MINDFUL CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGY IN THE PRACTICE OF A HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATOR

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

The Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

(Home Economics)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

(Vancouver)

September 2016

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ABSTRACT

A common conception is that the singular focus of home economics educators and home economics education is the development of a technical perspective (technê) in students with the goal of producing a product through reasoned, instrumental action (poïesis). However, taking such a curricular and pedagogical focus reduces the opportunity for interaction with praxis and phronesis. By excluding thoughtful engagement with the topics in this subject area, teachers may unknowingly facilitate mindlessness in themselves and their students regarding everyday life actions, which has the potential to unintentionally propagate harmful ideas and actions.

This research is positioned on the idea that attaining a mindful disposition can help educators develop curriculum and pedagogy that challenges students to think critically and, as a result, make thoughtful decisions about their actions in their everyday lives. The home economics curriculum engages with everyday life actions. While they are ‘small’, everyday life actions have the potential to be emancipatory. The purpose of this study is to investigate what non-meditative mindfulness looks like in the practice of a mindful home economics educator and to uncover connections between education, home economics, and mindfulness.

Through the use of case study and action research methodology, the research investigates how a home economics teacher engages with and employs mindfulness in her curriculum and pedagogy. Data collected throughout the semester delivery of secondary school courses include a reflective personal journal on classroom activity; lessons and classroom documents; and feedback from students within the course.
Four themes identified from the data that appeared to reduce mindless tendencies in my teaching practice were: i) having an intentionally evolving curriculum and pedagogy, ii) the inclusion of place-based learning opportunities, (iii) the inclusion of inquiry based learning opportunities, and iv) the importance of external validation.

This research indicates that engaging with non-meditative mindfulness has an impact on both an educator’s thinking about his or her pedagogy and also on his or her practice. Employing non-meditative mindfulness may appeal to educators because it offers the opportunity for individuals to experience empowering, transformative ways of thinking without demanding that individuals commit significant amounts of time to modifying their practice.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my advisor Dr. Kerry Renwick for her support, inspiration, and guidance. Her insightful comments and questions encouraged me to dig deep into the roots of my research question. I would also like to thank Dr. Anthony Clarke for providing helpful comments and suggestions as a member of my thesis committee. Thank you to Dr. Mary Leah de Zwart and Dr. Mary Gale Smith for igniting and emboldening my passion for home economics and for helping me see the incredible potential for everyday life education. Thank you to Debbie Gregg and Tracy Gates who showed me the importance and transformative nature of authentic learning and critical thinking in the classroom. Thank you to Rachel Labossiere for being an inspiring colleague and home economics educator.

I would also like to express thanks to my family and friends who supported and put up with me as I immersed myself in my graduate work over the last three years. Thank you to my parents who relentlessly believe in me. Thank you to Colin for his endless encouragement, patience, and editing. This thesis is dedicated to Elise because she represents why being mindful in our everyday lives matters.
SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the Problem

I am interested in the connection between mindfulness, critical thinking, and education, home economics education specifically. Smits (1997) explained that the lives we live, the relationships we have, and the practice of living embody the principles of hermeneutics whereby we are conscious and make sense of our actions in relation to self and ‘other’. With this perspective, my research will apply questioning and careful thought to mindful curriculum and pedagogy in order to investigate its links to home economics education, critical thought, and the potential for emancipatory action in both teachers and students. In order to do this, I will explore the conceptualization of mindfulness in a home economics teacher’s practice.

My research question is: In what ways might an educator incorporate mindfulness in her practice to facilitate her students' engagement with independent, mindful critical thought? I will employ case study and action research methodology to investigate both how a home economics teacher included mindfulness in her practice and what this inclusion looked like in a home economics classroom. I am interested in investigating how mindfulness connects to emancipatory notions in the classroom and will review Aristotle’s concept of praxis and phronesis (Renwick, 2015), Freire’s (1998) conception of conscientização or critical consciousness, and Kincheloe’s (2008) theory regarding critical self-analysis. This thesis will outline major themes that emerge from the data analysis and the implications of the findings will be discussed.

a) Definitions

In this subsection, I will define the key words/terms used in this thesis and clarify
how they will be used within my thesis from hereon. These words/terms include home economics, mindfulness, praxis, phronesis, and emancipatory action. The following definitions and explanations are provided to enable clarity about how I have understood each the word/term’s relationship with education and mindfulness for the purposes of this thesis.

