected the case based on the opportunities for learning

about children's multimodal textmaking practices. Kyle's multimodal textmaking practices

offered the possibility of learning about what a boy, who loves sports, wrestling, and rap music,

who is friendly and wants to be a 'good' student, used as resources in his textmaking and how

these resources were used differently across time and space.

In addition to opportunities to learn, I sought a participant who would welcome a

participant-observer both in school and at home. Although the presence of researchers and/or

observers is commonplace in many classrooms, the presence of a researcher in someone's home

is more unusual and brings a unique set of challenges and opportunities. In my pilot study, Kyle

easily took on a leading role, showing me around his house and deciding on activities we would

do. His mother referred to me as Ms. Collier and referred to me as Kyle's teacher, on occasions

when I overheard her saying so on the telephone. For the most part, Kyle's mother participated in

our activities although she occasionally excused herself. She often observed what we were doing

and made a number of comments about how interesting it was. She would get supplies and

prompt Kyle to share stories. I shared activities from Kyle's day at school with her and she shared stories about Kyle with me.

I acknowledge that my researcher presence changes practices and families decide what they do and do not share. I shared many of my observations with Kyle and his family on an ongoing basis. Classroom teachers mediated my access to potential families and consent for their child's participation. I asked the classroom teacher for her input and knew the administration and teachers would want to represent the school in the best possible light, especially given the public image of the school as academically weak. Because I decided to initiate contact through the school, the teachers and administrators were, in a sense, the gatekeepers that controlled my access to potential participants (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995).

Researcher Position

The classrooms, in which I did some of this work, were the classes of my former colleagues. One of these colleagues, Kyle's Grade 3 teacher, Elaine[2]—was my partner teacher with whom I collaborated for six years. His Grade 4 teacher, Joan, where I carried out the second year of the study, is also a former colleague. My familiarity in and with this school allowed me easy access to teachers, students, and families, but also carried extra responsibility as I took on this new role as researcher and tried to establish new types of relationships.

Related to challenges regarding children's choices about participation are issues of confidentiality in relation to children's stories and their ability to make decisions about which stories to tell and which experiences to share. What makes children's voice studies interesting is

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[2] Elaine and Joan are pseudonyms for Kyle's teachers.

the way that usual notions of adult and child and the relationships between generations might be shifted through the research process, even if this is only temporary (MacNaughton & Smith, 2005). Briefly, students may take the lead in asking questions or by sharing particular knowledge to which the researcher does not normally have access.

The transformation that is possible through participation might be a "transformation of what it means to be a student; what it means to be a teacher" (Fielding, 2004, p. 296). Ethnographic research can make this transformation visible when the researcher intends to listen to participant's words and to take their lead. I accomplished this by remaining open to my participant's interests. Even though I focus on children's participation, it is impossible to talk about this without a discussion of my role. Because of my experiences in school and my familiarity with the teaching of writing, I took on an adult role that made sense. Here, I think of Graue's (1993) study of Kindergarten readiness and the way that she took up the role of teacher's aide in her ethnographic study because this was a role for adults with which children and parents were familiar. My adult body, my interest in writing, and the ways I can develop relationships with children always framed my participation.

As a result of reflection upon my pilot study, I decided on a fluid approach to my role in the classroom. When directly observing what I have decided is textmaking time, I took up a role close to a *least adult role* (Mandell, 1988) where I acted, physically, as much unlike an adult and as much like a child as possible, sitting with children on the floor or at their desks, as they worked. At the same time, I moved in and out of observer and participant roles, as I made notes or audio-recorded as children worked. At other times when I was present, I acted as a helper to the teacher or student assistant. When I visited Kyle at home, his interests, and those of his family, guided our activities.

In this research project, I included Kyle in the collection of data, the recording of images, text, and talk, and in the interpretation of data. I shared data generated at school and at home with Kyle's mother and data from school with Kyle's teachers. These conversations took place on an ongoing basis, when I had a question, inserted amongst other daily activities. They also occurred during conversations at home and in informal conversations/interviews where I talked to Kyle one-on-one at school, but not in his classroom. In educational research, with children, there is much to be learned from children directly, through conversation, through participant-observation as children learn and make texts. Although researchers ultimately take responsibility for the research projects that they construct and impose (Mannion, 2007), children's participation can be enhanced, alongside interested adult researchers, especially through the opportunities provided with digital data collection tools.

Collecting and Generating Data in the Case

Empirical data for the papers presented here were collected over two years and focus on the textmaking processes and practices of Kyle, from mid-year of Grade 3 and throughout Grade 4. During this two-year period I spent two to five days a week in Kyle's classroom, focusing my data collection on the production of multimodal texts and the processes involved. I collected data across the curriculum but particularly during Language Arts, art, and technology lessons where textmaking was more common. Some examples of texts from this time period include a group-written script about friendship, poems about friendship and several art texts (i.e., gesture drawing and paintings, painting using different types of lines), speeches and informal talk, and short writing pieces (i.e., answers to questions, written responses to a visual). For the purposes of this project, I wished to follow texts that were drafted and re-drafted over a period of time.

During the two-year period of this study I visited Kyle at his home on seven occasions, and had ten informal conversations with him. I collected video, digital images, images of a range of texts, and audio and video recordings. During the first year of data generation in the second half of Grade 3, I became particularly interested in the ways that Kyle created a written text during a writing process assessment. During Grade 4 in the second year of the study, textmaking events were briefer and less connected to each other and I became more interested in how Kyle used the performative features and possibilities of his interest in professional wrestling to create texts.

Analysis of Processes, Audiences, and Texts

Data analysis occurred on an ongoing basis, starting with a six-week pilot study and the reflective memos that I wrote over a period of two years, while Kyle was in Grade 3 and Grade 4. With an interest in textmaking processes and tracing textual connections across home and school, data were transcribed, reread and coded for ideas, always using a top-down, bottom-up approach (Ryan, 2009). The top-down part of the approach is driven by the theories and research questions. The bottom-up component is driven by the data generated and I worked back and forth between these. This process relates to a constant comparative method (Heath & Street, 2008) where one moves back and forth, within data, and between data and theory in a recursive way.

In coding or tagging this data, I did not view the data, or categories from the data, as only emerging, but instead as both connected to my particular research questions about texts and identities (Ryan, 2009) and as generated through the experiences documented in this research. These questions framed the data on which I focused from a large pool of possible visual artifacts, transcriptions and audio and video files. Although I looked for repeated ideas, I also considered multiple points of view and possible contradictory or unexpected ideas and textmaking elements.

These patterns could be described as themes that cut across interviews and conversations, and correlate with observation data, and artifacts collected (Patton, 2002).

Also, influenced by social semiotics, I looked at textmaking processes where Kyle seemed to be making meaning and we talked about what meanings those might be. Along with social semiotics, an interest in sociocultural theory and especially the history of a text, guided my analysis. My focal unit of analysis was one child's multimodal textmaking practices. In this emerging field of multimodal analysis, I refer to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) as a starting point for analyzing the multimodal elements of texts.

Examples of multimodal texts, or communicative ensembles, in this research, are photographs of Kyle posing as a wrestler; these photographs that I took and that he directed, can be viewed as examples of a communicative ensemble. The photograph, as text is comprised of Kyle's talk about his wrestling belts, his direction of me to take pictures (which he would check one by one after I had taken it), the pose in which he held his body, his explanation of the pose, and the movements and sounds he would make as I took each photograph. The photographs themselves add another visual element but can be more fully understand with a consideration of the other modes and acts that surrounded the picture-taking event.

In order to look beyond texts as objects or products, Rose (2001) proposes a framework to analyse images, that includes three sites: "1) the site of production of an image, 2) the site of the image itself, and 3) the site of where it is seen by various audiences" (p. 13). Within each of these sites, Rose describes three aspects: technological (the form- e.g., painting, Internet), compositional (material qualities – e.g., colour, spatial organization), and social (economic, social, and political relations, institutions, and practices as image background). The site of production points to how an image is made, the site of the image refers to how one might view

the image based on visual impact or how it looks, and the third site refers to how images are taken up by and interpreted by audiences. Although Rose develops this framework to work with visual images, here it is applied to a range of multimodal texts, some of which were print-based and some more visual or gestural.

Sociocultural theory, with its emphasis on social practices and histories, speaks to the importance of looking beyond the text as meaning-making object. This approach, alongside Rose's framework for images, allowed me to observe the textual processes of each participant's multimodal texts as well as the ways that they might interpret their texts and others might interpret them. Textual processes include talk about texts, drafts of texts, and changes/choices made. These processes, or practices, also include multimodal texts – including oral, visual, print, gestural modes; artefacts include drawings, digital photographs, recordings of talk, videotape of internet activities. Through an examination of textmaking practices, the processes of textual selection and pedagogical approaches, I traced how resources were used across the time and space of home and school. This approach is applied to the ways that wrestling is constructed and performed as a text by Kyle and also how Kyle works through a mandated writing assessment piece in his classroom.

<p align="center">Structure of Dissertation</p>

This dissertation is comprised of three manuscripts that form the three chapters that follow this introduction. Chapter 2, entitled "Relocalizing Wrestler: Performing Texts across Time and Space", uses the metaphor of a spiral to trace how Kyle uses the resources and features made available from his knowledge of and experience with professional wrestling to create new and hybrid textual forms across time and space as he plays with *wrestler* in formal and informal settings at home and at school. Chapter 3, " 'I'm Just Trying to be Tough, Okay': Masculine

Performances of Everyday Practices", features another element of Kyle's interest in professional wrestling as a taboo cultural form and seeks to elaborate how certain texts are valued over others. In this chapter, I argue that Kyle's knowledge of professional wrestling is reflexive and nuanced, and argue that children are not passive recipients of the media texts they consume and adapt. As one example amongst many possible examples, I explore how Kyle's experience of everyday culture, in the form of professional wrestling, questions assumptions about children's consumption and gullibility. I also present the data generated by and with Kyle as a statement about children's understanding of play and imitation, in relation to expectations for boys and their performances of masculinity.

Chapter 4, entitled, "I Wish I was a ~~Lion~~, a Puppy": Becoming Writer through a Textmaking Process" follows Kyle's development as a creator of print texts, as a writer, and focuses on a three-day process in Grade 4 where Kyle wrote in a provincially mandated writing process assessment. This chapter highlights the influences upon a children's development as a writer and the ways in which a focus on process, rather than product, renders visible moments of decision-making, identity construction, and textmaking competence that might not otherwise be seen. The conclusion, recognizing that this research project is focused on one participant, argues there are opportunities for the findings to resonate with other practices across time and space. The portrait of Kyle as a textmaker and some of his textmaking processes are presented. I argue for the value of considering textmaking processes, as well as everyday culture texts and out-of-school resources, in 21st century literacies. I point to a sociocultural definition of creativity as socially produced, and part of everyday practices, while looking to definitions of practices, identities, and texts that are changing and fluid. Finally, Chapter 5 pulls together the theories,

analyses, and claims of the three manuscripts and considers significance, application, and future

research possibilities.

CHAPTER TWO: RELOCALIZING WRESTLER: PERFORMING TEXTS ACROSS TIME AND SPACE[3]

Kyle, a boy in the middle years of elementary school, used the everyday resources of professional wrestling to playfully create new textual forms across events in time and space. His experience with and knowledge of professional wrestling as textual resource provided him the opportunity to create new local multimodal texts that were more or less visible or possible depending on the time and space of production. Kyle relocalized wrestling along with its performative affordances, style, and features. In other words, he re-created and relocalized the performative identity of wrestler through other texts that he constructed. An examination of this relocalization acknowledges textmaking resources from out-of-school settings and considers potential connections between textmaking at home and at school.

Building on the New London Group's (1996) manifesto, researchers and educators have considered how school-based language and literacy practices can be infused with local literacies, multiple language groups and ethnicities, and multiple modes of meaning-making (e.g., Asselin, Early, & Filipenko, 2005; Bloome, Katz, Solsken, Willet & Wilson-Keenan, 2000; Moll & Dworin, 1996; Pahl & Rowsell, 2006; Purcell-Gates & Duke, 2007). Nonetheless, there have been few attempts to document, in a fine-grained manner, how cultural resources are used in textmaking practices across time and space. Thinking about New Orleans as site of hybrid

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[3] A version of this chapter has been published. Collier, D. (2012), Relocalizing wrestler: Performing texts across time and space, *Language and Education.* Published online on Oct 24, 2012: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09500782.2012.727831. Print publication date December, 2013.

cultural flow, and about research dilemmas in general, Gutiérrez (2010) highlights the imperative to understand how literacy practices might change across time and space and the need to:

> study how practices travel, shift, or become hybridized in border and boundary crossing, or study what is learned in the movement across the practices of home and school, school and the corner, or across new media activity, for example, to account for historical, spatial, and temporal influences on an ecological niche (487).

In this paper, practices, texts, and identities are explored as they travel and are formed across the trajectory of a textual resource. Ethnographic analysis, along with the concept of relocalization, is used to examine how the interactive potentials of the everyday cultural resources of professional wrestling[4], including its modes of textual expression, are performed by Kyle, a boy in the middle years of elementary school. In order to think through and trace how new texts are made in new times and spaces while the textmaker uses and reuses textual resources, this textmaking trajectory is described as a spiral. The focus of this paper is how hybrid textmaking practices can be viewed as productive and creative through Pennycook's (2010) concept of relocalization.

Multimodal Texts, Practices, and Mobilities: Theories and Research

The analysis presented here is situated at the intersections of sociocultural theory, new literacies studies, and mobilities research. All textual forms and processes are viewed as multimodal, and the term *text* is used to include a range of communicative modes. Kress (2003)

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[4] This paper focuses on professional wrestling of the type promoted by World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc. I use the terms *wrestling* and *professional wrestling* interchangeably.

suggests that "communication—whatever the mode—always happens as text" (p. 47). Multimodality includes a range of possible expressive modes such as the visual, print, gesture, drama, and speech (Kress, 2003; New London Group, 1996). Through the term 'communicative ensemble' Stein (2008) describes the multi-faceted nature of multimodal texts and the ways in which modes might come together. The idea of an ensemble evokes how the elements of an orchestra work to produce a performed piece of music. Stein argues that the consideration of multiple modes, especially those that are not based in language such as drawing and gesture, may render visible ideas, feelings, and meanings not always as easily conveyed directly through language. In practice, the term multimodal is used often when talking about including visual or non-linguistic modes alongside other modes. Print texts can also be considered multimodal (Bearne & Wolstencroft, 2007) if one considers elements such as layout, and font, as well as tactile features of a particular text. Multimodality is not new, although the ways in which texts are viewed as multimodal and the ways that non print texts are valued, may be shifting. In this chapter, the text, *wrestler*, is performed through the production of speech, action, digital images, and game-play.

Research in contemporary literacy studies often focuses on social practices as key units of analysis. Scribner and Cole (1981) define a practice as "a recurrent, goal-directed sequence of activities using a particular technology and particular systems of knowledge" (p. 236). From this perspective, one could expect that children come to school with literacy experiences developed within and alongside their families and communities. Particular kinds of reading and writing and other communicative practices are often valued differently; print being the most highly valued (Collins, 1995; New London Group, 1996).

The term *practice* is often used in a past-oriented fashion that implies that practices are static or able to be systematized. Practices can be viewed as "repeated bundles of activities" (Pennycook, 2010, p. 26) that imply "an understanding of language as a product of the embodied social practices that bring it about" (p. 9). In this way, practices can be viewed as a starting place for analysis, as they are constantly being rewritten (Luke, 1991). This view of practice acknowledges the possibility for change and helps to explain how hybrid forms might happen. The view of practice used here follows a paradigm of mobilization (Blommaert, 2010) where practices are viewed as changing across "temporal and spatial trajectories" (p. 21). Although borrowing on concepts that originate in sociolinguistics, the practices and texts of interest here are not just linguistic and are always locally relevant and rekeyed.

The hybrid or relocalized nature of texts and textmaking is directly connected to the form that the texts take and the time and space in which textmaking happens. The resources used to construct multimodal texts are transformed across time and space and they take on hybrid forms. Texts are always multi-voiced, ventriloquating the voices and texts of the people and other texts with whom and with which textmakers connect (Bakhtin, 1986). Just as utterances always reflect traces of other utterances, multimodal texts borrow elements from and speak to each other. Intertextual connections are made as texts are performed and changed in a variety of ways, across iterations (Bauman, 2004) or across modes (Heydon, 2012).

Interested primarily in the ways that language is used and re-used in hip hop texts, Pennycook (2007) compares the subtle differences and transformations in texts to the practices of professional artists, the practices of borrowing or sampling from each other's work. He refers to the cult of genius (Shusterman, 2000) that predominates in North American culture, which honours individual effort and individual texts. From a structuralist-humanist perspective,

mimicry or copying is denigrated and creativity is seen as original and the result of individual

production. Pennycook (2010) uses the term relocalization[5] to describe a creative process that

acknowledges repetition as production. Texts and textmaking practices are transformed as they

are re-used and relocalized. I posit that this recycling or relocalization is a form of creativity or

play.

In this chapter, I use the terms time and space while imagining them in motion, where

global and local intersect and where change is constant (Blommaert, 2010; Pennycook, 2010). In

order to disrupt the idea of home and school boundaries as separate, children's hybrid texts can

be described as *remixes* (Dyson, 2003), and the boundaries between everyday culture and school

can be seen as permeable. "Classroom-as-container" discourses, or 'home-as-container', for that

matter, are limiting and it is more productive to explore the ways in which time and space can be

negotiated and connected. Leander et al. (2010) refer to Lefebvre's example of a house, usually

conceived of as a stationary object, in order to illustrate how objects, people, and events are

connected. If one visualized a house as connected by wires to other structures, people, and events

that relate to that house across time and space, one could imagine an intricate set of connections,

akin to a spider's web. Unlike the "undeveloped and overused notion of context" (Pennycook,

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[5] Pennycook (2007) first wrote about this concept of relocalization as *recontextualization,* and built upon

Bernstein's (1996) explanation of how official pedagogic discourses are modified and redistributed and on Van

Leeuwen's (2008) description of how language practices are social practices that are recontextualized in other social

practices. Pennycook refers to language and focuses on locality, rather than context, and argues that that repetition is

a form of relocalization and can produce difference, as well as sameness.

2010, p, 35), a focus on connections across time and space provides a more complex and nuanced picture of the ways that texts might be relocalized.

By thinking of textmaking as a spiral, it is possible to examine how the transformation of texts might happen across time and space. Research that examines how texts are made across time and space often illuminates what is invisible when texts are viewed only as products. In addition, the study of how cultural resources are used over time and across space, especially everyday culture resources, provides possibilities for studying hybrid textmaking in process. The changing time and space of textmaking and the identities and resources involved can constitute an act of resistance or commentary on the original text. Hybrid texts are necessarily at least partially repetitive and their creativity lies in local changes and performances of texts. In this way, hybrid texts can be viewed as relocalized texts and this makes it possible to consider all human textmaking as creative rather than conceiving of creativity as the special talent of a select few individuals (Stein, 2008).

Key to an understanding of relocalized text is a focus on process; the happenings that may or may not lead to a text as product. When tracing the history of meaning of a series of drawings produced by a group of friends, Siegel and Panofsky (2009) argue that all newly created texts derive from other texts and the meanings produced in these other texts are re-used in new texts: "A text is a weaving, through time, of meanings" (p. 106). By observing the history and the change in the way a concept 'radiation' is used by a group of young boys in new ways, first to describe punishment for bullying and later as punishment for wrongdoing in general, they provide a perspective that privileges the meanings given by participants, here children, rather than the more static and researcher-focused readings that are proposed by Kress and van

Leeuwen (1996). These meanings work "with and against the discursive norms of schools" (p. 6) and render visible how activities, identities, and power are enacted during textmaking.

When out-of-school forms enter school, their original forms and functions may change, as is also true when school literacies go home. Rather than reject these hybrid, relocalized forms, I propose that they be seen as valuable and productive opportunities. Especially with children in the early years of school, there are possibilities for both critical analysis and the production of popular texts within schools where "children should be producing and disseminating texts that engage meaningfully with the world outside the classroom . . . as contributions to public debates both local and global" (Carrington, 2005, p. 24). What better way to become competent participants in the textual world?

<div align="center">Wrestler Case Study: Local Context</div>

This research took place as an ethnographic case study of one child's textmaking practices, in an inner city school in eastern Canada. The neighbourhood school attended by the child serves a low-income community with families living primarily in public housing. It has a reputation as a place where many students struggle to become successful at the literacy curriculum that the school offers. In the local media this school has been portrayed as a low achiever in provincial assessments and a frequent location for vandalism and theft. On the other hand, staff turnover is low and the administration has been consistent for long periods of time. I was previously a teacher at this school and was a familiar face to many of the families whose children attended the school. Located in a city where the population is primarily White and English-speaking, 4.9% of the population consists of immigrants and non-permanent residents and 3% of the population self-identify as visible minority (Statistics Canada, 2006).

In this chapter, I focus on Kyle, when he was eight to ten years of age, across Grades 3

and 4. During the second half of Grade 3 (2009) and throughout Grade 4 (2009–2010), I made

seven 1½-2 hour visits to his home, spent two to five days (for the entire school day) a week in

Kyle's classroom, and engaged in ten informal conversations (usually 30-60 minutes) with Kyle

in a one-on-one setting outside of his classroom but at school. Kyle lived with his mother, Janet,

and an older brother, and his father and other two older brothers often visited in the evenings. He

had a wide range of interests outside of school, but over the two years of this research study,

watching wrestling online and on television and playing wrestling on his PlayStation2[6] in his

bedroom were important activities. No doubt, my presence influenced what was done and said

while I was there, as Kyle and his family made decisions about what they would share and what

they thought I would want to see and do (B. E. Gibson, 2005).