**Home Economics:** Home economics is a subject area with curriculum centered around behaviours and habits of everyday life. According to the International Federation of Home Economics (IFHE), home economics (also known as Family and Consumer Studies or Everyday Life Education) is “a field of study and a profession, situated in the human sciences that draws from a range of disciplines to achieve optimal and sustainable living for individuals, families and communities” (International Federation for Home Economics, 2008). It is “a curriculum area that facilitates students to discover and further develop their own resources and capabilities to be used in their personal life, by directing their professional decisions and actions or preparing them for life” (International Federation for Home Economics, 2008). Home economists have proposed that the goals of everyday life education are to attain “optimal and sustainable living” (International Federation for Home Economics, 2008) and “to bring people together in caring relationships, to work together for the common good of all living systems” (Heinilä, 2003, p. 111). They have asserted that this subject area should guide students towards developing “moral vision” so they become “responsible, caring citizens by living everyday life mindfully” (Heinilä, 2003, p. 114).

**Mindfulness:** Mindfulness is commonly explained as paying attention to what is happening in the moment (Bishop et al., 2004). Studies on this topic have increased in
popularity over the last decade (Garrison Institute, 2012) in various areas of research in “Western society, commerce and science” (Grossman, 2015, p. 17). According to Ie, Ngunoumen, and Langer (2014), there are two distinct “dominant mindfulness camps” (p. xxxii). A large body of research on mindfulness in the last decade draws on traditional Eastern, meditative mindfulness (Reber, 2014). This form of mindfulness uses meditative practice to develop mindful awareness and behaviours by avoiding distress and increasing awareness (Djikic, 2014). The research in this thesis, however, employs non-meditative, Western mindfulness, which aims to reduce mindlessness through individuals actively noticing new things (Langer, 2014). Distinctions between these two forms of mindfulness are described in greater detail in Section 3. The remainder of this thesis will be referring to non-meditative mindfulness when the word mindfulness is used, unless otherwise stated.

**Phronesis:** Phronesis has been described as wisdom or intelligence and, more specifically, “wise practical reasoning” (Renwick, 2015; Eisner, 2002). It is a quality that guides individuals toward knowing how to employ thoughtful consideration in their choices and actions. Phronesis connects with the concept of mindfulness in this thesis because by employing phronesis mindlessness is reduced providing individuals access to increase and more enlightened ways of knowing. This reasoned practical wisdom has the potential to continue to reduce mindlessness as mindful ways of thinking and knowing develop.

**Praxis:** Praxis is a morally-committed and oriented action (Kemmis & Smith, 2008) that is informed by phronesis. Praxis “is a form of conscious, self-aware action, … distinct from technical action... and as such it is about knowing what is being done
simultaneously with the doing” (Kemmis, 2010, p. 10). This is important in this thesis because of how it relates to the goals of home economics education specifically attaining an optimal and sustained living. Additionally, it is useful to note that praxis does not always follow phronesis. This connection between connection between mindful consideration and mindful action is a relationship I analyze in this thesis.

**Emancipatory action:** The phrase emancipatory action elicits the idea of behaviour that frees individuals or groups from something that is enslaving them. This thesis will explain how individuals can be trapped in mindless ways of knowing and that participating in mindfulness can potentially free them from mindless categorization or even oppressive ways of knowing and understanding the world (Langer, 1989). Further, mindful ways of knowing and thinking can lead to or stimulate praxis or mindful action. This mindful action has the potential to be emancipatory action, in particular when individuals reduce their mindlessness around potentially oppressive societal norms and/or expectations.

2. **Rationale for the Study**

This research will investigate connections between non-meditative mindfulness and the curriculum and pedagogy of a home economics educator. I believe that they are inherently linked because of the personal nature of and ever-changing content in the home economics curriculum. A fundamental component of home economics education is the development of a technical perspective (technē) with the purpose of producing a product technē through reasoned, instrumental action (poïesis) (Renwick, 2015); however, there is a common conception that this is the singular component of the subject area. Focusing primarily on production does not fully address the goals of home
economics. This curricular and pedagogical focus may cause educators to reduce their interaction with praxis [action that is morally-committed and oriented and informed by traditions in a field (Kemmis & Smith, 2008)], and phronesis (practical wisdom), both of which call for critical thought due to their reliance on the consideration of moral notions. By excluding thoughtful engagement with the topics in this subject area, teachers may unknowingly facilitate mindlessness in themselves and their students regarding everyday life behaviours, which has the potential to unintentionally propagate ideas and actions that may not be conducive to a productive and rewarding life for themselves and their local and/or global communities.