Methodology and Research with Children

Ethnographic research with children about their everyday culture provides an opportunity

for engaging with children's perspectives on their own social and literate lives. In this study, a

combination of ethnographic (e.g., Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; LeCompte, Preissle, & Tesch, 1993)

and case study methodologies (e.g., Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Merriam, 1988; Stake, 2005) are

used. Instrumental possibilities for these cases to illustrate a particular phenomenon (Stake,

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[6] PlayStation2 is an older, less expensive version to the current alternatives such as X-Box or PlayStation 3.
Kyle played this game on a small television set in his bedroom, which was not set up to watch television but only
play the games, and where he stored his small collection of PS2 games.

2005) or to resonate across other family and classroom experiences across time and space are the focus. The processes of textmaking are connected through a particular textual resource—wrestling—which I describe in depth using the metaphor of a spiral.

The focal data –as well as the analysis employed –honour visual and video data equally with the written transcript (Kendrick, McKay & Mutonyi, 2009; Rose, 2001). Through a process of reading, writing, rereading, viewing and reflection of the entire data set, I identified textmaking processes that were substantial, spanned time and space, involved the focal participant and took into account formal and informal as well as home and school time and space. I marked and referred to possible claims that were directed by my interest in texts, identities, resources, time, and space, and through my interaction with this participant (Ryan, 2009). In ethnographic research, particularly in educational and community settings, it is neither possible, nor desirable to remain separate from what is happening (Loutzenheiser, 2007). As the research participants created and recreated texts, I created and recreated my interpretation of this data through the process of writing or textmaking. When writing about writing and inquiry, Richardson (2000) suggests that "writing is also a way of 'knowing'–a method of discovery and analysis" (p. 223) whereby writers discover what they think.

Following Wrestler Across Time and Space: Findings

Relocalized textmaking processes where wrestler is performed in time and space removed from the wrestling texts with which Kyle originally engages at home, are imagined as a spiral (Figure 1). Prompted by Richardson, this spiral metaphor as a visual representation of a textual trajectory has been effective and important in my process of analysis. I use the metaphor of spiral as a tool to think through the data, not as a model for all thinking about this kind of text. The metaphor of spiral helps me think about the professional wrestler as text moves and is transformed across

time and space in a cyclical recursive manner. The trajectory of Kyle's textmaking is imagined as a spiral that moves with Kyle's body, as he engages with texts, practices, and people. The small stars are potential textmaking processes or drafts of a text, where production and reception by audiences can be examined.
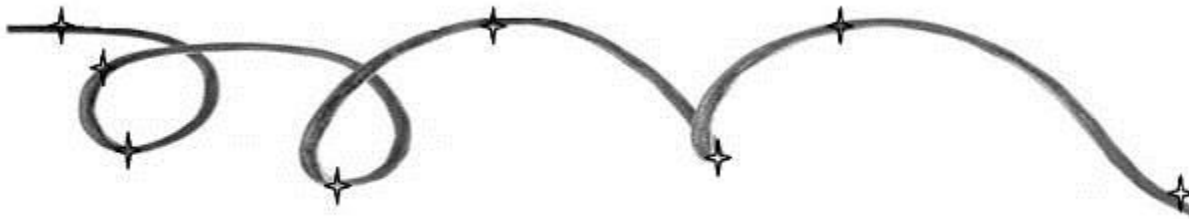
Figure 1. Spiral metaphor for Kyle's textmaking.

Kyle's performances as wrestler travelled out from 1) home to a range of hybrid textmaking processes and new texts during 2) informal conversations at school such as conversations between him and me outside of class, and at recess and lunch times, 3) informal events during class time such as group work or independent work in the computer lab, and 4) more structured class time. In the sections that follow I present relevant data and a discussion of this portion of the data within the section. Prior to the conclusion, I discuss the findings of each section.

Wrestler at Home

This analysis starts with the wrestler text at home, where the interest started for Kyle. Both parents enjoy wrestling and have watched local wrestling events as well as television wrestling throughout their lives. Although Kyle's mother explained that she discouraged her

boys and Kyle particularly, from watching wrestling, it is something that Kyle enjoyed. Kyle watched wrestling alone, or with his brothers, and sometimes with his mother or father. Although originally wary, at some point Kyle's parents supported his interest in wrestling with wrestling video games, wrestling toys, wrestling posters, and plastic wrestling belts. Both parents expressed surprise that Kyle loved the things they once loved.

While at home in the afternoons and evenings, Kyle assumed a range of characters, enacted wrestling matches with his wrestling belts, collected and embellished wrestling belts, collected and played with wrestling figures, and had table top matches with both Pokémon figures and miniature wrestlers. Through the research process, we videotaped play-wrestling, made a movie from our videotaped session, videotaped battles of Pokémon figures, and Kyle began to teach me to play Wrestlemania 8 on PlayStation2. Kyle was knowledgeable about wrestling. For example, Kyle knew the background stories to feuds, the personal and wrestling histories of many wrestlers, going back to the 1950s and 1960s.

Based on portrayals of wrestling and academic writing about wrestling (e.g., Archer, 1999; Barthes, 1972; Mazer, 2005; Sammond, 2005) the important elements of wrestler texts include: bravado, confrontation, a sense of good and evil (e.g., babyface vs. heel), clever commentary from sports-like commentator pairs, fans and trainers as integral players, multimedia promotion of wrestling products and toys online, use of accessories/implements (to attack opponents), machismo accompanied by an extreme concern with appearance, an orientation toward stylized moves, and coveted awards in the form of championship belts. Through Kyle's performance of this text and the ways that it was viewed and co-constructed—by Kyle, his parents, and me—hybrid, relocalized texts were produced. Although there are a number

of possibilities to highlight for analysis here I focus on one performative text: Kyle acting

wrestler.

Relocalizing wrestler: Video-making.

Kyle performed and narrated wrestling matches for his mother when they were home in

the evenings, before, during and after my visits. Another layer was added to these home-based

performances when I entered their home as a researcher. Kyle took on the role of teacher, leader,

narrator, commentator and wrestler as he shared this practice with me. This was a "space of

improvisation and play" (Pahl, 2005, p. 129) for Kyle as wrestler, a space that was rich with his

family history of engagement with professional wrestling, and that offered many opportunities

for textual expression. Over two visits to his home, I videotaped Kyle wrestling with a toy

wrestler and we edited the video that resulted in a polished video excerpt similar to those

produced for the World of Wrestling Entertainment website that Kyle and I viewed together and

that he often watched online, on his own.

On the first visit, during the videotaping of the wrestling event, Kyle narrated the

production so that his performance became exaggerated and sometimes self-conscious. For

example, Kyle's play was peppered with comments like this: "Just say there's a steel chair. Just

say" (Home visit, Transcript, Nov 17 09). According to his mother, Janet, during this visit, he

narrated to a greater degree while I was present (Field notes, Nov 17 09). Kyle alternately went

in role and came out to explain things to me. He continued to direct data collection by instructing

me to follow him around this house and shoot video, on this occasion. On other occasions, Kyle

asked me to turn on the audio recorder or to take photographs of particular objects or

performances, as in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Kyle posing with multiple wrestling belts.

Sometimes he would take pictures himself. Kyle's knowledge of the wrestling genre, moves,

retreats, and commentary were all part of the performance. He moved the action from the main

arena (the kitchen) to the halls downstairs then to the living room where the possibilities for

more props were apparent and where his mother was not. I consider Kyle's poses and his

dramatic play as texts.

On the second visit discussed here, Kyle and I produced and edited a movie, using

Windows Movie Maker and my laptop, with the previously captured wrestling footage. During

the production Kyle previewed all clips and, then, when we looked at the list of clips he quickly

decided whether he would keep or discard them. Longer, repetitive sections were excluded, and

highlights were chosen so that the finished video included key features of a wrestling match and

a wrestling video from opening sequence to finale. Kyle chose excerpts that were fun and where

he could be seen as powerful and in a winning position. Technical talk about how to edit, cut,

delete occurred as Kyle asked me how to negotiate the program. The following excerpt gives the flavour of our interaction:

Diane: ==Do you want that one?

Kyle: Yeah. It's already down there.

Diane: Okay.

Kyle: U..m..m.. This, where's the next one?

Diane: That one I think- I think that one. I don't know if you have this on your computer, movie maker?

[video playing – Kyle acting in high pitched voice]

Kyle: I don't want that one.

Diane: Okay. So go, just oh, you know what to do. What'd you just do? Edit cut?

Kyle: Edit delete.

Diane: Okay.

Kyle: Is this the next one?

Diane: Yep.

[video starts - yelling]

Diane: This is the part where you were talking to me I was [inaudible word]. Do you want that one?

Kyle: Mmm hmm. [3 sec pause] U..m..m.. this next one right here?

Diane: Yep.

Kyle: Sandman winning? That's not Sandman winning.

Diane: No?

Kyle: No, he never won.

Diane: Part of it- part of that is where he might have. So he- he's not winning!

Kyle: [laughs] Oh! It's kind of fun so I'll take it.

Diane: Oh you already got that one do you?

Kyle: Nope.

Diane: Oh, okay.

Kyle: This one?

Diane: Um, no you don't need that.

Kyle: Yeah

Diane: It's kind of the same thing again though isn't it?

Kyle: Yeah but it's a different part of the same thing.

Diane: Oh okay.

Kyle: It's not.. ahh

Diane: Okay we gotta take that blue bar, and move it along a little bit. There.

(Transcript, Dec 2 09)[7]

Kyle's depth of wrestling knowledge, accompanied by the opportunity to take control, to edit and to add titles and music, supported this process. Kyle's engagement and self-consciousness were simultaneously present throughout the process of movie-making.

In the frames in Figure 3, there is a title page announcing the performance of a grandmaster, sequences of moves, retreats, fake injuries, fake blood, interspersed with

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[7] Transcription conventions are described in detail in Appendix A.

explanatory utterances and close-up narrations. Also, there is an auditory element missing from

this paper-bound version, the theme song of Wrestlemania 11, which Kyle provided from a cd.

Figure 3. Screenshots from Kyle's wrestling video.

Although we made a video and I copied it onto a DVD for Kyle and his mother, Kyle never mentioned it afterwards. Throughout this process, other audiences besides Kyle and me engaged with Kyle's textmaking. Kyle's mother remained as audience for most of the videotaping although she is invisible in the end product. Kyle's mother and father were both present for the entire editing session, they deferred to Kyle's choices only expressing disapproval, delivered in a joking manner, when they saw the segment where he jumped around on the furniture and when Kyle drooled on his chin and called it fake blood:

Janet: Kyle that's gross! That's what you were talking about.

Kyle: Do the shameful thing later, okay?

Janet: That's disgusting. (Home visit, Transcript, Dec 2 09)

At the same time, they both expressed approval at Kyle's ability to edit clips and learn the movie-making software quickly.

This relocalized text is both hybrid and repetitive. It repeats or imitates professional wrestling in that Kyle follows many of the conventions of wrestling matches such as the pounding music in the background, the hyped title, the short intense bouts followed by a resting time. At the same time, something new is made. His audience was private, in contrast to the public audience of professional wrestling, although more public because I provided a new audience. The textmaking event is similar to professional wrestling matches in that Kyle acknowledged his audience and responded to the demands of fans. In the end, Kyle included scenes where he narrated or explained what was going on to me but the speech that accompanied them was wiped clean when Kyle made the decision to add an audio track. Immediately, upon playback, we were all struck by how the final product came together and looked and sounded like a professional wrestling video.

As illustrated in the analysis so far, Kyle can be seen to grasp and manipulate genre and wrestling culture. Kyle displayed sophisticated genre knowledge and played with everyday cultural texts and resources as part of the process of producing texts at home. Because of my presence and my material data collection tools (i.e., video cameras, notebooks, etc.), it was possible to revisit the wrestling dramatization and produce a video text. The photographs and movie that Kyle designed are multimodal texts that he constructed, with other people who were present, and the resources he had at hand. His identities as a wrestler and one who can lead others are enacted here. It seemed that he viewed the movie as an act of play, a 'snapshot'—not something to be revisited, or held onto in the ways that teachers, or adults, might view texts as products. For example, rather than focus on the making of texts, and what happens while children engage in textmaking, teachers often display textual products on walls, and assess them for report cards, or parents at home might post them on the refrigerator. Kyle's knowledge of wrestling, his interest, and his confidence are obvious in these home-based sessions. He relocalizes wrestler with new audiences, for new audiences, in ways that both resemble and differ from the original texts. Kyle's text is part of an ongoing process of hybrid textmaking. This text, like others, is part of an unfinished playful process.

Wrestler in Informal School Time and Space

In another example of textmaking, Kyle relocalized and performed wrestler by ranting about school and classmates in playful and creative ways. During informal conversations alone, outside of the classroom time and space, we reflected on texts made in class.. Sometimes we would discuss particular texts that had been made at home or at school or sometimes we would sit at a computer and talk while Kyle searched the Internet for videos and websites he had previously viewed at home and that he wanted to show to me.

As Kyle became more and more comfortable with me, he would take on a wrestling persona to express ideas that were critical of other children or of school. Kyle ranted about Stephanie[8], another student with whom I was working, and often referred to her as a "devil" or "the demon of death valley" (Interview, Jan 26 10). The excerpt below is from our conversation:

Kyle: Oh she's evil she's the devil's child. For sure.

Diane: You can't just ignore her?

Kyle: But once I get rid of her I-I-I be the devils child (smiling, whispering, tapping fingers)

Diane: (laughs) Is that your fantasy? (stops smiling) That your dream?

Kyle: To be the devil's child?

Diane: No to get rid of her.

Kyle: Well yeah.

Diane: Mm hm.

Kyle: Because she stabbed me in the back with the recycling when I won the recycler ==

Diane: == (laughs) ==

Kyle: == so I'm not gonna bring her.

Diane: You're talking about yesterday when she didn't let you do the recycling?

Kyle: And she said she would but she took Alex ==

Diane: == Yeah ==

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[8] Stephanie is a pseudonym for another student in Kyle's class. Stephanie chose her own pseudonym, as did Kyle. During one year of the time period in which I worked with Kyle, I also worked with Stephanie. Data collected with respect to Stephanie are not included in this dissertation

Kyle: == but that's okay Stephanie I'm true to my word (glances around room). I. Will. Take. You. Out. For good. (serious voice) (Interview, Feb 9 09)

When I suggested to Kyle that his video was like a wrestling rant or challenge, however, he did not agree at all:

Diane: Do you know what you're like? You're like one of those guys who comes - you know the wrestlers before the matches? That's what it makes me think of. You know when the guys come on before the wrestling matches and they say I'm gonna get so and so.

Kyle: (nods no) They're evil they're called heels. And no I think of an evil villain (implying Stephanie) and that's it. (Interview, Feb 9 10)

Kyle's bravado and performative wrestler stance carried through our conversation as he tried to convince me that Stephanie had fooled me but he saw through her intentions and told me:

Kyle: Did you take Stephanie out earlier?

Diane: Today? Yeah. Why? Stephanie doesn't have a problem with you.

Kyle: Of course she does! She's not saying it!

Diane: I don't think she really does. That's just my opinion ==

Kyle: == Yeah. You- she—you can't handle the truth.

Diane: (laughs) You think she's got me bamboozled?

Kyle: B..a..m..b..o..o..z..e..l..e..d.. Bamboozled. (Interview, Apr 23 09)

In these examples, Kyle relocalized wrestler rants in hybrid ways with creative content for new purposes. Although Kyle expressed these opinions during our private conversations, little evidence of any rebellion appeared in his behaviour at school or in his classroom. During other informal class times, at recess and lunch times, I observed Kyle posing as a rapper, saying "I'm a

convict," to writing "gansta" on the smart board during free time, creating an avatar with a Mohawk, and teasing girls about their annoying dancing. In class times and spaces, however, Kyle appeared to work hard, stay on track, and follow the rules.

Wrestler in Semi-Formal Classroom Time and Space

In less formal classroom settings such as in the computer lab, during group work, and in casual conversations with myself and classmates, Kyle performed *wrestler* as he worked through independent tasks, thought about audience, and maintained a sense of himself as cool, strong, and powerful. His approach to the production of texts appeared to be informed by the audiences he imagined.

Relocalizing wrestler: Imagining fans and interest in Kyle.

Kyle's assumption that there was an audience out there listening appeared to encourage him when he used a typing computer program or wrote a poem, using a word processor. For example, when stuck on the spelling of a word in a poem while using a computer word processing program, Kyle spoke in a voice resonant of a wrestling commentator: "There's 10,000 watching at home, and these viewers want to see more action" (Transcript, Mar 9 09). Another example, among many, occurred while Kyle was using a typing practice program and was having difficulty following the instructions and keeping up with the speed:

Classmate: Not that one, that one. Why do you keep doing that?

Kyle: Because, I didn't press it. Oh! (Classmate gives more directions) okay, and, oohh! (shudders) (in commentator's voice) *Viewers, do not try this at home.* This is so hard. (Classmate tells what level she's on)

Kyle: k, g, no 'a,' How do you? Ah! a, a, s, spacebar, a, oooh! (sounds irritated) a-s-j, okay I can't do this!

Classmate: Yeah, you can

Kyle: Oh, a, o, j (hard clicking key sounds) a, s, k, (grunts) Oh! Oh, g! (grunts) *Viewers, if you're watching at home, do not do this*! Even if you started to do it, even level I is hard! And C's on level IV. Stage VII. S, k, n, m, oooh! (sounds of keys being pounded). (Transcript, Mar 6 09)

After these moments of commentary, Kyle seemed to be able to move on with his work. In the examples above, Kyle's words mirror the important relationship between wrestlers and fans. Of course, there is potential irony in his commentary too as Kyle's actions (using spelling and typing programs and writing a poem) are fairly mundane, in contrast to a wrestling match. In wrestling matches, fans ask for more. In a sense, Kyle may have been asking for more of himself or for more in terms of the task to which he was assigned.

Wrestler in Formal Classroom Time and Space

During whole class instruction or independent teacher-assigned work, I observed Kyle working quietly, following classroom rules, and being very careful with his work. There was little, if any, evidence of Kyle's knowledge of wrestling or wrestler performances or textmaking during classroom time at school.

Producing good student.

Kyle's interest in wrestling was present in some highly structured events, such as an oral show and tell presentation of a wrestling figure that was a Christmas present or a Getting to Know Yourself bag activity at the beginning of the school year. During the "Getting to Know Yourself" bag, children were encourage to choose "about 5 items which represent them as an individual" (Classroom artefact, Oct 07 09). Suggestions for various items such as photos, awards, souvenirs, and items that show special talents were given. This structure provided students with freedom to choose, within parameters. They were also encouraged to prepare what they would say, on an index card. As can be seen in Figure 4, from the small sheet of loose leaf mounted on construction paper in a small plastic baggie, Kyle prepared his speech in advance. On this occasion, as on several other events where speeches were required, Kyle's talk was stilted and formulaic:

> Kyle: Hi my name is Kyle and I am going to present my wrestler, Jack, Swagger! This is the hair comb that came with him and he talks. And here's the championship belt that came with it. With the ECW world championship. *He has blond hair and a great smile like me*. And, he is my fifty uh, fifty-third wrestler. I got fifty-three wrestlers. Um he is made from, China, and he is one of my favorite wrestlers 'cause he wins almost every match. (2 sec pause) Um. And I got him for Christmas my mom got him from Walmart along with two other wrestlers. Three, other wrestlers. A..n..d.. made (inaudible word - 3 sec pause). That's the end of my presentation. (Transcript, Jan 8 09)

Figure 4. Objects from Kyle's getting-to-know bag.

The only utterance that resonates with Kyle's other playful and elaborate performances is the comment that the wrestler has a great smile like him. The classroom performances that I observed carried none of the confidence or sense of play with words of which Kyle seemed so capable of in other events across time and space, such as his conversations when leading me around his house, his talk to himself while working in the computer lab, or his humorous banter when we spoke alone.

Kyle's identity as a good student and a follower of the rules prevailed in formal classroom time and space. In this school, where behavioural concerns are fore-fronted by teachers and administrators, and many students have special provisions and plans regarding maintaining positive school behaviour, Kyle is thought of as a good student. I often heard adults, from administration to classroom teachers to student assistants, describe Kyle as a 'good' boy,

sometimes to me and on several occasions as I walked down the hall with Kyle. As a student,

Kyle had some areas of difficulty (especially in Mathematics, and work that required spatial

representation), but his compliance and rule-following behaviour seemed to tag him as 'good',

possibly preventing him from receiving help in the areas which he needed and preventing him

from seeing himself as a student with areas of relative strength and weakness. At one point

during our informal conversations, I asked him about his reputation as a good student and he

argued that it is important not to get in trouble. He had mentioned that he found some things

boring and I asked why he went along with things that are boring, since not everyone does:

Diane: Yeah. But uh some people who think things are really boring they refuse to do

them.

Kyle: W..e..l..l.. that can't be me.

Diane: Why not.

Kyle: I dunno I'd get in trouble.

Diane: Would you?

Kyle: Y..e..a..h..! H..e..l..l..o..!

Diane: (laughs) Did you ever try it?

Kyle: Hm no.

Diane: No.

Kyle: The only time I got in trouble- well trouble right?

Diane: Mm hmm.

Kyle: I wasn't sent to the office I um u..h.. I usually got sat out, like in grade one we were

going outside right?

Diane: Mm hmm.

Kyle: And I was talking to someone

Diane: Mm hmm

Kyle: And I got sat out on the playground for two or five minutes. (Interview, Dec 17 09)

Kyle recounted several other small incidents, in vivid detail, that had occurred over the years. They seemed minor to me, yet had impressed upon him the importance of staying out of trouble, something that his parents had also mentioned that they valued. On other occasions, Kyle joked about staying out of trouble.

The multimodal texts that Kyle produced across time and space varied widely and the ways in which he was able to use familiar and productive resources were unevenly represented in the texts he produced. His competence and his identity as a performer and a wrestler were relocalized in new ways. He relocalized wrestler for new purposes with new impact, in new forms. Upon closer examination what might at first appear as mimicry, can be seen as productive, creative and useful for Kyle. During the recursive interactions between textual production and reception by audiences, new hybrid performative texts were constructed in ways that are only seen through observation and participation in an ethnographic multi-sited research approach.

Through the textmaking trajectory of relocalizing wrestler, Kyle created and played with wrestling resources and textual features, to self-consciously interact as a research participant, to maintain a sense of control in interactions, to deflect serious topics, to work through assigned tasks at school. A wealth of wrestler resources and knowledge fuelled this ability to relocalize and recreate wrestler. Just as using visual or physical modes might afford different possibilities (i.e., gesture allows movement in physical space as does the manipulation of materials), the materials and modes of professional wrestling provided Kyle with imaginative material that

allowed him to imagine new identities and textual forms (Kress, 1997). Movement across modes, from television, video, and video games to performance at other times and in other spaces, suggests a competence with genre, here the ritualized genre of professional wrestling, and the ability to manipulate its features and potentials. If Kyle, or other children, were as familiar with or as invested in genres at school, therein lies possibility for creativity and the relocalization of more authorized educational textmaking.

Kyle's role as a performer varied depending on the time and space within which it was enacted but was enhanced by his sense of an audience, that someone else is listening. The consideration of Kyle's relocalized performative texts across modes also allows for a more intricately painted picture of literacy (Kendrick, 2003; Pahl, 2003) and textmaking processes than a conventional consideration of literacy as reading and writing. The ways in which Kyle's strengths and interests show through this portrayal suggests possibilities and opportunities for building on these at school.

Conclusion

The textmaking trajectory of *wrestler* fans out from its source in ways that relocalize the possibilities present in wrestling texts and resources that were available to Kyle. One of the goals of this project was to choose a case that provides "opportunity to learn"—here opportunity to learn about how children might use resources in productive and creative ways and to render visible textmaking processes that might not be evident when texts are viewed as final products. The resources used here relate to professional wrestling but could also be applied to other resources such as video games, online media, and music videos. Although the explicit integration of everyday culture texts in classrooms often transforms the texts so they become more like the hierarchically organized resources of academic literacy, what is interesting here is how these

interests and rich knowledge bases might provide openings for conversations about the complex messages that exist in everyday culture texts and practices.

Additionally, creating a hybrid relocalized text is a form of play, that involves learning and innovation, where children can produce "interconnections between story and self" (Kendrick 2005, p. 6). Although Kyle's performance does not suggest that he intends or wishes to one day become a wrestler, it does seem that the freedom to play, to create taboo personas, and to assume power and prestige, are features of a wrestler text that are both desirable and familiar. Professional wrestling offers opportunities to explore an anti-authority, carnivalesque (Bakhtin, 1984) endeavour that is enjoyed by many, but is not present or necessarily valued in classrooms or formal literacy time and space. Professional wrestling, a particularly taboo and denigrated cultural form, does not travel easily to school, or, at least, its presence is not easily accepted or acknowledged.

The challenge of including children's interests in classrooms when those interests are viewed as inappropriate or problematic is a crucial one for contemporary educators. Although wrestling was not an explicitly taboo topic in Kyle's classrooms, explicit expressions of any kind of violence often are. Children may be forbidden from portraying family events (such as hunting in Kendrick & McKay, 2004) or their interest in everyday culture may be explicitly ignored or dismissed as frivolous (Nixon & Comber, 2006). Although media education has primarily focused on a critique of media messages (Masterman, 1985, 1996), there is room for conversation and critical awareness that also acknowledges the pleasure that many everyday culture practices and texts bring (Buckingham, 1998, 2003; Stack, 2008).

Pedagogic approaches advocated by those working in the area of critical literacy (Luke, 1997; Vasquez, 2005; Wohlwend, 2008) not only suggest the expansion of valued modes of

expression, but also attempt to shift and make visible power relationships in literacy practices

with young children. Part of this shift can occur when school acknowledges and includes

children's textual resources and expertise. Children's improvisational capabilities and everyday

creativity are encouraged and enhanced when educational spaces are open to the resources, tools

and everyday practices that they bring.

CHAPTER THREE: "I'M JUST TRYING TO BE TOUGH, OKAY": MASCULINE
PERFORMANCES OF EVERYDAY PRACTICES

In the early 21st century in North America, popular culture[9] texts are pervasive. Print no longer dominates literacy practices outside of schools and children are both producers and consumers of texts and of culture (Carrington, 2005). Children spend a great deal of their time learning from mass media sources such as video online games and television, and these are often the source of blame for children's 'wasted' time, yet popular culture, or everyday culture, sites are where social identities are often produced (Stack & Kelly, 2006) and where children gain knowledge and expertise and share interests with others as part of particular affinity groups (Gee, 2000-2001). Through everyday culture, identities are produced, individuals seek and receive pleasure, and many 'commonsense' understandings of the world originate (Grossberg, 2006).

Children often engage with and perform hybrid or remixed versions of everyday culture forms in playful or parodic ways. Thinking of identities as texts or narratives, one is able to rescript (Appadurai, 1996) one's life, and "experiment with self-making" (Soep, 2005, p. 176) through local performances of mass media forms. Through rescripting one is able to momentarily take on the possibilities that another life story or identity might afford. The roles and storylines of everyday culture offer resources for rescripting. This chapter, which focuses on one child's use of professional wrestling as both a ritualized genre and masculine melodrama, offers an analysis of identity performances that are both imitative and creative.

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[9] The term 'popular culture' is used briefly here in the introduction, when referring to popular culture more broadly and in reference to others who use this term specifically, and then usage shifts to 'everyday culture' later in this chapter.

Kyle, a young boy in elementary school and the focal participant for this study, fluidly performed social identities that originated in particular everyday culture texts and resources. For example, Kyle's knowledge of wrestling was deep and the language and actions of wrestling informed his daily interactions at home and at school He variously presented himself as a championship wrestler, a cool 'gansta', a rapper, and, within this research project, a leader and a teacher. In this chapter, I examine how Kyle's complex and nuanced engagement with professional wrestling and other hypermasculine cultural forms question the commonplace and pervasive taboos that surround these forms when they try to enter school. In a larger sense, I address the question, "How might out-of-school identities, social practices, and the literacies that they recruit be leveraged in the classroom?" (Hull & Schultz, 2001, p. 603). I examine how masculinities are enacted through playful performances based on everyday culture forms and consider the potential for including these practices as literacy practices in schools. The possibilities for inclusion of these practices and ideas do not necessarily or literally mean bringing these forms directly into the classroom, although they may. The analysis and discussion that follows focus on why certain forms might be excluded and what might be learned from these forms and children's expertise.

Popular Culture, Identity Play, and Professional Wrestling: Theory and Research

Popular Culture and Everyday Culture

Parallel to the polarization of literacies in and out of academic time and space (Graff, 1991; New London Group, 1996; Street, 1984) is the division of high and low (or popular) culture. If school is seen as focused on high culture, then school literacy and the literacies of popular culture are, in many ways, polar opposites (Marsh, 2006). Through the polarization of high and low culture, Luke (1997) argues that we make outsiders of some children in schools.

High culture is sanctioned by schools and is academic, and decontextualized; low culture is bawdy and associated with working-class values. In a review of research on popular or everyday culture, Buckingham (1998) refers to the disdain for those who are considered working-class and argues that there is "a thin line between contempt for popular television and contempt for its audience" (p. 36). This oppositional stance often separates teachers from their students, and middle class values from those considered working class. Of course, there are many popular culture forms and they are not disparaged or valued equally.

Partly to address these concerns and also because popular culture is so difficult to define, Alvermann and Hong-Xu (2003) are careful to differentiate popular culture from the mass media:

> A view of popular culture that is more appealing in our eyes is one that conceptualizes it as *everyday culture*. Those who favor this definition of popular culture reject notions of mass media producing mindless audiences. Instead, they see audiences as understanding that media-produced popular culture contains images, sounds, symbols, and the like that appeal to different audiences in different ways (p. 148)

I use the term *everyday culture* in order to emphasize the daily and ubiquitous engagement of children with media forms and the ways that it becomes part of their everyday life. They become experts in and producers of these forms, as well as consumers.

Everyday Culture at School

When children attempt to use everyday cultural resources in schools and classrooms, and are encouraged by teachers to do so, their attempts, and the resources that they bring to play, are not valued equally (e.g., Bourne, 2002; Freebody, 2001; Nixon & Comber, 2006). Teachers may adamantly oppose the use of some forms of everyday culture in classrooms because of the

elevated status they assign to traditional print forms (for example, essays or published texts that are read) but also because ways in which many everyday culture forms appear to display antagonistic stances toward school (Lambirth, 2003; Marsh, 2006). Videogames that involve fighting, some forms of rap music, and television shows involving aggressive behaviour are amongst the forms that are most disdained.

Nonetheless, research about children's use of everyday culture in classrooms suggests productive potential student engagement because of students' high level of interest and because of their knowledge of familiar cultural forms. In addition, everyday cultural forms are often complex genres in and of themselves: "social networking and playing videogames… require them to decode and encode a complex mix of images, words, sounds, symbols, and genre-specific syntax –skills that typically are not taught in traditional subject-matter classrooms" (Alvermann, 2012, p. 9). In a study of Grade 1 African-American children's beginning writing, Dyson (2003) focused on the ways that children, with the support of their teacher, took up everyday culture practices in their writing. Children in this classroom were encouraged to borrow from the textual forms of popular films, sporting events, cartoons, and popular music in their Grade 1 writing to create remixes or hybrid texts. In Singapore, preschool boys created new texts through drawing, talk and writing that extended their experiences with *Spiderman* (Shegar & Weninger, 2010). Ignoring the rich possibilities of everyday culture can reinforce binaries of low and high culture. A large-scale Australian project, Early Literacy and Social Justice Project (Arthur, 2005), found that the most reluctant readers and writers, who were often boys, were more interested and engaged when popular culture topics were offered as choices for their writing.

Video games come in a wide range of forms but boys' enthusiasm for intense and aggressive video games has long been a concern for educators (Bijvank, Konijn & Bushman, 2011; Kantrowitz & Contreras, 2000; Willoughby, Adachi & Good, 2012). Girls and boys may engage differently with this textual form of video games, with boys focused on independence and mastery, and girls sometimes limited from mastery because of their relational goals (Walkerdine, 2007). In Walkerdine's study of elementary-aged girls and boys playing video games in an afterschool club, girls chose primarily soft and cuddly avatars, and, occasionally, femme fatale avatars. Always arguing that masculine and feminine subjectivities are constructed and performed rather than innate, Walkerdine described how boys' choices for avatars were conventionally aggressive and powerful. Boys spent time with the games and became competent to gain status while girls, for the most part, downplayed their skills and saw competitiveness as a threat to friendships with other girls. Other studies have shown that although many boys succeed in literacies at school, boys "embodied doing" (Hicks, 2001) and orientation towards action (Blair & Sanford, 2004) calls for a more diverse set of classroom literacy practices. While considering concerns about boys and literacies, it is crucial to avoid essentializing boys (and girls) and the ways in which they make texts.

Identity Play and Re-scripting Lives

The analysis explored in this framing of the data connected to Kyle's textmaking understands identities as constructed through playful interactions with texts and these playful interactions can be viewed as performances where identities can be tried out, and relocalized. Beyond arguments about engagement or inclusion of everyday culture topics as substitutes for academically sanctioned ones, the ways in which particular children use particular forms of

everyday culture inevitably engages their social identities, and ways of speaking that are particular to these identities.

The idea of text as play is conceptualized in Vygotsky's (1978) future-looking approach to development. He maintained that "in play, a child always behaves beyond his average age, above his daily behaviour; in play it is as though he were a head taller than himself" (p. 102). Texts can be drawings, dramatic events, text messages, web pages, and spoken stories, for example. Play can be described as a "literary and social text" (Kendrick, 2005, p. 8) and children's textmaking is viewed here as a performative text and a story "the players [here, children] tell themselves about themselves" (Geertz, 1973, p. 237), as well as others who are audiences. In the same vein, play offers opportunities for change, with possibilities for transformation of self (Holland et al., 1998; Marsh, 2005; Schwartzman, 1976; Wohlwend, 2009)

These ideas can be placed in relation with Bakhtin (1981, 1986) who understood language as inherently social and described ways of speaking as social languages: "a discourse peculiar to a specific stratum of society (professional, age group, etc.) within a given social system at a given time" (Wertsch, 1985, p. 57). When social languages, specified ways of being (for example, in school time and space) are turned on their heads, or remixed, and conventions are challenged, play or parodies that Bakhtin (1984) would describe as *carnivalesque* are possible. In carnival, in opposition to high or sanctioned culture, or in parody, actors are able to challenge norms and create alternative performances (Buckingham, 2003).

The imaginative performances of global identities, such as those that might be accessed through popular or everyday culture, can be seen as a form of scripting or re-scripting one's life where "electronic media provide resources for self-imagining as an everyday social practice" (Appadurai, 1996, p. 3). When children enact or perform popular culture or everyday culture

identities, they engage in the creation of imaginative narratives, texts, and identities. Although they may be attempting to borrow the power that accompanies these identities, strong masculine identities in this case, they are also playing with these roles, and using them in reflexive ways. Global media are adopted and adapted in local time and space, through the work of individuals and groups and their imaginations.

Combining Appadurai's suggestion of "imagination as social practice" with Pennycook's description of hybrid language as relocalization allows for a way in to thinking about how texts are used in creative ways through play, through remixed or hybrid texts. Using the concept of remix (here, using the term recontextualization, similar to relocalization) Bauman suggests that:

> approaching performance in terms of the dynamics of recontextualization opens up ways to a recognition of alternative and shifting frames available for the reconceptualization of texts. Successive reiteration, even of texts for which performance is the expected, preferred, or publicly foregrounded mode of presentation, may be variously rekeyed. A performed text may be subsequently – or, to be sure, antecedently – reported, rehearsed, translated, relayed, quoted, summarized, or parodied, to suggest but a few of the intertextual possibilities" (2004, p. 47).

In this chapter, and in the larger ethnographic case study, performance is conceptualized as a kind of multimodal narrative text and a way in which identities are used and constructed. Performance is seen as fluid and changing rather than essential or natural (Butler, 1999) but it is also built within practices. Like Goffman (1959) the role of audience is highlighted and one performs for both self and others. The theoretical stance here views identities as sedimented or

layered, and elements appear stable across time and space, but there still remains the possibility for change within and across practices (Rowsell & Pahl, 2007; Pennycook, 2010).

The parodic play of boys performing masculine identities in reflexive ways has been documented by Soep (2005). Boys who recreated and created action films in their homes engaged in a form of "hyperbolic masculinity" (p. 186) when they mocked themselves while enacting action hero identities. According to Soep, they seemed acutely aware of the distinction between the unyielding and indestructible characters that they emulated and themselves while they continued to engage in their filmmaking practices in a family basement. Children in Medina and Costa's (2013) study, along with their teacher and the researcher, used the material of telenovelas to disrupt and retell stories based on television episodes in which they both accepted and rejected dominant storylines and gender stereotypes. Letitia, a Kindergarten girl in Kendrick's (2003) study of one child's early bilingual literacy experiences enacted and adapted family gender roles and storylines. Hence, children use the material of their everyday evolving lives to try on possible identities, as they play, and create new texts or storylines

Everyday Culture and Masculinities: Professional Wrestling and 'Attitude'

In the analysis that follows, Kyle played with the everyday resources of professional wrestling, rap music, and other representations of what it might mean to be a successful masculine figure in the public sphere. One of the key sources for this exploration during the period of the study was the world of professional wrestling. Although other areas of masculinity are explored by Kyle and are presented here, professional wrestling holds particular interest because it is a particularly taboo form in educational contexts and because of the kinds of parodic play material it offers.

Professional wrestling is a form of embodied identity work. It engages all the senses as a multimodal text from the visual appearance (costumes and makeup) of wrestlers' bodies, the sounds of fans, commentators and smacking bodies, and the ways that matches and stories are read by the television viewers and fans "out there" (Kyle, Transcript, Mar 4 09). In one of his earlier sets of essays on popular culture, Barthes (1972) presents wrestling as a spectacle of matches between good and evil. He highlights the importance of the body as a site of immediate meaning-making (corpulent wrestlers symbolize evil or stupidity) and the wrestling match as display. He explains, "wrestling is like a diacritic writing: above the fundamental meaning of his body, the wrestler arranges comments which are episodic but always opportune, and constantly help the reading of the fight by means of gestures, attitudes, and mimicry which make the intention utterly obvious" (p.18). Wrestling is a story or a play, with a history connected back to the most ancient theatre. Mazer (2005) highlights the role of fans as co-constructors of wrestling storylines (and therefore of these texts) and the accountability of wrestlers to their fans.

In 1999, when Smackdown premiered in the United States, it held at least 5 million viewers each night (Sammond, 2005). Documentaries such as "Beyond the Mat" and "Wrestling with Shadows" highlight the life histories of particular wrestlers. As well as offering opportunities for identity performances, professional wrestling can be viewed as the epitome of white adolescent male attitude and likely unwelcome in children's classrooms: "it aestheticizes and packages unruliness, a refusal to behave and internalize discipline" (Sammond, 2005, p. 135). Attitude is an anti-authority stance personified by the mores of professional wrestling and is often associated with working-class males. He further points out that "wrestling transgresses because it is pointless: it suggests no moral or behavioural lesson, no transcendent terminus of self-improvement. It is intentionally gratuitous" (p. 155). Although its viewers are more varied,

in age, race, and gender, professional wrestling's target audience is the working-class male (Jenkins, 1997).

This chapter is an exploration of one boy's interest in professional wrestling and the opportunities for textmaking this offers. There has been widespread critique of professional wrestling in public (Children Now, 1999) and academic (Kivel & Johnson, 2009, Soulliere, 2006) spaces and the ways in which it promotes violence and constrains masculinity, offering limited identity options for boys and men. In this examination, I consider both the pleasure that this form of everyday culture might offer and the possibilities for critique, but, more importantly, focus on the possibilities that this resource offers for Kyle in his textmaking and identity-making endeavours.

Unlike the popular appeal of hip hop or rap for its poetic and social commentary (Alim, Ibrahim & Pennycook, 2009; Kirkland, 2008; Sanchez, 2010), professional wrestling is relatively invisible in academic or literary circles. Wrestling is viewed, in popular opinion as crass, gratuitous, violent, and adolescent (Barthes, 1972; Bernthal, 2003). Schoolyard violence, and the 'acting out' of young boys is often blamed on video games, violent television shows, and entertainment such as professional wrestling. Nonetheless, it provides the potential for a form of melodrama that is both hegemonically masculine and reflexive and where romantic interests, storylines and popularity drive the plot both inside and outside the squared circle (Jenkins, 1997).

In this chapter, I examine Kyle's interactions with others and his use of professional wrestling as well as other masculine cultural forms in his parodic genre play. His deep understanding of the history, characters, and practices of professional wrestling are examined, as well as the ways in which his masculine identities are expressed during the creation of digital

texts, the choices of avatars and an online presence, his interest and identification with rap stars and his desire to play with anti-authority messages about school.

Methodology

Qualitative and ethnographic research in the area of children's literacy (e.g., Hicks, 2002; Nixon & Comber, 2006; Pahl, 2003) has recently focused on the potential for considering everyday culture as a source for literacy work (e.g., Carrington, 2005; Dyson, 2003; Marsh, 2006; Merchant, 2004). In the larger research project, I used a combination of ethnographic (e.g., Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993) and case study methodologies (e.g., Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Merriam, 1988). Dyson and Genishi (2005) explain the decision to focus on a case as "an interest in the local particulars of some abstract social phenomenon" (p. 3) where one wants to look deeply at a case.

I am interested in the instrumental possibilities for this case to illustrate a particular phenomenon (Stake, 2005) or to resonate across time and space. An in depth examination of a case, or a history of one child's everyday life provides the possibility for theory-building. Hicks' research of two children's early literacy lives is an example of a focus on "the smallness of situated lives" (p. 33). She argues for the richness of this approach for theorizing about power relations because of the ways in which one can trace histories and the shaping of practices and of subjectivities through the everyday observation of these relations. The current study is conducted in the tradition of these fine-grained, small-scale narratives that allow the possibility for theory generation (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Stake, 2005)

Ethnographic research on children and their everyday culture becomes an opportunity for engaging with children's perspectives on their own social and literate lives and this is particularly appropriate when looking at children's everyday practices. This focused analysis

assumes that "one of these strategies includes taking the position that youth are knowledgeable about their lives and able to understand social meanings" (Biklen, 2004, p. 722). What makes children's voice studies interesting is the way that usual notions of adult and child and the relationships between generations might be shifted through the research process, even if this is only temporary (MacNaughton & Smith, 2005). The transformation that is available through participation might be "a transformation of what it means to be a student; what it means to be a teacher" (Fielding, 2004, p. 296). Ethnographic research can make this transformation visible when the researcher listens to participant's words and to take their lead. As part of this interest in children's voices, I locate myself in a critical ethnographic tradition, yet wary of the claims for empowerment of participants often claimed by critical ethnographers (Ellsworth, 1989). A focus on positionality demanded by a critical approach "forces us to acknowledge our own power, privilege and biases just as we are denouncing the power structures that surround our subjects" (Madison, 2005, p. 7). The data represented here are my observations, based on my experiences, and they can only ever be partial representations of what happened (Loutzenheiser, 2007).