In my opinion, a stagnant pedagogy and curriculum or one that focuses mainly on production cannot sufficiently approach the constantly evolving elements in the home economics curriculum. I believe that attaining a mindful disposition can help educators develop curriculum and pedagogy that challenges students to think critically and, as a result, make thoughtful decisions about their behaviour and actions in their everyday lives. The everyday life actions that the home economics curriculum addresses, including food, textiles, and family life, are constantly occurring, therefore these small, everyday life behaviours have the potential to be emancipatory in a variety of ways.

I am motivated to undertake this research because of my passion for guiding students toward understanding the impact their thought processes, choices, and actions make on themselves and the world. In other words, my goal is to develop mindful students. Dewey (1997/1897) proposed that educators are social servants who are responsible for assisting students to develop socially as citizens. Kincheloe (2008) explained that educators can circumvent their students from getting stuck in oppressive,
top-down ways of knowing if they develop a pedagogy and curriculum that engages their students in “critical and complex system[s] of meaning-making” (p. 88) that causes them to examine their civic selves. Throughout my teaching career, I have searched for means to encourage my students to think critically about their own lives. I hope that, by encouraging them to engage in critical thought about their everyday lives, they might become aware and motivated to make choices that would positively impact not only themselves, but also their local and global communities and environments. Mindfulness appears to have that potential.

Felver and Jennings contended that “[m]indfulness research has often been described as being in its infancy, and if this is the case then the study of mindfulness with youth and in schools is in the prenatal stage of development" (2016, p. 1). This statement resonates with me as I complete my literature review. I believe that mindfulness in the home economics classroom could produce myriad positive results with respect to students’ perceptions of themselves, their world, and the choices they make. There has been attention given to critical approaches to home economics (McGregor, 2003; Plihal, 1989; Way, 1989) and bringing a global perspective in home economics education (Smith & Lowe, 1996). I cannot, however, find any research on home economics that has used the term mindfulness or elaborated on it as a key way to orient teachers and/or students. Moreover, I was unable to find significant research on non-meditative mindfulness and, specifically, non-meditative mindfulness and its impact on educators or students in terms of its effect over time or ways it may modify or influence a teaching practice.

3. Purpose for the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate what non-meditative mindfulness looks
like in the practice of a mindful home economics educator and to explore connections
between education, home economics, and mindfulness. Further, by inquiring into
mindfulness, is it possible to consider it as an ability that facilitates emancipatory thought
within individuals regarding their everyday life choices? With respect to teachers, such
life choices would include the influence on their practice as well as the impact on how
students behave and make choices in their everyday life regarding the content of home
economics curricula.

4. Procedures

My research will use case study and action research methodology to investigate
how a home economics teacher engages with and employs mindfulness in her classroom.
This will be a case study with myself as the case. I am undertaking this research because
there is little research of a similar sort in my subject area and I am the only home
economics educator with in the community of home economics teachers that I am aware
of who is intentionally incorporating mindfulness in her classroom. I will collect data
throughout the course of a school semester by recording a personal journal as a classroom
teacher and analyzing my lessons and classroom documents.

5. Significance of the Study

This research is significant for home economics educators as well as educators in
general as the research will explore methods that apply in all educational contexts,
especially where the content is to be considered through a critical lens. Newmann (1977)
said that “[p]ersons wielding power… have an ethical responsibility to justify their
actions and that justification must be grounded in universal principles of justice, human
dignity, [and] equality” (pp. 30-31). Educators may unknowingly facilitate mindlessness
in themselves and their students about everyday life actions by excluding thoughtful engagement with the topics in home economics as a subject area. Mindfulness is a way of enabling thoughtful and judicious thought and action on the part of individuals as they live out their lives in relation to others. Attaining a mindful disposition can help educators develop curriculum and pedagogy that challenges students to think critically and, as a result, make thoughtful decisions about their actions in their everyday lives.