The study took place in an inner city school in eastern Canada. This neighbourhood school serves a low-income community with families living primarily in public housing. It has a reputation as a place where many students struggle to become successful at the literacy curriculum that the school offers. As a former teacher, I was a familiar face to many of the families whose children attended the school. As discussed in the introduction, I focus on Kyle, who lived with his mother and older brother, and his father and other two older brothers often visited in the evenings.

Over the course of this study, I used participant observation and semi-structured/informal methods to collect speech, gestures and dramatic performances, drawings and digital texts that

Kyle produced. I made notes, sketches, photographs, audio recordings and video recordings of events and texts in process and as final products. In this chapter, I focus on data generated throughout the study, and particularly events where Kyle played with everyday cultural resources at home and at school, and also conversations between Kyle and me where we explored websites and videos on the internet, in his house and in the computer lab at school. I highlight elements of the data where Kyle took on various popular culture personas through his voice, actions, intonation and the kinds of things he said. Some of the data discussed connects to another potential participant, Stephanie, who was in Kyle's class and about whom data were collected. Stephanie, is not, however, the subject of this piece.

The process of data analysis was guided by research questions that focused on Kyle's everyday interests, his social identities at home and at school and Kyle's complex understanding and use of this genre. In this chapter, I focus on Kyle's performances of his everyday cultures as narrative texts. Kyle's performances are viewed as identity work as they related to masculinity. As I worked through, read, reread and made notes about data, I focused on patterns and discordances. The ethnographic possibilities of the data generated through this process and the recording of small stories about Kyle and our interactions will resonate with other situations and suggest ways of thinking about how children and their interests are viewed by the adults in their lives, and particularly by educators.

Nonetheless I followed an interpretive process, similar to that described by Hatch (2002) in which I read the entire data set for a sense of the data as a whole while I also read memos and wrote new memos. Following Richardson (2000), I argue that my data analysis and writing are simultaneous. Here I suggest that "rather it is thinking by writing that tends to reveal the flaws, the contradictions in our ideas, forcing us to look, to analyse in different ways and rethink"

(Crang, 2003, p. 130) During and after collecting observation and artefacts, I reread the data and the memos, fine-tuning simultaneously by my impressions and interpretations, thinking through what permeated the data and how I had noted contradictory or interesting events and actions. I worked from the top down (from research questions) and from the bottom up (from data) using codes as 'signposts' rather than representation of content or of truth (Ryan, 2009).

Findings and Discussion

Kyle's investment in his everyday resources and the ways he used them, imply a reflexive form of masculinity (Soep, 2005). Kyle played with identities as wrestler, rapper, funny boy, son, and expert. His knowledge of wrestling was deep and often embodied. He used our relationship as an opportunity to play with anti-authority opinions. He engaged with his everyday culture resources in ways that suggest his awareness of the belief systems they sometimes represent. In the overview of data that follows, I discuss taboos about wrestling, wrestling's authenticity and 'appropriateness' as well as the embodied nature of Kyle's wrestler performances. I present everyday culture as a source for literacy work, when considering literacy in a broad multimodal sense.

In the section that follows, I discuss how 1) Kyle and his family understand and experience professional wrestling in contradictory ways as both taboo and appealing, and 2) Kyle's deep knowledge of the genre of professional wrestling as performative text allows him to use it in playful and parodic ways, 3) this playful approach to wrestling and other masculine identities available through Kyle's everyday culture constitutes a form of improvisation and can be explained as a form of masculine melodrama, and 4) the role of audiences (Kyle, online viewers, me) plays a part in the reflexive performance of masculine identities, and 5) Kyle's

video game playing of wrestling games can be viewed as a kind of embodied practice and identity play.

Wrestling Is Taboo and Entertaining

When Kyle was younger, his mother, Janet, worried about his interest in wrestling. She often mentioned to me how she sat with him while he watched music and wrestling videos online and she was concerned about his interest in wrestling. They both sang along (and I was encouraged to do so too) while we watched music videos online. On several occasions, Kyle's mother explained how she came around to letting him watch wrestling, which she also liked to watch. Kyle's mother, father and brothers were interested in wrestling. Figures 5 and 6 indicate how his room was decorated with a wrestling theme, from his bedcovers to his curtains and his walls.

Figure 5. Kyle's bedroom wall.

Figure 6. Kyle's bed with wrestler spread.

.   Although Kyle lived with his mother and brother, Kyle's father, Sam, was often visiting

when I went to Kyle's house. Kyle's mother and father sat in on our session while editing the

wrestling video with footage that we had shot on a previous occasion, and I asked about their

personal interest in wrestling. Once when they were both sitting at the kitchen table and Kyle

was editing a in wrestling:

Diane: Yeah. So you're into wrestling too? Do you watch wrestl ==

Sam: == Yeah I used to watch it when I was a youngster. I don't know how he got into it.

Diane: Yeah.

Janet: Cause I never used to let him watch it.

Diane: Mmm

Sam: (Inaudible)

Janet: But when he went …

Kyle: (sings)

Sam: Everything that I- everything that I was into as a fake he's into it==

Diane: == Yeah==

Sam: ==But I didn't introduce him to any of it==

Diane: Right

Kyle: Introduce it

Sam: I don't know if… but now ==

Kyle: == any of the old wrestlers

Sam: Mmm hmm. (laughs)

Kyle: No.

Janet: I used to love watching wrestling (Interview, Dec 2 09)

Kyle's father and mother both expressed surprise that Kyle loved wrestling like they did. At

various times, they reported how they had tried to dissuade him from watching wrestling and

occasionally seemed uncomfortable with my interest in his wrestling. When I questioned Kyle's

mother directly, she said that she did not want me to think that he was only interested in

wrestling. She mentioned how she loved wrestling but was hesitant to have Kyle watch it too

much as she worried it might have a negative effect. When she saw that it did not, she agreed

that he could watch. Kyle enjoyed playing wrestling on his PS2 and acting out wrestling for his

mother, but he rarely did this play acting when anyone else was around. However, Kyle often

had me take pictures of him posing as wrestler (See Figure 7).

Figure 7. Kyle as champion wrestler.

Kyle's play with wrestling, in terms of poses, dramatizing, and playing with wrestler figurines was limited to solitary play or when only his mother was home. When Kyle play-acted wrestling when I was present, his brothers were never at home. On one occasion while we were making the wrestling video, his brothers and friends showed up and Kyle was anxious for us to finish and for me to leave. When I asked if he had ever watched the video again, he said he could not remember. A year later, Kyle told me he was not so much into wrestling, but enjoyed Mixed Martial Arts more, a form of fighting popular on television, with a reputation for violence and more authentic fighting. Upon further questioning, Kyle reported that he and his father did play WWE games on his new Wii. Kyle's changing interests and his reluctance to acknowledge his interests on some occasions provide reminders that professional wrestling was only one of many interests that Kyle held, but also that there were times that Kyle seemed to downplay his interest in wrestling, depending on who was present or perhaps in response to my focus on his interest in

wrestling. Thus, Kyle appeared to be influenced by the taboo status associated with wrestling in school and public spaces.

At school, the topic of wrestling was not explicitly taboo but it surfaced only once during show and tell type sessions where Kyle brought in a wrestling figure to share. During our informal sessions at school, we sometimes went on the WWE[10] website and, on one occasion, Kyle showed me wrestling videos on the topic of whether or not wrestling was fake or real. Kyle would often remind me to close the door so that we would not get in trouble. Kyle's love of wrestling was not straightforward but seemed complicated by his ideas of what was appropriate and what other people might think. His interest in these conventionally masculine forms of entertainment offers the potential for critical discussions at school, that acknowledge the pleasure they bring and also the questions about masculinities and violence that it makes possible.

Wrestling As Performance: Deep Genre Knowledge

Kyle was knowledgeable about wrestling. For example, Kyle knew the back stories to feuds, the personal and wrestling histories of many wrestlers, going back to the 1950's and 1960's. He could find historic first matches on you-tube, spoofs and exposes about wrestling's status as fake or authentic and, when I commented on his knowledge he confided, "Me and my father know things that nobody else knows about" (Interview, Apr 19 11). I asked why his mother does not watch wrestling as much as he or his father does and he said it is because she

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[10] WWE is an acronym for World Wrestling Entertainment, a company that produces and sells professional wrestling multimedia that includes television, films, music, and a range of other products. It claims over 13 million viewers in the United States and in 145 countries around the world.

gets too excited. When I asked his mother about it, contrary to my expectation that she might find it too violent, a concern she had stated during an earlier conversation, she agreed that she got very involved and animated while watching wrestling. Despite her love of wrestling, Kyle frequently positioned his mother and me as unknowledgeable. His depth of knowledge appeared to give Kyle confidence and an almost unconscious use of wrestler style in other aspects of his life, yet the playful enactments made him uncomfortable as well.

Fans understand that wrestling is both fake and not fake. Ric Flair, a professional wrestler who has been 'stylin' and profilin' since 79' says about truth in wrestling: "Pictures don't lie, seeing is believing" (Jenkins, 1997, p. 65). Jenkins argues that part of the pleasure of wrestling, nonetheless, is seeing through the façade: "Fans elbow each other in the ribs, 'Look how fake', taking great pride in their ability to see through a deception that was never intended to convince" (p. 65). For fans, 'fakeness' is acknowledged, accepted and then overlooked in the pleasure of the performance.

When I asked Kyle what he thought teachers might think about wrestling, he responded in a falsetto 'teacher' voice, "It's still violent, even though it's kind of fake". Then in his usual voice, he said, "It's entertainment. Some of it's real, some of it's fake. Most of it's fake" (Interview, Apr 19 11). Thus, whether or not actions and stories are fake permeates wrestling. In performances that appeared to be parallel to the "fakeness" of wrestling storylines, Kyle often pretended to cry at home and at school when the internet was not working, when he could not complete a task in the way that he wanted, or when he had difficulty with a computer game, Crayon Physics, that he enjoyed playing.

During one of my visits to Kyle's home mid-way through this study, Kyle enacted a wrestling match in his kitchen while his mother and I watched. Kyle asked me to videotape the

match. He fought this match with a large stuffed sumo wrestler toy that he named Sandman. Sandman is a *heel* amongst wrestlers, has won several world championships, and more recently has become known as a Hardcore Icon. During this wrestling match, Kyle had constantly moved in and out of role, to give me explanatory commentary. He would pretend to be hurt and I would respond in earnest, then he would really hurt himself, and I would not know if he was hurt or not. For the minute or so before this excerpt, Kyle and I were in the living room and I was videotaping his match. Kyle was rolling on the floor, constantly narrating as a wrestling commentator and enacting his wrestling match with Sandman. Kyle fell off the couch, had a pained expression on his face, and held his back with his left hand.

Kyle: (I zoom in for close-up. Kyle removes pained expression from face and looks at me) Okay. Just pre- I'm actually hurt okay.

Diane: Oooh (laughs)

Kyle: No, I'm not actually hurt, just pretend I am.

Diane: Oh, okay.

Kyle: Cause the ref was there, right? Just say there's a steel chair and he goes like this. And he, then he barely touches like this.

Diane: Yeah.

Kyle: Oooh. (Kyle lies on his back on the couch, grasping his stomach, his knees pulled up to his chest) Oh, Mommy! (then relaxes his face) Then I just go (scrunches face in pain, eyes closed) Mo-om, ah!

Diane: But you're not really.

Kyle: (Kyle relaxes face and looks at me) No.

Diane: Do you want me to do something?

Kyle: (in regular voice) What?

Diane: Get an ambulance or something?

Kyle: (relaxed on couch, hands extended while talking) You're actually going to call an ambulance?

Diane: If you want?

Kyle: Sure.

Diane: 9-1-1, 9-1-1, we got a guy down (While I'm talking, Kyle resumes a pained expression on his face and falls to the floor) (Transcript, Nov 18 09)

My confusion over what was fake and not fake resonated with what happens with fans as they decipher the fakeness of moves at live matches and while watching on television. Everyone knows that many of the moves are illusion but they also know that it takes great skills to achieve these performances and, indeed, sometimes the performers are hurt.

Kyle's understanding of professional wrestling was deep and nuanced. As a true fan, he expressed both his pleasure in performances, with an awareness of the ways that wrestling plays with notions of what was real and what was fake. We had frequent confusing conversations about my understanding of what was fake and what was not. Indeed, in these fake moments, Kyle played with identities and enacted melodramatic scripts.

Playing With Genre: Improvisation and Masculine Melodrama

During the two years of this study, Kyle took wrestling storylines out of his home and into other moments in time and space. Just as literary genres at school follow rules or contain relatively consistent elements and themes, television shows and online representations of professional wrestling also have discernible elements and storylines. As is common with many professional wrestlers, storylines are developed between wrestlers, their managers (often women,

sometimes also professional wrestlers), and other wrestlers. For example, storylines involving the infamous Canada wrestling family, the Harts[11], centre on Bret Hart, who has won numerous wrestling championships. These storylines are well known to fans and are based on a mixture of fact and fiction. These out of the ring storylines are as important to the ongoing drama of professional wrestling as what happens in the ring.

In this study, Kyle engaged with professional wrestling, which I am considering here as masculine melodrama, and he carried this melodrama with him as he interacted with others at home and at school. On several occasions, Kyle would rant to me about another student in the class and who he saw as unworthy and undeserving of my attention. The storyline of Kyle versus Stephanie was a point of concern for Kyle and was present in interactions in and out of his classroom. When he spoke about Stephanie, on one occasion, he used the language of professional wrestling, stating that she was "the devil's child" and threatened what he would do, "to. take. her. out". (Interview, Feb 9 10) The ongoing storyline of how Stephanie acted against Kyle (i.e., by tricking me, by taking away his recycling job, by telling him what to do during group work) had the flavour of a wrestling storyline, and also the elements of fact and fiction mixed together. Later, at the end of a difficult conversation about his feelings toward his classmate, Stephanie, he whispered into the recorder, "Tough crowd" (Interview, Apr 23 10). I

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[11] Four Hart brothers formed a team in the early 1990s but animosity developed between Bret and Owen and they turned on each other a year later. Various family members took sides, exacerbating the public feud. The boys' mother, Helen, dramatically "threw in the towel" during a key match after being tricked by Owen, and caused Bret to lose. Retrieved from http://www.wwe.com/superstars/halloffame/inductees/brethart on February 24, 2012.

assume that I—resistant to the criticism of Stephanie but sympathetic to Kyle—am the "tough crowd".

Kyle's feeling of discomfort around and dislike of Stephanie seemed quite real but perhaps were not something he could not easily express to me (because I was working with Stephanie at the same time that I was working with him) or at school (because he was seen as a 'good' boy who did not cause trouble). Yet when he took on a wrestling persona he was able to playfully express these feelings, through a kind of wrestler parody.

Audiences for Melodrama and Masculine Identities

In some ways, Kyle's sense of audience was heightened through my observation and participation in his textmaking at home and at school. In other ways, the performative texts or narratives that Kyle constructed suggest a heightened sense of audience. He anticipated audience through wrestling commentary, chose avatars for online tools, and produced and anticipated viewers for his digital poster on the topic 'All about Me' that I initiated and directed for Kyle's entire class as a culminating project for this study and my time in Kyle's class.

Throughout the study, Kyle took on an announcer role, leading the direction of interaction and engaging in wordplay typical of the kind of talk in wrestling commentary. In class while working in a small group, or alone working at word processing in the computer lab, he spoke to an imaginary audience with his face close to the recorder: "Ladies and gentlemen, we are back, boys and girls" (Interview, Mar 10 09). He often spoke directly in the recorder as if an audience were there, or perhaps he was imagining me listening later on. On other occasions, while discussing his online poster, created using EduGlogster, Kyle commented frequently on the number of views recorded at the bottom of his page. He said, "I got 21 views. That's not

bad." (Interview, Apr 23 10) or "22 views that's cool" (Interview, Apr 27 10). Kyle's sense of a potential audience for his texts seemed strong.

On several occasions during the study, Kyle had opportunities to choose an avatar for an online profile. For examples, children had to choose avatars for an online math skills practice account and they had avatars for their EDUglogster accounts. During a session where we were talking about Kyle's glog in the computer lab, Kyle noticed that other people had changed their avatars and that the default for EDUGlogster was a teddy bear with a blue sweater for a boy, pink for a girl. Kyle said he wanted to remove the teddy bear avatar. Over the next half hour, Kyle and I worked through the process of changing his avatar. During this session, Kyle was also able to choose from pictures we had taken at his house, or throughout the research study, for his digital poster. First he chose a photo of a dream catcher (Figure 8) that he had in his bedroom and then decided to look for something else:

Diane: No you don't want the dream catcher?

Kyle: Oh I – I ain't catching a- I ain't catching a dream anytime soon. Now I have

dreams now they're something different. It might (inaudible). Please take contact. There

we go. (Sings to self) Yeah okay I got it.

Diane: That money one?

Kyle: Yeah what==

Diane: ==You love that money one. Did you see Nicolas's glog? He put dollar bills==

Kyle: ==Yeah== (Interview, April 27 10)

Figure 8. Dream catcher on Kyle's bedroom ceiling.

Figure 9. Kyle's second choice for EduGlogster avatar.

Kyle chose an image of dollar bills in a fan shape as his avatar for his digital poster.

Kyle's dream catcher, that his mother placed in his room for him, does not belong in the kind of

online spaces that he imagines for the digital poster that tells about him. Rather, it seemed that the fan of dollar bills (Figure 9) is more congruent with the cool guy image that he is creating and hoping to project.

Kyle's narrative performances were often reflexive and humorous yet tinged with 'attitude'. On one occasion, Kyle complained that school had gotten him nowhere and suggested what might happen if he came back one day and played a prank and put a rap song on the PA system real loud. After watching an video of the rapper, Akon, and finding out online that he had been in jail, Kyle talked about jail as no big deal. Then as an aside, he said to me, "I'm just trying to be tough, okay" (Interview, Mar 17 10). He would play at rapper or wrestler, but always seemed conscious that this was play. When frustrated with his inability to draw a circle for a snowman in art club he sang to himself, "Hush little baby don't you cry" (Transcript, Dec 7 09). Kyle seemed to be both mocking the activity, which he found difficult, and mocking himself, warning himself not to be weak but poking fun at his desire to appear competent and strong.

Kyle's self-conscious engagement with his own agency and his ideas of self-containment and masculinity are apparent here. In contrast to the idea of wrestler or rapper or other masculine persona as representation of a hegemonic masculinity, here Kyle played with genres and implied that he is not a tough guy. He used the elements of the everyday culture forms and resources in an experienced and experimental fashion, momentarily engaging in play and imaginative experiments.

Game-playing As Embodied Practice

One of the fears about boys' engagement in certain areas of everyday culture is connected to a fear of violent or aggressive behaviour (Bernthal, 2003). Although this study does not explore causal relationships between viewing of aggressive television shows, websites, and video

games, it does portray an interesting juxtaposition of one boy's embodied game-playing and stereotypes of frenzied video-game playing boys. In contrast to the popular image of an energized, frenetic, aggressive, video game playing boy, Kyle's embodied playing during the game was relaxed (see Figures 10 and 11).
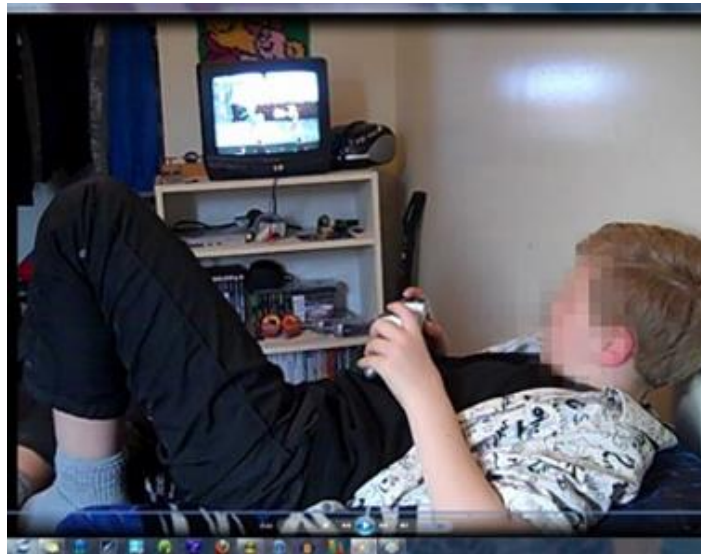
Figure 10. Kyle playing Smackdown on his PlayStation2.

Figure 11. Kyle playing Smackdown on his PlayStation2

Although wrestling, live or on-screen is embodied by the wrestlers, performing with their entire bodies, playing wrestler in PS2 is enacted through the movement of hands and fingers. Even when the game onscreen reaches a climax or there is a particularly intense or violent move, the game player's moves are minimal and focused on small finger movements. Typical for video game players, in contrast to live wrestling fans who might move or yell encouragement, Kyle, in Figure 12, is relaxed and the focus of his energy is on the localized movement of his hands and fingers (Gee, 2005).

Figure 12. Kyle's hands playing Smackdown (close-up)

On the occasions when I watched him playing on his PS2, his body was always relaxed and reclining. One leg might be loosely crossed over the other, and limply hanging. His facial expression was usually relaxed, neither smiling nor upset. Occasionally he would make quiet

comments such as "Come on" or "Wow, I never saw that before" (Transcript, May 13 10) but these were spoken in a near monotone. The only expressive gestures would occur when he remembered I was there, behind him and would turn to smile at me in response to a commentator's joke, as he did in Figure 13. In one sense, the games he plays are re-enactments or repetitions of wrestling matches, but the gestural, embodied way of interacting is different.

Figure 13. Kyle talking to me while playing Smackdown on his PS2.

Kyle's bedroom, the space where he plays wrestling on PS2 is also a place of contradictions. In Figure 14, for example, above his television screen is a hooked rug decoration of Winnie the Pooh and Piglet. When setting up my video camera, Kyle had an irritated expression on his face and seemed unimpressed when I moved his teddy bear that rested on his dresser. Kyle liked the toys from his younger childhood, dramatized fights with Pokémon figures, and watches Pokémon online. He asked me not to mention his Pokémon viewing to the other children at school: "Don't say this to anyone. They think it's babyish" (Interview, Feb 12

09). In the second year of the study, when Kyle was in Grade 4, he seemed more conscious of what his peers might think.

Figure 14. Kyle's walls – Winnie the Pooh, stuffed toys, wrestling, and basketball.

Contrary to hype around the impact of wrestling and other male-oriented cultural resources and practices that revolve around competition and fighting (Archer, 1999), in one form or another, there are no data to support that Kyle was physically aggressive in his day-to-day encounters or even engaged in play-fighting at school. Kyle said he did not want to be a wrestler when he grows up. He laughed when I asked the question, as if it would be an odd idea. He thought he would be a bus driver or work in a sports clothing store, jobs held by family members. Kyle's relaxed engagement with video games and his sophisticated knowledge of wrestling contradicts notions of young boys who engage in these practices as hyperactive, aggressive, antisocial, or unthinking (Bijvank, Konijn & Bushman, 2011; Kantrowitz & Contreras, 2000; Willoughby, Adachi & Good, 2012).

Discussion

This framing of the data is concerned with how an in depth examination of one child's engagement with particular everyday culture forms challenges taboos surrounding these forms. The goal of this examination is to consider how these forms might be viewed as productive and seen in more complex ways.

In this chapter, I have made the argument that Kyle has an area of expertise, professional wrestling, which is an integral part of his everyday life. His expertise is supported by family members' expertise, game-playing, television and online viewing, toys, and his bedroom as wrestling environment. The processes and products of his learning, through professional wrestling, travel with him into his classroom and in other informal settings at school. Although professional wrestling is a particular taboo resource that may also devalued because of its connection to working class values and adolescent male 'attitude', it often provides opportunities for Kyle to engage in re-scripting his own life, taking the offerings of professional wrestling and using them in productive and localized ways. He has other areas of interest or expertise that are included in this examination and that are used in comparable ways. His adoption of his everyday culture resources and style are not straightforward, and Kyle represented this in his reflexive and humorous performances.

Kyle rescripted professional wrestling, one of many cultural resources open to him – a resource that originates in his family's social practices. Namely, he created a narrative, or text, that can be read, although it is not stable or necessarily long-lasting. Although professional wrestling is problematic in its exclusion of roles for women and the often narrowly defined roles for men, as well as heteronormative and misogynistic attitudes and actions (Jenkins, 1997), it also offers a source for children to engage in critique and acknowledge the pleasure that is found

in their everyday culture. While endeavouring to include, or at least open up, the consideration of an everyday cultural resource such as professional wrestling, this chapter does not discuss the misogynistic elements of professional wrestling directly, nor does it deal directly with the potential impact of viewing wrestlers who are repeatedly injured and maimed during wrestling events although these elements would be a necessary element of critical discussions about wrestling. Through Kyle's experiences with wrestling media, he is able to explore, examine, and rescript his life. Professional wrestling, often viewed as gratuitous and violent (which it may often be), is a place where critical literacy can happen; "literacy learning is part of (children's) histories, not something that children do as a cognitive task divorced from their lives" (Hicks, 2002, p. 37).

Kyle's understanding of wrestling, which is both explicit and embodied, offers possibilities for creating new texts at school. His sophisticated use of humour, his understanding of the two sides of a story, suggest that through critical literacy, discussions of the pleasure and critique of everyday culture and the creation of new parodies or improvisations are possible (Newkirk, 2000). Children like Kyle are already engaged in critique with everyday culture and Alvermann (2012) suggests that "teachers are likely to find that adolescents who create derivative texts are neither mindless fans nor thoughtless remixers of existing media. An argument could be made, in fact, that engaging with all kinds of ideological messages (found in both popular culture and assigned classroom texts) is central to students learning to think for themselves" (p. 7).

Kyle's in-depth understanding of wrestling seems to allow him to use its resources and forms in more or less conscious ways, but always with confidence and a deep knowledge of its elements and purposes. The impact of this expertise, or Kyle's membership in a particular

affinity group (Gee, 2000-2001), offers to educational settings possibilities for instances where genres and practices are studied and used in repetitive and extended manners. This examination of the experiences of one child offers the possibilities for theory-building as it attempts to understand how particular forms of everyday culture are experienced and performed over an extended period of time with different people and in different moments in time and space.

In this ethnographic study, there was no attempt, on my part, to introduce Kyle's wrestler performances into his classroom. There is, however, the potential to see how this might happen in less structured, open-ended situations where children might be encouraged to use or play with familiar resources to create new textual forms. Additionally, as in Medina and Costa's (2013) research, teachers might explicitly work with students to create multimodal (e.g., dramatic, written, visual) texts in responses to texts from everyday culture and, in doing so, engage in and, to some extent, suspend convention in playful or parodic ways but also how it might be possible to engage in critical and reflective conversations about these texts. This suggestion is not a call to simply highjack or colonize children's literacy practices but to expand what it might mean to learn about and find meaningful ways to include what they bring (Alvermann, 2012; Buckingham, 2003; Buckingham & Harvey, 2001).

Conclusion

Educators need to be able to see children and their experiences as valuable. While many accept that communities and families have valuable expertise and experiences to offer to students and teachers, some forms of everyday culture are often not included. Everyday culture is constantly shifting. What was once seen as popular (i.e. the novel, Shakespeare's play) can become high culture (Buckingham, 1998). Furthermore, to exclude everyday culture is to exclude whole classes and groups of people: "To dismiss the everyday as trivial is a strategy of

the elite, akin to the dismissal of popular culture as low culture or the fodder of the masses" (Pennycook, 2010, p.11). For those who view aspects of everyday culture as pervasive and compelling, it is a place of great potential for exploration, both inside and outside of schools. If the gendered identities for boys and girls are complicated through discussions of everyday culture forms, productive spaces for exploration both inside and outside of classrooms are born. If teachers develop hybrid discourses (Hicks, 2001) to accompany children's hybrid textmaking, they might be able to switch back and forth between different kinds of practices but also find new ways of doing literacy at school.

In addition, digital literatures and everyday culture texts outside of school offer spaces for multimodal creativity and play. They are often part of a larger narrative trajectory. If, as Pahl (2005) suggests, forms like console games are "spaces of improvisation and play" (p. 129), these literacy practices can be relocalized in classrooms. Teachers and children in school need to engage with everyday cultural resources in ways that both recognize the pleasure and textual opportunities they provide as well as engaging in meaningful critique and examination of these forms. It is possible and productive to take up the richness of the everyday through the inclusion of elements of everyday culture practices, forms, and content, in elementary classrooms that acknowledge the possibilities they offer and the expertise that children bring.

CHAPTER FOUR: I WISH I WAS A LION, A PUPPY: BECOMING WRITER THROUGH
A TEXTMAKING PROCESS

Children are becoming producers and consumers of multimodal texts in the middle years
of elementary school. Amongst the influences on young children's identities as writers and
multimodal textmakers, are the kinds of writing that are valued, the rewards given for writing,
the degree of choice children are given in topics, and the influences of teachers and peers on
students' writing. The kinds of opportunities for writing and for textmaking ultimately influence
how one thinks of oneself as a writer or as a maker of texts. If opportunities for a wide range of
textmaking forms, processes, and purposes are not available or supported within classroom
literacy practices, children who are more competent at textmaking forms and modes (i.e.,
drawing, digital forms) that are not supported may be disadvantaged. Viewing identity from a
sociocultural perspective (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985), it is formed through social
interaction, from the outside in. If one views development as writer as a "method of knowing"
(Richardson, 2000) and a process of becoming (Ellsworth, 2005), one's identity as a writer or
textmaker can be seen as unfinalizable and ultimately in motion. At the same time, one might
question whether or not one is able to write one's own identity or one's own texts, in situations
where practices are more constrained.

Often, there are invisible or unclearly stated expectations about what good writing looks
like. In schools, teachers often ask for writing that is creative rather than formulaic (Pahl,
2007b). Educators hope that students will 'think outside the box' where they use and
demonstrate 'higher level thinking' and 'critical thinking' (e.g., Higging & Rewes, 2006; Notar
& Padgett, 2010). Intelligence and creativity are seen as individual accomplishments, where one
distinguishes oneself from others. In this chapter, I argue for an everyday and sociocultural
version of creativity, where day-to-day production of texts is valued (Alvermann & Hong-Xu,

2003) and creativity occurs 'inside the box'; building upon the ideas of others and other texts. In order to do so, I examine what happens through the process of writing, rather than solely what is produced as written artefact.

In a writing process assessment at the end of Grade 3, Kyle wrote in response to a prompt that required him to imagine and write about his life as an animal of his choice. First Kyle wrote as a lion, and then switched to imagining himself as a puppy. In this chapter, I trace Kyle's writing process for this three-day assignment in the context of his larger 'becoming' a writer/maker of multimodal texts. Kyle created texts at home and at school, in multiple modes, to varying degrees of execution, with different audiences and for a variety of purposes. Many were momentary or fleeting and others were more fixed or finished products.

Core to the framing of textmaking of data examined here, I consider how 1) an analysis of process, or the history of a text, renders visible what might otherwise have been invisible in Kyle's becoming as a writer and a textmaker, and how 2) dichotomies of imitation and creativity can be questioned, as they apply to judgments around valued texts and textmakers. Influenced by sociocultural theory (Wertsch, 1985; Vygotsky; 1978), New Literacy Studies (The New London Group, 1996) and mobilities (Leander et al., 2010), I contrast the analysis of Kyle's finished text with the process by which his final text was created. In doing so, I argue that there is much that can be learned about identities, about valued practices, and the circulation of discourses about valued textmaking by tracing the history of texts and connections across texts. Within mandated assessment, I suggest that what is assessed is what is most highly valued (Nixon, 2001).

Theories and Research

Literacy Practices: Multimodality, Writing, and Assessment

Children's written work can be viewed as multimodal texts that are embedded in multimodal textmaking practices. Here, textmaking processes are presented as textual histories, and ways in which different texts are valued differently, particularly with respect to assessment and in consideration of what makes a text or a textmaker creative, are examined, as well as what is made visible when one consider what happens or how texts are made. A print text is often considered monomodal, consisting of one mode, the written word on paper or in a digital form. However, with recent interest in how multiple modes can be more fully included in understandings of literacy, many have argued that the production of a print text can be considered multimodal (Bearne, 2005; Harste, Woodward & Burke, 1984; Kress, 2000). The embodied stance of the textmaker, his or her gestural and verbal interactions with others, the visual and auditory surroundings, and the talk of other students and the teacher are part of its multimodal composition, and the intertextual connections as well as connections to other events, and practices across time and space can all be considered as part of the textmaking process.

The writing assessment process examined in this chapter takes place within larger writing process approaches to assessment and an intention to assess children's writing in authentic ways using these assessments (Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000). Performance assessments—like the assessment under discussion here—attempt to measure or create a picture of what students can and do produce in classrooms. They are meant to simulate classroom writing processes. Based on the elements of writers workshop, writing process assessments are often structured by phases of writing: pre-writing, drafting, conferencing, revising, editing, and publishing (Calkins, 1986). In Canada, education is a provincial responsibility and a number of provinces have used

these assessments at different times. On the East coast of Canada, these performance-based assessments continue and are mandated in a range of primary, elementary and high school grades towards the end of the school year and they occur in the subjects areas of Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and French. They may differ from day-to-day writing in that the steps or phases are linear and discrete, teachers are not allowed to provide support, peers are able to give some feedback at the revising stage only and talk, overall, occurs at a minimum.

In the example used here, the assessment is dependent on the understanding that teachers use this process regularly in the day-to-day writing programs in their classrooms. Students' writing is judged according to various criteria, sometimes according to pre-determined grading scales, rubrics, or checklists. The elements of writing that are assessed are often referred to as traits and have spawned a number of published teacher guides to support this kind of assessment. Often process pieces are reviewed according to traits such as voice, content, organization, sentence structure, conventions, and word choice that are described in various published materials (Culham, 2003) and rubrics are widely available as instructional as well as assessment tools. Even in provinces that do not use this form of mandated assessment, the writing process, and a trait-based form of assessment are present in prescribed writing curricula.

Although a process of brainstorming, drafting, and editing is largely supported by teachers in principal, some research has questioned whether or not these processes are often followed or if they are always beneficial to students (Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000; Dutro et al., 2004; Valli & Chambliss, 2007). If students were expected to model writing on that of professional writers, a wider range of possible ways of writing is more likely to be successful. Some writers may need to draft and redraft longer texts; brainstorming might occur in oral form or in the thoughts of the writer, and getting feedback from others may be helpful in some

circumstances and counterproductive in others. For example, in a study by Dutro et al. (2004), one girl who was a successful writer in a middle elementary school found the requirement to do brainstorming before writing in a state-mandated assessment task stressful and counterproductive, and her teachers allowed her to skip this step. Classroom teachers of young children may express concerns that revision is not something that young children are developmentally ready to do, especially at the Grade 3 level where these requirements are part of the assessment.

Textmaking Histories

Although it is possible to learn about one's success as a writer, according to pre-determined criteria, by examining a revised and edited text, there are many elements or moments of multimodal textmaking that are invisible when one looks only at the final product. If social semiotics (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996) is used to analyse a text as final product, it is possible to describe the various elements that come together to produce meaning. An examination of design and layout are possible, for example. Starting from social semiotics, the addition of sociocultural theory allows an examination of the interests of the textmaker, the modes that they choose, as well as the practices and identities that they bring (Rowsell, Kress & Street, 2012; Rowsell & Pahl, 2006; Siegel & Panofsky, 2009). An examination of image production, audience, and images, rather than images only is called for by Rose (2001) who outlines this approach and its possible application to a range of epistemological and methodological approaches. Here I suggest that Rose's framework for analysis of images, as texts, could be applied to a range of multimodal texts. This application is elaborated in the methodology section of this paper.

An examination of textmaking involves the study of the history of a text, and the processes of textmaking. Writing practices are developed historically and culturally and can be

examined as a view into a culture and the study of writing here attempts to discern, "what functions these texts serve and how different actors appropriate and make sense of them" (p. 9, Papen & Barton, 2010). Sociocultural theory makes possible the study of texts and meanings as they are being made. As socially and culturally produced events, writing and writers cannot be reduced to sets of discrete skills and abilities but reflect relations and networks with others.

Pointing to the value of the history of multimodal textmaking along a text's history, Siegel and Panofsky (2009) describe a group of boys in elementary school and their construction of the concept 'radiation' during a sketch-to-stretch cartoon writing activity. Across classroom time and a number of open-ended textmaking activities, the boys' meanings for radiation, in their cartoons, meant "punishment for being a bully", and later, punishment for wrongdoing. The researchers argue that what is important here are the friendship and group participation and the intersubjectivity of the participants across time, elements that are not accessible when looking at texts alone. In a similar way, Dyson (2003) examined how children used the resources of their everyday culture (i.e., sports, music, movies) to create their beginning writing in Grade 1. Dyson followed children's interests across home, the community, and school to trace how resources were used and remixed in children's beginning writing.

While in school, even if there is a value placed on process, it is often only children's 'finished' products that are evaluated and children may come to value only these products also. The following two studies highlight how identities are constructed through textmaking, the role of assessment in this process, and how certain texts and modes of textmaking might be valued over others. The first is the story of a "a boy who died from writing" (Dutro et al., 2006), and explains how this process might occur. Throughout their research study, and even after satisfactory results in a state-wide writing assessment, Max continued to dislike writing and to

see himself as a struggling writer. The reasons for this, as presented by the researchers, seem more connected to relations within the classroom writing practices. Teachers provided Max with additional assistance, from classroom teachers and classroom aides and, rather than seeing the help as positive, Max viewed this as further confirmation of his incompetence at writing. A few comments from the teacher about Max's need to be clearer in his writing, amidst many other positive feedback moments, became further indication, in his opinion, of his weakness as a writer. Max found talking about his writing embarrassing. He did not view himself as a reader or a writer. By looking closely at Max's ongoing writing processes, a more nuanced, if troubling picture of him as a writer was constructed. The challenges that Max experiences are not easily elucidated by an examination of his assessment scores.

Although schools and governing educational bodies seem interested in acknowledging modes of communication beyond conventional print, this may not always translate into particular children's everyday lives. When children's strengths and qualities as literate beings are assessed, print literacy, or reading and writing, are most often highlighted. In a second example, Joseph, a Grade 5 boy, in a long-term Australian study (Nixon, 2001) was viewed by his teacher as a struggling reader and writer. Although Joseph was attentive, worked hard, and was able to write clear and organized pieces of print text, his teacher wrote on his report card that he "required considerable assistance in literacy" (p. 3). Looking closely at what was happening in that classroom, part of the judgment against Joseph's literacy progress connected to issues such as his quiet demeanor and his challenges with completing work on time. In addition, his visual skills and ability to communicate through the visual were not fore-grounded. Joseph wrote, "I am good at art and using documents on the computer, like Claris Works, Kid Pix and Art Work for kids. I know how to use the internet and CD ROMs... [I] enjoyed the excursions, the subjects, the

videos, and all the drawings we have done… [I] learned …about Space, how to draw flowers and how to use HyperStudio and hotmail" (p. 6). Joseph was competent at many literacy practices, especially those that involved drawing. Later in the year, and perhaps partly due to the influence of the researchers who were in this classroom, some of Joseph's positive talk about his competencies surfaced in the teacher's writing about his academic progress. These two examples suggest that the construction of literate identities within a narrow range of classroom textmaking practices can affect individual children in potentially detrimental ways.

Valued Texts, Valued Practices

In classrooms, in schools, as children are becoming writers, certain types of texts are valued over others. Even though, in North America, many schools integrate digital technologies and teach critical literacies, which often focus on media literacy, print texts are still most highly valued (Honan, 2008; Lillis, 2001; Millard, 2006). Outside of schools, print texts are highly valued also, although one might argue that this is changing with interest and use of online, social media. The dichotomy of autonomous (schooled) and ideological (local) literacies proposed by Street (1984) represented the ways that different texts are valued differently. Schooled literacies are conventionally valued, and written texts rather than local iterations are normally assessed. In elementary classrooms, when children are in the process of becoming writers or textmakers, the most valued texts have tended to be fictional narratives and journal writing (Collier, 2010), although increasingly there is a focus on writing texts from a variety of genres and on informational literacy in general. Offering opportunities for constructing a wide range of texts is ideal. In Canada, teachers ideally offer opportunities to write process-oriented texts as well as

demand[12] pieces, those that are produced in short periods of time. Most Canadian curricula provide for all of these possibilities.

Creativity As Everyday Practice

Connected to the kinds of texts that are valued is the way that children execute these texts. Creativity or "thinking outside the box" is viewed as valuable in educational discourse, by researchers and teachers alike (Marshall, 2010; Pennycook, 2010). In the writing process assignment that is the focus of this chapter, students are asked to be creative in their writing. Part of the impetus for this chapter came from an early conversation with one of Kyle's teachers. I was sharing Kyle's use of wrestler language while he was working on his own in the computer lab, which I found surprising and interesting at the time. During this casual conversation, we discussed Kyle's imitation of wrestling commentators while he was working at school might mean. At this time, Elaine had expressed concerns that, because of his reputation as a good student and a compliant boy, Kyle's academic needs were possibly being overlooked. We discussed whether or not his wrestling talk was creative or imitative. The notion of copying and what might constitute creativity at school surfaced a number of times during the two years I spent following Kyle. I wondered about his skilled and playful use of wrestler resources that seemed to contrast with his less elaborated textmaking at school as I thought about educators'

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[12] *Demand writing* describes a piece of writing in response to a specific prompt. The writer responds to the prompt in one writing session and writing is not expected to be revised or edited in the same step-wise approach as a writing process piece that conventionally follows stages of brainstorming/pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.

desire for students to 'think outside the box'. Exactly how creativity worked within this set of practices and how students might come to be 'creative' seemed illusive.

Contemporary and colloquial versions of creativity permeate teachers' thinking in classrooms and these sometimes borrow upon the notion that creativity equals intelligence and that there are only a few who are successful in relation to the others who are not. Yet, teachers also expect students to think for themselves at the same time that they follow convention, instructions and examples that the teacher provides. It seems that creativity may mean the opposite of mimicry or copying yet it is unclear what the criteria for one or the other might be. There are a variety of definitions for creativity (H. Gibson, 2005; Higgins & Rewes, 2006; Marshall, 2010) but, for the most part, they are built upon an understanding of thinking (or writing, in this case) as an individual endeavour, as a departure from the past, and indicating genius, or prowess on the part of the textmaker (Craft, 2003; Hargreaves, 2005; Henrich, 2010).

'Thinking inside the box', by contrast, suggests that one is formulaic in one's thinking, that one repeats what has already been done (Weisberg, 2011). Thinking outside the box is creative; thinking inside the box is imitative. Underlying this notion of 'thinking outside the box' is an individual, rather than social, understanding of learning and thinking. An alternate understanding of creativity, a social one, thinks of creativity as an everyday practice, one that acknowledges the thinking/texts of others, in the past, and the contributions of others. Turning this notion of creativity around, Pennycook (2010) argues, "language creativity is the common stuff of everyday language use" (41). Knowledge, thinking and textmaking are seen as borrowing on the works of others and are incrementally developed. Testing situations, whether performance-based or not, expect individual production of work, or more individual than usual.

An alternative is to think of creativity as 'inside-the-box'. Using the example of the famous home, Fallingwater, created by the architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, Weisberg (2011) challenges the notion of creativity as 'thinking outside the box' and challenges the common perception of genius or creativity as individually produced. Fallingwater is a particularly elaborate and exceptionally renowned home that is cantilevered over a river. Part of its infamy is the story that it came to its creator as a flash of insight. Weisberg argues that the piece is creative and interesting but it is definitely inside the box. He described Wright's years of experience, Fallingwater's connections to other buildings that Wright had designed, and earlier drafts of this building, as well as the history of this style of architecture, as a way of challenging the idea that this piece of architecture is an example of 'out of the box' thinking. In the context of this chapter and the analysis that follows, I suggest that the everyday textmaking of Kyle is potentially creative and I examine the ways that he uses and builds upon the supports that have been provided for him in this writing event. I suggest that all texts are remixes and rely on other texts, textmakers, and textmaking practices that have come before. Innovation is socially produced.

The analysis of textmaking during a writing assessment focuses on a three-day process but also makes connections with the identities constructed, understandings of creativity, and what is made visible when one looks at textmaking up close.

<div align="center">Methods and Data Generation</div>

This chapter is part of a larger ethnographic case study of one boy's textmaking processes at home and at school. As discussed in earlier sections, over eighteen months, I used participant-observation methods to collect data about Kyle, a boy in Grade 3 and then Grade 4, as he created multimodal texts through different events in time and space. Data were collected in Kyle's home in the evening, in his classroom at school, in the computer lab, and through informal

conversations with the researcher outside of formal learning space and time. For this chapter, I focus on a subset of this data, a three-day provincially mandated writing process assessment that occurred towards the end of Kyle's Grade 3 year, several interviews in Grades 3 and 4 where we discussed Kyle's ideas about himself as a writer and various textmaking events that form intertextual connections with the focal textmaking process where Kyle wrote about his life as a lion, and then a puppy. Also, data discussed here includes Kyle's Grade 3 and Grade 4 teachers' ideas about Kyle as a writer and their ideas about what constituted successful writing.

By focusing in on one case, here bounded by Kyle's experience, I explore a small story or small narrative that provides rich opportunities for theory building, based on the subjectivities of one individual, and his developing and multiple identities as a textmaker (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Stake, 2005). Ethnography (LeCompte, Preissle, & Tesch, 1993; Marcus, 1988) is uniquely positioned for this examination of process as its interpretive intentions and participant observation allow for a day to day form of data generation that focuses on what is happening and how momentary meanings are made as well as how identities in the making can be seen as becoming. I have attempted, where possible, to present the perspectives of Kyle, and his family, and teachers by sharing data generated and interpretations of this data, particularly parts of the data in which they played a role. Nonetheless, my interpretations, are my own, and are necessarily partial, as I can only represent my experiences of these events, which are necessarily driven by my research interests and questions at the time.

From a critical ethnographic perspective (Madison, 2005), I am interested in seeing things differently and this connects to my role as an educator in general, but also specifically in relation to Kyle's school and neighbourhood where I had taught. Kyle's school and his classmates primarily come from low-income families. Schools that serve low-income families

and children, who often do not achieve at the levels of children at more economically diverse or middle-class schools, have often received an educational experience that focuses on back-to-basics, transmission models (Delpit, 1995; McCarthey, 2002). Some of the literacy initiatives of Kyle's school fall into that approach and teachers are very concerned about teaching reading, and are aware of the school's status as low achieving. Low-income and welfare-dependent families, who may sometimes live in subsidized housing, are often viewed by teachers at the school as unable to support their children in school literacy practices. School literacy is often viewed as model of which parents need to become part rather than home literacies influencing what happens at school. As a previous classroom teacher, in this school, I was and am engaged in a personal shift from teacher to researcher as I attempt to look at children's experiences up close, in ways that I may not have as a teacher. From a critical ethnographic perspective, I am interested in examining the constraints that operate upon Kyle's textmaking and the ways that dominant discourses about valued writers and valued writing influence his experience of textmaking at school.

In order to analyze this subset of data, guided by the focal textmaking process, the three-day writing process piece, and my research questions, I use Rose's (2001) framework for analysis of images, which includes 1) the site of production—the process of producing the image. 2) the site of the image itself—as product/object, and also analysis of 3) the site of the audience—the reception of the image by audiences. Other researchers have highlighted how an understanding of audience and process (Kendrick, McKay & Mutonyi, 2009; Kendrick, Rogers, Toohey, Marshall, Mutonyi, & Hauge, 2010; Perry, 2010) provide a sense of history of a text and also, to see images as part of a larger social and cultural backdrop. Here I apply Rose's framework for analysis of images to the analysis of Kyle's text in this formal assessment. This

opportunity allowed me to begin to see what might occur in the invisible processes of textmaking that are largely ignored by schooling practices of assessment. Building upon social semiotic analyses of texts (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996), this examination allows for analysis of texts in the making, using the momentary meanings of those present. This focus on audience, text, and process complements a study of writing process.

Driven by research questions about how resources (including identities) are used in the construction of multimodal texts and textmaking identities, I selected the textmaking process of this chapter amongst a range of possible textmaking processes. This one was selected because it offered the possibility to examine writing in process, under the constraints of formal assessment, within a larger range of textmaking practices.

<div align="center">Findings and Discussion</div>

What Can Be Learned from Kyle's Final Draft?

One approach to examining Kyle's success as a writer is to look at his writing as a final product. At this point, I present the final piece without information about the process by which it was produced or its connections to other texts and practices in order to later juxtapose these two elements. I examine how Kyle's competence is represented by this piece, produced through drafting stages, albeit within the constraints of a mandated assessment. During this writing process assessment, students wrote in response to the prompt: *Pretend you are an animal. Describe what your life would be like if you were that animal. Be creative and provide lots of details.* In Figure 15, I present Kyle's final piece of writing, alongside a transcript (Figure 16):
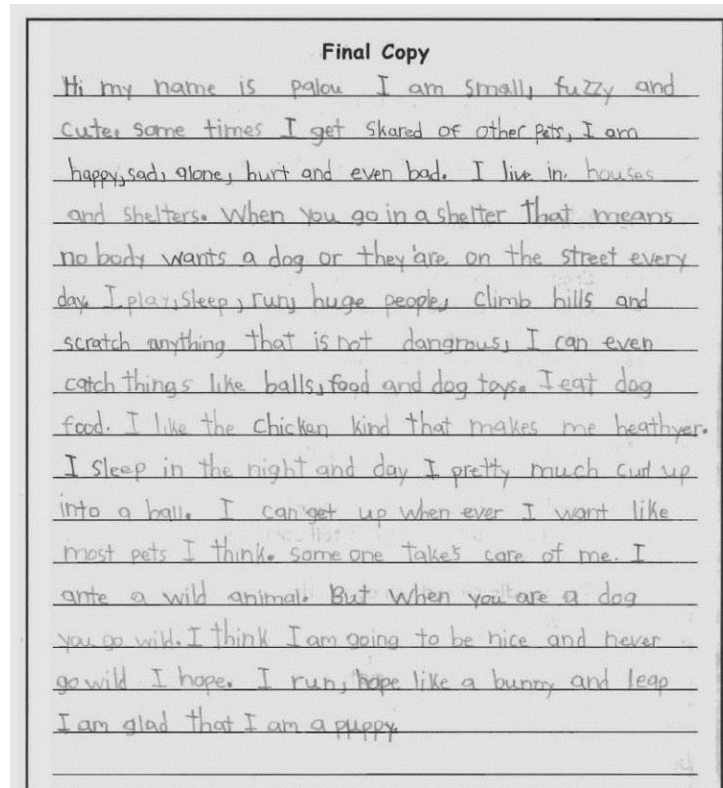
Final Copy

Hi my name is palou I am small, fuzzy and cute. Some times I get skared of other pets, I am happy, sad, alone, hurt and even bad. I live in houses and shelters. When you go in a shelter that means no body wants a dog or they are on the street every day. I play, sleep, run, huge people, climb hills and scratch anything that is not dangrous, I can even catch things like balls, food and dog toys. I eat dog food. I like the chicken kind that makes me heathyer. I sleep in the night and day I pretty much curl up into a ball. I can get up when ever I want like most pets I think. Some one takes care of me. I ante a wild animal! But when you are a dog you go wild. I think I am going to be nice and never go wild I hope. I run, hope like a bunny and leap I am glad that I am a puppy.

Figure 15. Kyle's final draft.

Hi my name is Palou I am small, fuzzy and cute. Some times I get skared of other pets, I am happy, sad, alone, hurt, mad and even bad. I live in houses and shelters. When you go in a shelter that means no body wants dogs or they're on the street every day. I play, sleep, run, huge people, climb hills and scratch anything that is not dangerous, I can even catch things like balls, food and dog toys. I eat dog food. I like the chicken kind that makes me healthyer. I sleep in the night and day I pretty much curl in to a ball. I can get up when ever I want like most pets do I think. Some one take's care of me. I ante a wild animal. But when you are a dog you go wild. I am going to be nice and never go wild I hope. I run, hope like a bunny and leap. I am glad that I am a puppy. |

Figure 16. Transcript of Kyle's final draft

Using the rubric provided for analysis of process texts, which asks markers to assess students' work in terms of 1) content, 2) organization, 3) voice, 4) sentence structure, 5) word choice, and 6) conventions, and my experience as a teacher of Grade 3 for nine years, and a member of marking boards for this assessment on numerous occasions, I evaluate what I see as the strengths and features of Kyle's text. The process and the audiences for texts are not considered here. Adopting Rose's framework (that is intended to be used for visuals) I can think about the communicative effects of the text, the composition of the text, and the meanings that are evident. If I were only to see this version of the text, as the marker would, I would state that the piece of writing is brief but does meet the minimum requirements of the assignment.

In terms of *organization*, one of the key elements of the analytic rubric, Kyle included a beginning, middle, and an ending. He wrote "Hi" and introduced himself as "Palou". The middle includes details about the puppy's life that are organized by topics, indicated by the prompts but are not in separate paragraphs. He wrote an ending sentence, "I am glad that I am a puppy". In terms of *content*, another key evaluative element, Kyle followed the prompt, the checklist provided and the brainstorming chart to represent his animal, a puppy. Amongst reviewers of this text there would likely be debate about whether or not he was "creative, and provide[d] lots of details" as the task requires. The choice of puppy is probably very common and although some details are included, many more could be. One gets a sense of the puppy's feelings (i.e., happy, sad), his favourite activities (running, climbing) and what he likes to eat (chicken-flavoured food). He seems to be mischievous and Kyle, as Palou, was concerned that he might get into trouble as he gets older. There is a concern that the puppy might become homeless or live in a shelter. The puppy's owner or any humans in the puppy's life are only vaguely mentioned.

Voice and *sentence structure* are components of the analytic rubric used for this assessment. Some sentences read as a list, particularly the first few while others, that could be seen as answers to the questions provided in the brainstorming checklist, are more elaborated and contain elements of a more confident, playful voice (i.e., "sometimes I like to curl up into a ball"). Kyle used a variety of shorter and longer, more complex sentences. He consistently wrote from the puppy's perspective, using "I" in his sentences, except on two occasions, when he used the second-person "you" to represent generalizations about unwanted puppies in shelters and adult dogs that go wild. It is possible to see these two statements as strengths (i.e., Kyle understands larger issues about dogs as pets) or as weaknesses (i.e., Kyle is stepping outside of the 'puppy' persona).

In terms of *conventions*, the final draft has 9 spelling errors out of 168 words, for a spelling accuracy of 95%. One might argue that the accuracy percentage might be lower if a wider range of more complex words were used. There are five errors in punctuation that are primarily due to missing periods, or commas in the place of periods. Kyle did not include quoted speech. With respect to *word choice*, the writing is often general and words such as "small", "run", or "toys" are used when other more specific choices might have been possible. Kyle was writing as a puppy, however, so simple language is appropriate. He sometimes used more specific vocabulary such as "shelter", "dangerous", "scratch", and "healthier".

The printing is very neat, single-spaced, and is written as one long paragraph. Five pages are provided for the assignment and one page was used. Kyle was beginning to be able to write in a more extended fashion. During this particular school year, Kyle's piece of writing was not analysed by the official marking board because only a subset (N=2) of students' work was

evaluated but his writing satisfied most of the level 3 criteria (out of a possible 5 levels, 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest), which is a satisfactory level for Grade 3 writers.

If one looks at the final text as product, there are elements of textmaking and identity construction that are invisible. The reader has unanswered questions about how Kyle came to his decision, for example, or the input of teacher and peers throughout the process. However, none of these unanswered questions and background details would be used in the assessment of this piece. Although all of the drafting elements and worksheets are included, markers rarely refer to these. In my experience, as a marker for these pieces on multiple occasions, markers have access to the entire booklet but generally only refer to it when a piece is not finished or there are confusing elements. One is meant to judge the competence of the writing from the qualities of the final written piece.

Although the writing process followed here (i.e., brainstorming, drafting, etc.) is meant to be authentic, or reflect everyday and common classroom writing practices, one can question whether this is the way all writers write and whether or not children usually follow this process when they write in classrooms. Writing process approaches to classroom writing are common across Canada and are generally viewed as fair and authentic practices (e.g., Chang, 2012; Fleming, 1993; Pritchard & Honeycutt, 2007). One of the primary purposes for this assessment is to give professional feedback to teachers, to look at ways they might focus their future instruction, as well as ways that individual students might be helped. The results of these assessments are provided to Grade 4 teachers the following year and are meant to help with their teaching. Parents receive the evaluations and these may or may not be shared with the writers.

In the section that follows, I re-present the above data as part of a drafting-audiencing cycle, wherein certain identities and texts are constructed within the constraints of this writing process assessment.

Kyle's Textmaking Practices and What Kyle Thinks Writing Is

In Grade 3, Kyle wrote answers to questions about a range of subject areas, completed demand writing pieces, wrote journal entries, completed research projects, wrote poetry, and used digital tools such as EDUGlogster, Photostory3, and Wordle. Towards the end of Grade 3, students were required to write a process piece as part of a provincially mandated writing assessment that took place in Grades 3 across the province. Later in the year, they would also complete two demand pieces of writing, respond to informational, poetic, and narrative texts, orally perform a speech, and engage in assessment in the core strands of mathematics.

At home, outside of homework, Kyle had access to colour-by-number books and colouring books. He had a large plastic bin of these materials in his living room. He spent his free time playing street hockey when the weather was good, watching sports and professional wrestling on television, and watching rap videos and cartoons such as Pokémon online. During the course of the study, I considered textmaking in a broad multimodal sense, and examined how Kyle used the textmaking resources of professional wrestling to construct texts through game-playing, play-acting, movie-making, and digital modes.

Kyle was seen by his teachers as a good boy in a school where there were many behavioural issues and as a mature student who liked to joke around with adults. He and his mother had a close relationship and spent much of the time after school together. His mother helped him with his homework and closely supervised his activity online. Neatness was highly valued at home. Kyle kept his room tidy and he often relied on his mother to help him to produce

home work that was complete, accurate, and neat. During conversations with Kyle about writing he expressed a concern with writing neatly, understood 'writing' as 'handwriting' or cursive writing, a common enough phenomenon in Grade 3. For example, when I would question Kyle about his writing, he would often begin by talking about his cursive writing abilities. Although Kyle was able to write to express his ideas, he often referred to the surface features of the print he produced. The excerpt that follows represents the direction of our conversations about writing.

> DIANE: Okay. Um... umm. I have a big next question but we'll see. I think that probably you're going to miss... Well, let's just see. Okay, I'll ask you a question and we'll see, we'll continue if you have a lot to say. What kinds of writing do you do in school?
>
> KYLE: What kinds of writing? Well, we do handwriting,
>
> Diane: Yeah.
>
> Kyle: like, like I can make some handwriting...
>
> DIANE: Mmm.
>
> KYLE: Well, I can make an 'a'.
>
> DIANE: Yeah
>
> KYLE: [Makes an 'a', saying the script teacher uses for handwriting – hoops & loops.]That's just an 'a'
>
> DIANE: That's nice.
>
> KYLE: And I can make a 'g'. (Mar 4 09)

Kyle was also focused on skipping lines as a key practice in writing (on several occasions he had been asked, by his teachers, to rewrite a draft where he had not skipped lines). He also

worked to keep his writing a small size, and wanted to spell words correctly. In the midst of a conversation about what kind of reader Kyle is, I asked him to draw a picture to express his ideas. He drew a picture of an 'O' level (mid Gr. 3) book:

> DIANE: Ok, so now what I want you to do, if you don't mind, is I want you draw a picture of reading or writing. And it can be a picture of reading or writing that you do at home or at school.
>
> KYLE: So, can I like draw a book?
>
> DIANE: You can draw however you want to.
>
> KYLE: Okay.
>
> DIANE: And it can be a picture of reading or writing that you do now, or, that you think you might do when you're older. But it has to be a picture of reading or writing.
>
> KYLE: Hmm.
>
> DIANE: Whatever you would like to draw.
>
> KYLE: Well, I'm in P, I'm in O, [mid to end of Gr 3 reading level] so I'll put a book that has lots of words into it, [sounds of paper and leads coming out]
>
> (Interview notes, Mar 10 09)

Kyle's status as an O level reader at school, the place where most of his reading happened, was what he shared on this occasion. Kyle also spoke of the importance of having a lot of information about a topic (Int3, Nov 5 2012; Int9, April 23, 2010). He identified pieces of writing that he liked such as "Halloween Story", "If I were principal for the day", and "When I grow up I want to be a rapper". Kyle did not seem to dislike writing at school, but sometimes focused on mechanics rather than content or style, although he was also able to produce works that were lively, with a strong sense of writing style or voice.

What Writing Is, in Kyle's Classroom

Most of the data discussed here was gathered when Kyle was in Grade 3 even though the project spanned his Grade 3 and Grade 4 years. In Kyle's Grade 3 classroom, children engaged in a wide range of textmaking practices. They wrote both teacher-directing demand writing pieces with a set prompt but written in one sitting without a drafting/revising process and some process pieces that included pre-writing or revising and editing stages, across a wide range of genres After the instructions of his teacher and classroom discussion, Kyle followed a process of brainstorming, drafting, conferencing, revising and editing. Students had used this process throughout the school year, using the three-day format of the upcoming assessment to prepare them for the process and the expectations that accompanied it. During the month of March, students wrote over a period of three days. In the section that follows, I present an account of the data in summary form with some low level analysis of events.

Summary of Three Days

Day 1: Listening, Reading, Discussing, Brainstorming

A) Read aloud as model

Observations:

- The teacher, Elaine, introduced CRT (criterion-referenced test) process.
- Elaine read aloud book, Diary of a Worm by Doreen Cronin, suggested in teacher instructions.
- Elaine drew students' attention to features of text such as speech balloons and journal format.
- Kyle appeared to be attentive, sat quietly, and raised hand during reading.

B) Students chose topic and brainstormed/discussed

Process Writing

Pretend you are an animal. Describe what your life would be like if you were that animal. Be creative and provide lots of details.

THINK:

- What kind of animal are you? ✓
- What do you look like? ✓
- Where would you live? ✓
- What would you do? ✓
- What would you eat? ✓
- Do you sleep at night or day? ✓
- Are you a wild animal or a pet? ✓
- How do you move?

PLAN: Use the Organizational Chart to plan what you will write. Use jot notes to guide your writing.

WRITE: Begin your first draft. Use loose leaf paper. **Skip lines in the first draft.** Single space your final copy.

2

Day 1
B) Students chose topic and brainstormed/discussed (cont'd)

Observations:

- Elaine encouraged students to choose an animal and share what they would write.
- Students chose a range of animals and shared ideas.
- Elaine encouraged students to elaborate on ideas.
- Kyle shared that he would be a lion and was able to tell that it is "Big, hairy, coming out to here" (making a circle around his head with his hand) and that he would get his food from the forest and that he would "sneak up and grab" prey with his "sharp teeth".
- All of Kyle's elaborations were in response to teacher prompts.
- Elaine encouraged children to use their imaginations but also choose animals they knew well.

C) Students brainstormed independently

Figure 17. Kyle's brainstorming chart for lion paper with initial analysis.

Day 1
Observations:
C) Students brainstormed independently (cont'd)

- Elaine reminded students to make jot notes, work independently, focus on ideas, and asked them to move their desks apart, a move only made during testing situations.
- Kyle spent most of his time stretched back in his seat occasionally writing a word on his page.
- Kyle checked the first three items on his checklist only.
- Kyle recorded his choice and wrote brief jot notes.
- Kyle included few of the ideas from the readaloud and the group brainstorming session.
- Kyle's responses were brief and general; nothing in the final section.
- Kyle asked if they would be able to add more detail tomorrow.
- Elaine and I discussed how challenging this choice, lion, was going to be for Kyle.

Day 2: Brainstorming, Drafting

A) In between sessions/Instructions

- Elaine read aloud another similar model book, Diary of a Spider by Doreen Cronin and finished it at the beginning of this session.
- Elaine reminded students to use extra paper if they needed to, to skip lines, to revise, to spell on their own. They were reminded to reread work from previous day.
- Students were instructed that they could use their imaginations but knowledge about the animal was important too.

B) Brainstorming Day 2

Figure 18. Kyle's revised brainstorming chart for puppy paper with initial analysis.

B) Brainstorming Day 2

Observations:
- Kyle asked if he could change his topic to puppy.
- Teacher and Kyle erased what he had and he started over.
- Kyle sat bent towards his writing and wrote continuously.
- Kyle generated many new ideas and words to describe 'feelings' or facial expression in the first section.
- Several ideas about puppies from the group brainstorming were not used.
- Kyle used exclusively one-word responses.
- Kyle did not add any checkmarks to the brainstorming chart.
- Two descriptive words, 'fuzzy' and 'skeared' connect to his notes about a lion.

Day 2

C) Drafting
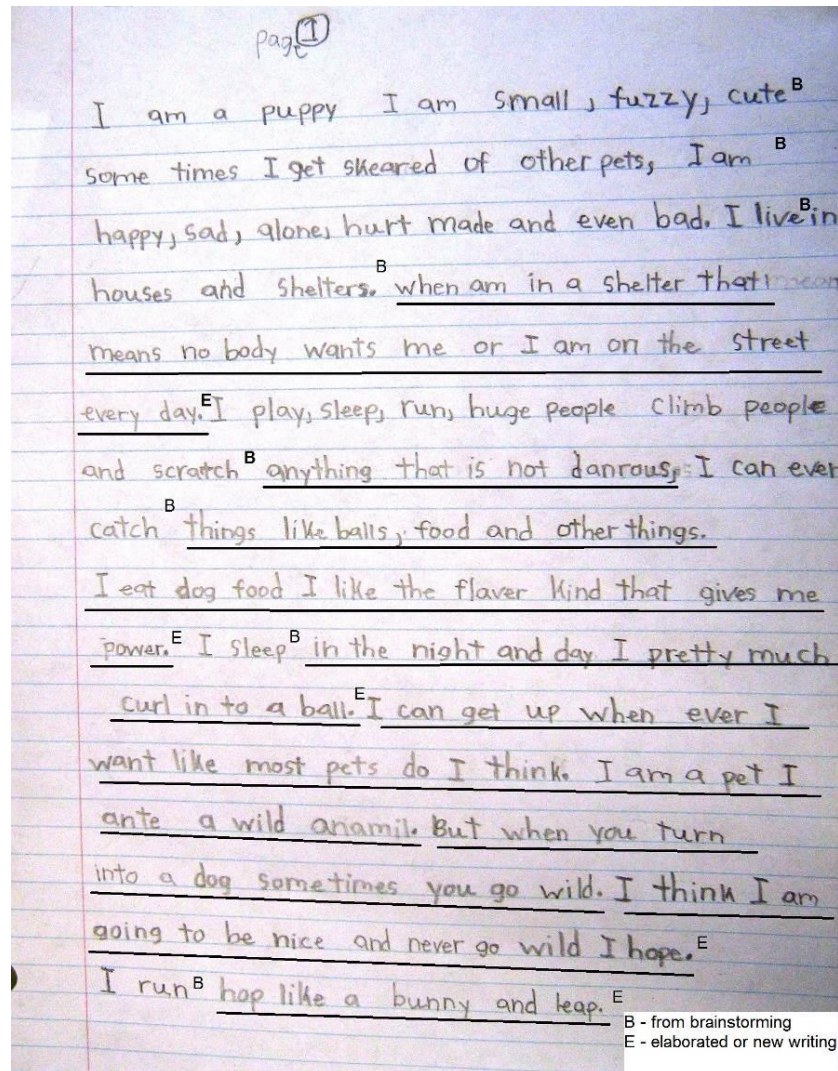
Figure 19. Kyle's 1st draft of puppy paper with initial analysis.

Observations:

- Kyle started writing within five minutes.
- During writing, Elaine showed a sample from last year, where a student had written a piece many pages long.
- Kyle's first six lines include all of the details in his brainstorming draft.
- In this next section Kyle appears to be answering the questions in the brainstorming guide. These responses are more elaborated than those generated from his jot notes.
- The voice of Kyle as a puppy is more discernible after the first 6 lines.

Day 2: Peer Conferencing, Revising

A) Revising

- Kyle quickly finished his first draft and reread it.
- Elaine paired Kyle with Zoey, a student of similar writing ability, possibly a little stronger than Kyle, at writing.
- Kyle and Zoey sat together for almost 25 minutes, rarely talking, often leaning away from each other.
- Kyle asked me to help him give feedback to Zoey but I declined, given the testing situation.
- At one point they appeared to have an argument and Kyle pushed away from the table.
- Elaine and I discussed how children of this age and writing experience are challenged with revision.
- Zoey gave Kyle three suggestions for improvement on the feedback sheet and he addressed them in his next draft. They require Kyle to be more specific or detailed about his life as a puppy.
- Kyle and Zoey returned to their own desks and Kyle wrote his next draft. He wrote continuously with infrequent breaks to stare ahead or look around the room.
- Kyle made the changes Zoey suggested as well as many others.

Day 2

A) Revising (cont'd)

Draft Writing Conference

Author's Name Kyle _____ Date _____

Listener's Name Zoey _____

After you have listened to your partner read, help your partner by answering the following:

I liked went the puppy/ dog curls up in a ball.

I would like to know more about what other things do the puppy catch.

One suggestion is talk more about food and our onwer.

4

Figure 20. Partner conference sheet and Zoey's comments.

Day 2

A) Revising (cont'd)

KEY
N   new word/idea
Sp spelling change
P   punctuation change
R   revision
Z   Zoey's suggestion

Figure 21. Kyle's puppy draft after revisions and responses to Zoey's comments.

Day 3

A) Editing

- The teacher reminded students they could not ask each other for spelling help or use their personal dictionaries with other students in the way that they normally did.
- Kyle started using the strategies (COPS – capitals, overall presentation, punctuation, and spelling) as well as the guidelines in the booklet to edit his work.
- Kyle appeared to be checking his spelling and spent 35 minutes looking for words. He looked around the room and said, "Help".
- The teacher noticed what was happened and told Kyle, "Do the best you can"
- The teacher had reminded students to start sentences differently. Kyle interpreted this to mean that his sentences that started with I (there were several) were problematic.
- Kyle called out quietly "I need help! I need help!" I went over and encouraged him to move on. I said what he was doing was okay.

B) Publishing
- Kyle wrote his final draft and made several small changes.
- Kyle made 9 more changes at this point, removing excess or tentative wording (i.e., sometimes) and added punctuation and spaces.

Final Copy

Hi my name is palou. I am small, fuzzy and cute, some times I get skared of other pets, I am happy, sad, alone, hurt and even bad. **'mad' deleted** I live in houses and shelters. **P** When you go in a shelter that means no body wants a dog or they 'are **P** on the street every day I play, sleep, run, huge people, climb hills and scratch anything that is not dangrous, I can even catch things like balls, food and dog toys. I eat dog food. I like the chicken kind that makes me heathyer. I sleep in the night and day I pretty much curl up into a ball. I can get up when ever I want like most pets I think. some one takes **'do' omitted** care of me. I **P** ante a wild animal. But when you are a dog **'turn into' deleted** you go wild. I think I am going to be nice and never go wild I hope. I run, hope like a bunny and leap I am glad that I am a puppy.

Figure 22. Kyle's final draft.

Hi my name is Palou I am small, fuzzy and cute. Some times I get skared of other pets, I am happy, sad, alone, hurt, mad and even bad. I live in houses and shelters. When you go in a shelter that means no body wants dogs or they'are on the street every day. I play, sleep, run, huge people, climb hills and scratch anything that is not dangerous, I can even catch things like balls, food and dog toys. I eat dog food. I like the chicken kind that makes me healthyer. I sleep in the night and day I pretty much curl in to a ball. I can get up when ever I want like most pets do I think. Some one take's care of me. I ante a wild animal. But when you are a dog you go wild. I am going to be nice and never go wild I hope. I run, hope like a bunny and leap. I am glad that I am a puppy.

Figure 23. Transcript of Kyle's final draft.

Kyle made considerable changes across the drafts of his writing, both in terms of content and conventions. Choices and changes that I saw as most important from these observations include:

- Performing good student by behaving attentively, raising his hand, making contributions, and following all guidelines.

- Kyle's decision to write as a lion despite limited knowledge and vocabulary about lions.

- Kyle's decision to change his topic, and write as a puppy, an animal whose behaviours and features he knew better.

- The long periods of time that Kyle spent not writing, potentially due to a lack of ideas about the topic.

- The lack of impact of the pre-writing instructional, discussion, and modelled book time.

- The partner conference and the challenges of students helping each other with their work.

- The long periods of time spent looking fruitlessly in dictionaries and trying to change sentences.

- Kyle's frustration at various point and unanswered requests for help.

In the section that follows, I represent the above data as part of a drafting-audiencing cycle, wherein certain identities and texts are constructed within the constraints of this writing process assessment. Beyond initial observations, in the sections that follow, I connect Kyle's writing process back to the initial foci of this paper, with respect to what an examination of process renders visible and how one might understanding textmaking identities, creativity, within classroom writing practices.

Looking backwards and outwards from the focal textmaking process, the writing assessment process, I use the remaining space for analysis to talk about:

a) Connections to other texts, practices, and events

b) The role of others in textmaking and

c) What was missing from Kyle's writing process.

Connections to Other Texts, Practices, and Processes: Beyond the Writing Assessment

Implicit in this writing task is the assumption that children will have easy access to a number of animal personas and that the modelled text and the class discussion, as well as the brainstorming checklist, will support children's writing. The modelled text, Diary of a Worm, recommended by the testmakers was possibly chosen as a creative example because the story is told in a journal format from the point of view of a worm. These journals are framed in a way reminiscent of a graphic novel. The ways in which worms contribute to the natural environment are explained through a narrative rather than informational format. The worm is a humorous character and many of his traits, as well as other familial characters, allow us to imagine him as a

boy. When the instructions for the task ask the writers to be creative, they may be imagining that students could emulate this format. Again, this begs the question of what is creative. Student writers in this assessment are asked; it seems, to use this text as an exemplar or an example of what is possible. It is interesting to note that none of the children in this class wrote a humorous text in the style of *Diary of a Worm*.

Kyle's lion→puppy text seems connected to other texts at other times and in other spaces. Several weeks prior, Kyle's class had watched an African safari video and were asked to make a collage to represent an animal of their choice. In Figure 25, there is a photograph of a lion and Kyle's lion collage. Also, during the writing process assessment one other student in the class chose lion, and this may have given him the idea to write as a lion.

Figure 24. Photograph of a lion and Kyle's lion collage

One might ascertain from his choice of a lion that Kyle appeared to have trouble generating new ideas or he liked to re-use ideas. When I met with him at home, and brought art-making materials, he wanted to make another lion collage. Lion, as animal choice, seemed to be on his mind, at this time. When his mother and I suggested something new, he found it difficult to generate a new idea, even though he had many personal interests that he could state. Also, as a

boy, who enjoyed powerful characters, such as professional wrestlers, Pokémon figures, and tough boys in novels, lion seems to have been an appropriate choice. Kyle, however, did not immediately recognize his limited knowledge about lions or the implications of unfamiliar or poor choices on his ability to generate a piece of writing, despite Elaine's repeated efforts to make this clear to students. One might also conclude that Kyle needed more time with the 'lion' topic, that repetition or re-choosing was something that might help him to learn and to think.

Looking across Kyle's interests and textmaking processes and histories there are many powerful masculine symbols and a lion fits with many of Kyle's interests in hockey players, wrestlers, and rappers as all are symbols of masculine power. Kyle said that he had also watched lions on television. However, when it came to generating vocabulary and factual information about lions, Kyle had few resources upon which he could draw. Kyle's search for ideas was not successful. His physical stance (i. e., leaning back, staring out ahead) while writing and his brainstorming sheet (with few, brief examples) seemed to indicate that he was not well prepared to write this text. Such observations led me to question whether better writers have better ideas or can they work with any idea that they are given? Also, do children necessarily know to choose what is familiar? Kyle knew that he knew enough to write about puppies but did not know, at first, that he did not know enough to write about lions. The creators of this assessment assumed that every child would be very familiar with an animal that they could choose and would be able to connect with and understand a writing model, generate a topic that was appropriate, and then bring these elements together. In everyday classroom time and space, children might be given opportunities to research their topic and to collaborate.

A look at Kyle's process and the decision to change from lion to puppy highlights the importance of choice in how decisions about topics for writing and the ability to generate ideas

for writing. It seems likely that the choice of lion would have led to a less developed piece of writing. Upon speaking with Kyle later, he explained that the dog's name was Apollo, not 'Palau' and was named after one of his father's dogs. It seems interesting that after Kyle changed his topic to puppy, he still managed to give his character a regal name, even though it might not have been decipherable to others and even though, Kyle did not know to whom, Apollo, Greek and Roman god, referred. Whether performing wrestler, watching and singing along to rap music, or playing with anti-authority sentiments, Kyle's choices seem to gravitate toward masculine symbols or power and/or wealth.

Help, Peers, Teachers, and Researcher: Kyle's Writing Community

If literacy practices are socially constructed and historically developed, relational considerations are crucial. In Kyle's writing, the instructions of the teacher, the instructions in the booklet, and the feedback from his peers all influenced his final product. When I questioned Kyle about the potential audience for his piece of writing – the marking board assessor – he had not thought of that person but instead had thought of his classroom teacher as the reader, as one might expect. His teacher's requirements for writing over the school year, as well as for this assignment, seemed paramount in his writing. Although Elaine may have thought that she emphasized content over surface, Kyle sometimes interpreted her comments in unexpected ways. As mentioned earlier, he was very concerned with skipping lines and with varying sentence beginnings, the latter of which may have interfered with the clarity of his writing. The teacher's message of adding lots of details was strong and reiterated by other students. For example, at the beginning of the final session the teacher reminded students to vary sentence beginnings:

> Elaine: use more descriptive language, that might make it more interesting. How about if you hear a word over and over again? Not that anyone would do this, but how about if

you heard like, "Uh, I eat garbage and I play with the ball and I and I am and I... and I

had and I" what would make that piece of writing better…take out something that's

repeated over and over again. Rearrange how you do your sentence, right? Do you take

out the whole sentence? No, the sentence might be a really good sentence. But you want

to find a different way, in order to start your sentences, in interesting ways. So those are

the kinds of suggestions… (Transcript, March 13, 2009)

It seems that in response to this reminder by the teacher, Kyle attempted to change all

sentences that start with "I" but instead of starting sentences in different ways, he looked for

synonyms for "I" in the dictionary. In these ways, he tried to follow guidelines that his teacher

suggested as well as those that were in his booklet. This was clearly not the intention of his

teacher and later she was surprised when she learned what he had tried to do. Also, Kyle

continued to make changes to spelling and word tense after editing, while writing his final or

published copy. Kyle followed the intended writing process, and the ways in which he did this

would not be visible if only his final piece of writing was examined. Classroom writing norms,

or practices, were taken up by children in the assessment, and, in addition, Kyle tried to work

with what he saw as expectations for writing success within the assessment.

The influence of peers is also invisible when writing is seen as a final product only.

Because the students are not permitted to talk as they are working, or share ideas or spelling help

as they would normally do in day to day writing, peers seem to play a smaller role in a writing

assessment piece. Zoey and Kyle spent a long time consulting yet barely talking. Zoey appeared

to take on a teacherly role focused on requiring more detail. Kyle wanted help helping Zoey.

Zoey pushed Kyle to be more specific. The fourth draft includes changes based on Zoey's

questions – all of which Kyle addressed. Classmates reinforced the teachers' expectations – especially about improving writing by adding details –during this task.

This writing assessment assumes that students' writing competence is best demonstrated by independent work. At school, Kyle tried to follow his teacher's instructions and sometimes asked peers for help. At home, Kyle and his mother worked as a team and Kyle often asked for help. During the writing assessment, when Kyle was extremely frustrated he was not able to receive help and called out for help, in a loud whisper, in the middle of the assessment in a half joking, half serious manner.

At school, in Grades 3 and 4, Kyle enjoyed a number of different writing tasks and differing levels of engagement. He commented to me that he really enjoyed completing a research matrix for an animal prior to writing a paragraph from each column of notes. Another time he suggested that teachers should not ask students to do work when they do not know enough about the topic. For more spontaneous writing tasks, when Kyle chose a topic of interest to him, he appeared to be able to write much more fluently, and with a stronger voice. If one looks only at Kyle's submitted piece of writing for this assessment, only a limited understanding of both his strengths and his needs as a writer is possible.

What Is Missing?: Demand Writing and Wordplay

In this process writing piece, Kyle followed instructions as precisely as one could expect although he did not generate many new ideas or go beyond what was asked. Although students were encouraged to "be creative" in the instructions, I would be surprised if many children would understand what it means to be creative in an assessment like this one. Kyle's teacher, Elaine, trying to support students' success, emphasized knowing about the animal over the creative possibilities. At other times during the school year, Kyle was able to write a lively and

elaborated response to a visual prompt that might be viewed as more creative yet not necessarily seen as appropriate (i.e., his Halloween story was modelled after the Friday the 13th movies). In Grade 4, Kyle and his classmates were asked to write a Halloween story in response to this image and in fifteen minutes Kyle produced the story shown in Figure 19. When the bell rang for recess, the teacher left and the children huddled around, reading their stories aloud.

One dark scary night the blood sucking bats were out. rumour has it every Halloween the bats would kill any body who gets in there way. One Halloween jason and his friends were trick or treating lets go this way that were the bat suck blood and leave people to die. the crosses are for the people who died. Well jason went over there in a couple of minutes later jason came back blooded and batered. What happen the ba, ba, bats bite half of his face off we need to get you to a hospatil. Some man came with a wepon what are you kids doing here this place is bared off. We need to take our friend to the hospital. 3 year later jason was still hurt He never stop thinking about the bat. He went back there with a gun and shot the bats head off. the end. (151)

Figure 25. One dark scary night - Kyle's 15-minute writing piece

Kyle experimented with a more risqué topic here that was possible in his process writing and also that was implicitly encourage by the topic of Halloween. His confidence and his voice are strong in this piece that has a clear beginning, middle and ending. Although the piece is not well edited—there are a number of spelling and punctuation errors—it is developed and is almost as long as his writing process piece, which was 168 words, compared with the 151 words here. This writing sample (Figure 26) took approximately fifteen minutes; the writing process sample occurred over three days and approximately four or five hours. His quick and vivid response suggests another area of familiarity or expertise that might provide material for strong writing.

Thinking Outside the Box: Conversations About Creativity

The phrase 'thinking outside the box' pervades educational discourse and it surfaced in my conversations with Kyle. On one occasion, where he was attempting to generate ideas for a wrestler mosaic (inspired by the materials I brought and the lion mosaic he had made at school), Kyle, his mother and I were sitting at his kitchen table. Kyle was asking his mother for help and, as I had already been at his house for an hour and a half, I was getting ready to leave.

> Diane: You know what? I don't know but if maybe you're a bit tired to do this right now are you?
>
> Kyle: No [in a peppy voice].
>
> Diane: No? You sure? It's getting kind of late.
>
> Kyle: No.
>
> Diane: Okay
>
> Kyle: Got to finish this. I just got to think outside the box, I guess.
>
> Diane: Think outside of the box. Yep.
>
> Kyle: Ok, think outside the squares. [The mosaic tiles are squares].

Here Kyle associated the generation of new ideas, using a different topic rather than the lion collage idea from school, as 'thinking outside the box'. He seemed to know that is what was expected by the tasks and by me and that something more than what he was giving was required.

Teachers may expect that children will take the instructions they give as a starting place while children may interpret instructions literally or in unexpected ways. If you look closely at Kyle's piece of lion/puppy writing, his more lively sentences (i.e., curled up in a ball) occur when he goes outside of the prompts and his jot notes. A year or so later, I revisited this writing sample, along with all the drafts and my notes about them, with Kyle's Grade 3 classroom

teacher and her initial response to Kyle's jot notes was that they were very brief. As we spent more time looking through the drafts and discussed the notes I had made about changes from draft to draft, she was surprised at the extent of his revising and editing, as I had been also when I examined these drafts in detail. We both noted the many important elements of the writing process that he accomplished. Kyle was able to follow a writing process with success at many of the intended goals and expectations of the assessment task.

Kyle's teacher and I discussed how challenging it is to find the time and opportunity to examine children's writing in an in depth manner when there is so much else to do. Although this writing process piece took place in Grade 3, I continued to observe Kyle's classroom textmaking in Grade 4. Joan, Kyle's Grade 4 teacher, also brought up the notion of 'thinking outside the box' in her discussions with me about her goals as a Language Arts teacher and her teaching of Kyle, and of Stephanie (another participant but not the focus of this dissertation). During a discussion of what this might look like, Joan stated, "I suppose it's like taking a skill or taking something and then using it as their own or using it in a different way" (Interview, April 27 10). Over the course of our daily discussions, and during two semi-structured interviews, Joan frequently referred to the loaded curriculum and the challenges with getting beyond "the more structured part" of the curriculum.

The Halloween piece of writing, cited above, occurred in Grade 4 where Joan, Kyle's teacher, talked about the importance of children 'thinking outside the box" (Interview, Apr 27 2010). Joan said that she equated creative thinking with critical thinking although, through our discussion, she acknowledged that much of her classroom focus was on how children might follow models. Teachers, myself included, often seem to define thinking outside the box as coming up with new ideas, that have not been mentioned directly by the teacher yet the desire for

students to follow instructions was a more common practice. In this case, creativity might happen when ideas are used in ways that are both repetitive and productive, when something new but borrowed is made.

Conclusion

At the beginning of this analysis I proposed to juxtapose the process of writing with its product, in order to render visible what is normally not seen or valued. Also, there were intentions to examine how and which texts are valued and how the concept of creativity might be used in multimodal textmaking practices.

In this examination of one framed, bounded textmaking process, the ways that Kyle understood this process and this assignment are made visible. If one looks at only his final piece, one does not see his frustrations with spelling, sentence starts, peer conferences, decisions about what topic to make. In addition, as a busy teacher with limited time to review drafts in detail, one might not see his successes and the way he is able to follow the process of writing. Writing, or textmaking of any type, takes time, focus, and practice. Rarely is time taken to focus on writing process and how drafts are made and remade. Outside of the constraints of writing assessment this might be possible when more time is made for classroom writing, when conversations between colleagues is focused on writing, and when children have opportunities to talk about their understanding of what writing is and might be.

It is possible to shift our understanding of creativity or 'thinking outside the box' to an understanding of day to day production of texts as ultimately creative, because each new text builds on texts of the past but is finally creative because of the textmaker's intentions and resources, and the time and space in which the text is being made. Following a textual model or a set of instructions might not necessarily be imitative. Through this examination, it is possible to

see what happens and how texts are received by audiences, and to value this process as one might the final text. A social and historical examination of process reveals how writer identities are constructed and how educators might better work with students as they learn to be writers. Classroom teachers, as well as those who research multimodal textmaking at school are called to consider individual responses to teacher directions and requirements as well as the textmaking practices used in classrooms. Teaching requires a flexible approach to how children develop as writers, as well as provision for support, structure and opportunities for becoming familiar with genres, topics and processes. When teaching writing, writing process approaches might not reflect how many writers write (Lensmire, 1997; Luce-Kapler, 2004, Richardson, 2000), and opportunities for playful writing are also important.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION: TEXTMAKING CYCLES, IDENTITIES, AND
EVERYDAY PRACTICES

In this final chapter, the overlapping and separate findings for each of the proceeding chapters, originally conceived as separate manuscripts, are brought together. They were developed chronologically, in the order presented here, and each one built upon the ideas developed in the previous framing, as I worked to develop a broad and specific analysis that addressed my research questions about texts, identities, and resources across time and space. In Chapter 2, the textmaking cycle of *wrestler* is examined. Kyle's relocalization of the textual resources of professional wrestling across time and space for different purposes and with different effects poses questions and suggests responses about the ways in which genres and textual forms can be used in hybrid ways. Kyle playfully relocalized *wrestler* as he performed a wrestling match as I videotaped, edited the wrestling match footage to create a wrestling video, ranted about a classmate, imagined fans listening to his work at school and then, during more structure class time, did not use *wrestler* elements to create texts. This textmaking cycle, or spiral, was chosen for analysis because it surfaced across the time and space of home and school, and showed the potential for hybrid textmaking for a range of purposes and effects. The hybrid or relocalized texts that Kyle created were improvisational and playful, and used his expertise in the various forms of professional wrestling pervasive in his everyday life. As a particularly taboo cultural resource, professional wrestling offers a potential place for discussion and exploration in classroooms. Educators are challenged to imagine how these kinds of everyday culture texts and resources might be meaningfully included in children's learning at school.

Chapter 3 takes up this concern with popular culture, or everyday culture, and also the ways in which boys might play with and use these forms and identities in ways that could be described as rescripting. This chapter explores how certain texts and resources are more valued

than are others. Focusing primarily on data and analysis connected to Kyle's interest in professional wrestling, other areas and interests related to rap music and rap music videos, online avatars, and desirable masculine personas are considered. This section explores how Kyle and his family acknowledged and appeared to understand that wrestling is both taboo and entertaining. They were excited by and interested in professional wrestling, but were also concerned with issues of appropriateness and physical violence and were aware of public perceptions. Kyle's deep understanding and knowledge allowed him to play with wrestling in parodic and reflexive ways. The storyline of his adversarial relationship with Stephanie became a script that he playfully enacted in space made available through the research and with the researcher as audience. The ways in which professional wrestling is both 'fake' and 'real' were mimicked by Kyle as he constructed drafts of multimodal texts. He chose tough masculine avatars, pretended to be a tough guy when he told of what he might do to get in trouble at school, while at the same time keeping some of the interests of his younger boy self with his Disney toys and his interest in watching Pokémon. Finally, Kyle's interest in the aggressive arenas of masculine culture are contrasted with his self-consciousness and his relaxed wrestling game play. In Chapter 3, Kyle's reflexive use of a range of taboo cultural forms allowed him to play with identities as performances as he used his deep knowledge of professional wrestling and his interest in rap music, and was conscious of himself and others as audiences for his performances.

In Chapter 4, the textmaking process explored is a more conventional, three-day writing process assessment at school. It builds upon the ideas in previous chapters by expanding on the ways in which Kyle learns from those around him by making texts, highlighting the role of expertise in textmaking, emphasizing the impact of accepted literacy practices, and also the ways that practices might be interpreted individually. This process is connected to Kyle's

understanding of writing and school, his sense of what it means to be a "good boy", to other texts that Kyle has made, and the audiences for Kyle's texts. This core writing assessment process is considered in terms of what is made visible when process is examined, from a sociocultural process, alongside writing products, and when creativity is not seen as individually produced and in opposition to imitation. Kyle's texts build upon other texts and practices, and are creative 'inside the box'.

<p style="text-align:center">Overall Findings</p>

Looking across all three framings of the data collected throughout this ethnographic case study, this analysis of Kyle's textmaking makes claims about the connections between texts and identities across time and space, the importance of children's expertise and everyday resources, the ways in which some texts and textual resources are valued over others, and the value of hybrid forms as creative and productive. The analysis also highlights the importance of looking at textmaking processes and draft and what is rendered visible when one does so, and the constraints that are imposed upon textmaking during assessment and also the ways in which children can be successful within these constraints. Texts are viewed multimodally with special attention to embodied performed texts, and the audiences, implied or actual, for these texts.

Within ethnographic research, new audiences might make possible new textual forms and opportunities. With an intent to see children's as experts on their own lives and textual experts that can share this expertise, the possibilities for reflexive, parodic, and complex textmaking are acknowledged. Within masculinities as sites for textmaking, there are pulls from boyhood and manhood mixed together as Kyle selected high status and powerful personas, or scripts, and created masculine melodramas that admire and critique the texts that are being made. Textmaking is ultimately socially constructed and historically produced. Through Kyle's

textmaking an individual narrative can be traced, and this individual's narrative is co-constructed by media, practices, and other people in the textmaker's life.

Building upon the work of those who consider all texts as multimodal (e.g., Bearne, 2005; Bearne & Wolstencroft, 2007; Kress, 2000, 2003; Stein, 2008), I view Kyle's wrestler performances, as well as the print drafts that he produced at school, as narrative texts. This research and the examination presented here theorize what happens to practices across time and space (Gutiérrez, 2010), what can be learned by viewing the boundaries between Kyle's home and school as permeable and by considering these as changing across time and space rather than as easily definable contexts. Through the research conducted, and the analysis provided, there is a beginning response to Hull and Schultz (2001) who ask how out of school identities and resources might be leveraged in the classroom. I consider a wide definition of text, a changing view of literacy practices, and consider what children's out-of-school resources might have to offer. Framed within a sociocultural perspective (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985) that leans on Bakhtin's (1986) understanding of social languages and intertextuality, influenced by mobilities research (Leander et al., 2010; Massey, 2005), and New Literacies Studies (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Heath, 1983, Street, 1984), ultimately this project attempts to learn from one child about how best to include them in school literacy practices and how to help them to become successful multimodal makers of texts.

Many claims have been made about the value of including home and community literacies at school (e.g., Alvermann & Hong Xu, 2003; MacCleod, 2004; Moll & Dworin, 1996) and emphasize the importance of examining literacy practices travelling across time and space (Hull & Schultz, 2001; Gutierrez, 2010), much research remains to be done. Others have examined what happens at school or at home and a few have started to look across these spaces

(e.g., Dyson, 2003; Heath, 1983; Hicks, 2002; Li, 2007; Pahl, 2007a). In the current climate of interest in what homes and communities have to offer (e.g., Bloome et al., 2000; MacCleod, 2004), this project is concerned with how to help teachers to include the interests of all children, and particularly children who come from working-class and low-income backgrounds. As a starting place, this research describes how the experiences of one boy might resonate with the experiences of other children, and highlights the disjuncture between his out of school resources and those of school.

<div align="center">Research Questions and Contributions</div>

During the two-year period of this research study, Kyle relocalized the everyday culture resources of wrestling, and he created new texts and textual performances in the process. Two questions guided this research of Kyle's multimodal textmaking practices and trajectories:

1. What multimodal resources and identities are used by children engaged in text-making across time and space?

2. How do children use resources and identities to produce multimodal texts (i.e., engage in multimodal practices) and textmaking (and social) identities?

One child's use of a wide range of textmaking resources was traced and followed across time and space in order to examine the texts, resources, and identities being made and used. Kyle's hybrid performances or narratives of professional wrestling across time and space were considered creative, relocalized forms. His reflexive and parodic rescripting of everyday culture texts suggests a complex and nuanced understanding of these masculine forms and implies a playful stance towards textmaking. Looking up close at Kyle's writing process in a writing process performance assessment, it is possible to view his writing as creative and engaged and at the same time 'see' the challenges under which he produced his texts.

Hybrid Forms As Playful and Creative: Valued Texts and Valued Practices

Children's use of resources to create hybrid forms can be seen as playful and reflexive. Kyle repeated yet re-situated the textual resources of professional wrestling in different moments at school and the hybrid texts that he produced were indeed repetitive and mimicked the textual features of professional wrestling. Imitation, as argued by Pennycook (2007, 2010) is a creative process. There are two important points to consider here: the first is that because of the change in time and place from previous texts or cultural resources, something new and creative is made. Secondly, creativity needs to be reframed. Creativity happens when familiar ideas and ways of doing are combined in ways that seem new or unexpected but these are always interpreted in light of what we already know and do, socially and historically. A neoliberal and humanist perspective often attributes intelligence or creativity to the individual, as a sign of 'genius' or special talent that seems almost magical or mystical. An everyday understanding of creativity that does not diminish the competence of the textmaker but reminds us that creative textmaking always occurs socioculturally, amongst the backdrop of other people who have shared their interests and talents, and built upon other texts.

The remaking, relocalizing, rescripting, remixing, and revising of multimodal texts can be playful and parodic, often remaking meanings, shifting understanding, and critiquing texts and textual resources at the same time that they are being used and adopted. Particular for children that do not easily identify with the texts and literacies of their schools and classrooms, these new texts may provide opportunities for resistance and critique. Because of the narrow range of possible identities often offered to boys (e.g., Blair & Sanford, 2004; Connell, 1996, Newkirk, 2000), and to girls (e.g., Hicks, 2012; Nixon, 2001; Walkerdine, 2007) the tensions between the requirements of school literacy practices and desirable identities may be particularly

potent and difficult to avoid. When children are competent and comfortable with a particular textual form or genre, the possibilities for playful remixes are made stronger. Also, when children are given time and space to experiment with textual forms, or they claim time and space in which to do so, they may engage in both the critique and enjoyment the textmaking resources and forms have to offer. While schools and teachers continue to embrace only a limited range of possible texts and practices, the potential for including everyday resources is constrained. In a mandated assessment, the exclusion of everyday resources can be exacerbated. If children are asked to be creative, how might they interpret this requirement in an assessment task?

How Texts Are Made: An Examination of Process Across Time and Space

At school, desires to be a 'good' student can get in the way of greater school success. At the same time, this portrait of a textmaker suggests what might be rendered visible as one looks closely at the processes followed while making texts at school. In a mandated assessment, where one focuses on the final textual product, the accomplishments of an individual textmaker might be lost. Across these texts and textmaking processes, it is possible to tease apart, if only for a fleeting moment, the kinds of resources that were used and the identities that were both used and constructed. Rather than dichotomize home and school, I argue that both are permeable and constantly in a state of change. The possibility for play and experimentation with texts may be more likely outside of the classroom setting, where open-ended tasks more likely occur, and during events that are accompanied by the one-on-one interest of an attentive adult. Writing play or playing with writing is rarely a component on writing instruction or classroom writing practices. Nonetheless, textual resources are able to travel into new moments or events in space and time, and can be used in relocalized ways that are repetitive but in new spaces at new times, and used in ways that suit the textmaker's audience and purposes in the moment.

What Can Be Learned from Children About Their Lives?

One of the key intentions was to look to children in order to learn about what is important to them, in their lives, and in their textmaking. This ethnographic case study offered an "opportunity to learn" (Stake, 2005) from the focal participant and key people in his life. Kyle was positioned as important with knowledge and experience worth sharing. He directed data collection at times and was engaged with the research process although ultimately, I am responsible and accountable for what is made of these experiences.

By tracing the trajectories and processes of textmaking, this research points to the kind of influences that act upon one boy's textmaking work and also the importance of learning more about families whose literacy practices may not coincide with those authorized by schools and classrooms. In addition, this research questions the taboos around inclusion of particular everyday culture resources, especially those that are seen to represent working-class values, and possibly promote violence and aggression, such as professional wrestling.

Strengths and Limitations

An examination of one child's textmaking through an ethnographic case study approach offers opportunities for theory building and in depth examination (Kendrick, 2003). In this analysis sociocultural theory, a focus on process and audience, the inclusion of a conventional understanding of writing process approaches, and a desire to work across time and space all worked together. This study focused on literate textmaking at a time when children's identities as literate beings are developing, in the middle years of elementary school. The participant's relationship with the research and the researcher are integral elements of this research process. In response to calls for research that crosses the time and space of home and school, this project follows cycles and trajectories across these.

Using the possibilities of extended ethnographic research for tracing small narratives, or lives up close, this research allowed for the viewing of normally invisible drafting of texts and an examination of process. This research project follows the textmaking processes, and the daily life at home and at school of one boy, Kyle. Using participant-observation methods, I observed his textmaking along with many other events. These included recess and lunch times at school, special events, and work in all of the other subject areas. At home, visitors or other family members might be present, and often Kyle and his mother had things they wanted to show me or to do. The use of small narratives or stories is a key place for theorizing and observing how the tangle of everyday occurrences and responses to these events might occur (Hicks, 2002). The claims that I make as a result call for further research with more children, but also make a case for valuing what can be seen when one looks up close (Kendrick, 2003). The complexity of one child's perspective and the contradictions amongst the identities that he performs and constructs are made visible.

The depth and width of engagement with this project, and Kyle's textmaking, was enhanced by the ethnographic nature of the study. At the same time, there were opportunities for textmaking that were not observed. For example, I did not accompany Kyle to the community centre where he played games and sometimes did homework. Although Kyle was happy to have me present at school and at home, he was not as interested in having me accompany him to his community centre (where he did some homework, played pool, and engaged in other recreational activities) with him. I also did not spend time with Kyle when he played with friends outside and around his house, where many more textmaking opportunities might have occurred. Nonetheless rigour is maintained in this study based on the time spent in many different events over an extended period. Focused on the social construction and history of the texts being made, this

recount is limited by the time and space of the two-year research project and information and recounts from those around Kyle that questioned throughout the study about events outside of the time and space explored. Because of the ethnographic nature of this research and the time spent with Kyle, I was able to remain open to textmaking opportunities and to shift what I originally imagined as texts (i.e., pieces of writing, paintings, digital compositions, etc.) to more performative moments that I would later frame as texts.

Becoming part of the classroom environment, and to some extent, the environment at home, I was able to position myself as an interested party, a teacher helper, and a student supporter. In this way, I was able to observe Kyle in a naturalistic setting, a setting in which no doubt my presence changed things, and become party to his development as a maker of texts over time. The ways in which Kyle's identities came into play changed as he moved from one grade to the next, from one event to the next and were influenced by a multitude of other factors. Borrowing notions about interpretive work by post-structural researchers (Lather, 2007; Pillow, 2003), I recognize that these observations and analyses are my own and are ultimately partial. Guided by my research questions, I interpret Kyle's actions and talk through my own lens, and cannot claim to describe the only possible interpretations of these data, data that were not only gathered but also generated by my presence throughout this research project.

Applications

One of my original goals for this research was to revisit and redefine my roles in relation to children in classrooms, and also to attempt to see children and their families differently, in ways that had become invisible to me as a classroom teacher in this community. This study presents the richness and diversity of home literacy practices and resources the focal child and potentially for other children whose families are not often successful in terms of school-defined

notions of academic and literacy success. It is believed that this close-up view of Kyle as he becomes text-maker and reflexive thinker should resonate with other children and their literate practices.

Additionally, considering what children bring, whether it is a language, a culture, or a particular set of literacy practices that are not part of mainstream schooling, is necessary in order to encourage all children to be welcome participants in school settings. These considerations, or inclusions, need not be literal in the sense of incorporating them into classroom content, although, there are many who advocate for this route (e.g., Alvermann, 2012, Dyson, 2003; Moll et al., 2005/1992). Other options are to include children's interests as objects of discussion, and not only in order to critique them in negative ways. If classroom spaces are opened up, for children beyond the early primary years, for playful and open-ended textmaking, it seems likely that many everyday resources may find their way into classrooms.

This kind of openness would require a form of risk-taking on the part of educators, where activities that are not usually seen as appropriate in classrooms would undoubtedly find their way in. Teachers would also need to be open to the possibility that children could then be positioned as experts and they as learners, in ways that might not be part of educators' usual teaching practices. Also, points of tension might arise from engagement with cultural forms that implicitly or explicitly critique teachers and schooling or that engage with behaviour that may be seen as aggressive or antisocial (Buckingham, 2003). In a world that considers digital and social media spaces as important sources for learning, consideration of many cultural forms seems inevitable and crucial.

The ways in which writing process approaches are implemented in classrooms calls for examination. More fluid and individualized approaches where students reflect and recursively

draft texts seem reasonable but a strict stepwise approach might not be suitable for each child. In North America, where mandated assessment seems inevitable, the impact of these assessments on children's development as multimodal textmakers needs to be considered.

The playful and parodic ways that Kyle made texts invites educators to create more open-ended textmaking opportunities for children at school, where their expertise and experience with textmaking in everyday culture might offer possibilities for new textmaking practices at school. An approach that embraces play and inquiry is central to learning in early years classrooms and then seems to disappear as children progress through formal schooling. Teacher may end up being positioned as learning alongside children, as observers and facilitators of textmaking. It is crucial to remember that as "children enter classrooms, they encounter worlds that are also saturated with specific cultural meanings, values, forms of knowing" (Hicks, 2002, p. 24).

Future Research

Children's everyday literacy practices need to be further examined in ways that consider boundaries between home and school as permeable and that examine, close up, how children make sense of their areas of expertise and use them in innovative hybrid ways. From the current study, it seems that the range of masculine identities offered by particular forms of everyday culture are adapted by boys in ways that suggest they do not passively accept the messages and identities of mass culture, yet media informs and influences the kinds of identities that are seen as valuable and powerful. Although many researchers and educators accept that diverse languages and ethnic heritages must be considered and included in schools in some ways, this acceptance is not always extrapolated to more taboo and 'inappropriate' choices. More in depth study of how teachers are taking up these issues in increasingly digital classrooms is required.

The ways in which elementary-aged girls use their everyday resources to construct identities and to make texts in a digital age is also necessary.

Future research with young children needs to consider the roles that children can play in telling their stories through research, while acknowledging the power differentials between researchers and children. Ethnographic and qualitative methods are highly suited for these types of investigations. If the complexity of everyday culture texts are considered and children's contributions are valued, it might be possible to develop "a more responsive and responsible vision [that] would allow the raw beauty and power of working-class voices to challenge our conceptions of the literary and the pedagogical" (Hicks, 2002, p. 227). If connections were made to *all* children's everyday lives, including their everyday culture practices and familiar forms, including those children who are excluded from school literacy practices, schools might become unrecognizable in comparison to their current state. In a contemporary culture that engages with digital and online resources, the possibility for innovative data collection of ongoing textmaking processes is more possible than ever. Children, often competent with digital and online tools, may be able to become even more involved participants in the data gathering process. With respect to children's textmaking potential and the desire to transform schools and classrooms into equitable spaces, imagination is necessary: "imagining things being otherwise may be a first step toward acting on the belief that they can be changed" (Greene, 1995, p. 22).

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APPENDIX

Appendix A. Transcription Conventions

Symbols	Meaning
. period	Termination after falling intonation
, comma	Speaker parceling of talk
? question mark	Used to indicate question or uncertainty
! exclamation mark	Expression of shock or surprise
" " quotation marks	Used to mark a change in voice quality, e.g. when speaker uses another person's words
[ ] square bracket	Sounds, background noise, inaudible words/phrases
… three dots	Used to indicate hesitation or pause
- hyphen	Indicates false start, or rewording, by speaker
= = overlap	Overlapping utterances. When second speaker begins talking is marked by = = in the first person's turn.
WOW capitals	Used to mark a word or part of a word that is stated emphatically.
{ } braces	Used to provide additional information to clarify text

Transcription conventions adapted from Eggins and Slade (1997) and Fairclough (1995)