The home economics curriculum engages with everyday life actions, including food and textiles. While they are ‘small’, everyday life actions have the potential to be emancipatory. The aim of examining a mindful home economics educator’s experience is to investigate what non-meditative mindfulness looks like in practice and to uncover connections between education, home economics and mindfulness. Within this research, the nature of the subject area - home economics and its connection to everyday life actions is aligned with the reflexive practice of a teacher as they examine their everyday classroom practices.

Through my investigation, I hope to demonstrate that engaging with non-meditative mindfulness has an impact on both an educator’s thinking about his or her pedagogy but also on his or her practice. I also intend to showcase the appeal of employing non-meditative mindfulness in that it offers the opportunity for individuals to experience empowering, transformative ways of thinking without demanding that individuals commit significant amounts of time to modifying their practice.
SECTION 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW: A CRITICAL APPROACH TO EDUCATION

Teaching is a complex and complicated practice. The intention of my research is to try to bring about more meaningful learning and pedagogy within school contexts. As a researcher, it is essential that I not only focus on the object of learning, but also the way in which desired outcomes can be met. There are a plethora of circumstances, experiences, considerations, and choices that lead up to how and what an educator does in their classroom. Curriculum (i.e. what is taught) and pedagogy (i.e. the method and practice of teaching) are greatly impacted by social, cultural, and historical influences. This section will discuss major factors involved with education and the role of mindfulness, including: curriculum and pedagogy; the implications for pedagogy and the role of the teacher; the connection between Langer’s (1990) psycho-social mindfulness theory and social constructivism; and critical theory.

Curriculum and pedagogy are intricate, symbolic concepts with various layers and contexts that are “deeply embedded in one another” (Henderson & Slattery, 2005, p. 2). Educators must “not only think deeply about what they teach but about how they go about their teaching and why they teach in the ways that they do” (Henderson & Slattery, 2004, p.1, emphasis in original). According to Henderson and Slattery, education is “a form of human artistry that is, at its core, a curriculum-based pedagogy” (2004, p.1, emphasis in original).

Unfortunately, curriculum and pedagogy (including research, choices, and actions) are often separated in educational policies – a consequence of historical, socio-political, and cultural conditions, which propagate a profession that is “overly managed
and narrowly technical” (Henderson & Slattery, 2004, p.2). Critical pedagogy is often overlooked when groups or individuals focus on what knowledge learners should know and less on how or why something should be taught (Pinar, 2004). Conversely, pedagogy can become trivialized and reduced to techniques, processes, or competencies. The sometimes misguided “promise of pedagogy” (Pinar, 2004, p. 22) has driven the search for a simple, pedagogical cure-all with the hope that by discovering “the right technique, the right modification of classroom organization… or [how to] teach in the right way… then presumably students will learn what we teach them” (Pinar, 2004, p. 22). In creating such misrepresentation about pedagogy, it is now possible to see a social environment where teachers are too often viewed as responsible for results (McClintock, 1971) or mere technicians implementing a predetermined agenda.

The purpose of curriculum is to engage people in learning the skills and knowledge that a community deems essential to be a productive member of society, including the ability to be critical and creative thinkers that contribute to society in various ways. The valued skills and knowledge included in curriculum and how the curriculum itself is developed are influenced by a variety of factors. Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, and Taubman (1995) have expounded that:

Curriculum is what the older generation chooses to tell the younger generation. So understood, curriculum is intensely historical, political, racial, gendered, phenomenological, autobiographical, aesthetic, theological, and international. Curriculum becomes the site on which the generations struggle to define themselves and the world. Curriculum is an extraordinarily complicated conversation (pp. 847–848).
Further, the skills and knowledge chosen for inclusion in the curriculum has implications for pedagogy and the role of the teacher. Societal influences and prescribed curriculum impact how teachers go about their teaching and why they teach the way they do.

Today’s curriculum and pedagogy have been greatly influenced by the social, political and economic impact of neoliberalism. An understanding of how this politico-economic philosophy is imbued in our society provides context for understanding curriculum and pedagogy as a field of study in its own right. Neo-liberalism encourages “supremacy of the free market, the absence of government intervention,… deregulation, and widespread privatization” (Cruz, 2013, p. 179; Harvey, 2005). It grew in pervasiveness in the 1970s and 1980s as a response to economic stress in many countries but particularly in the United States and Britain (Harvey, 2005). It continues to be a strong socio-political position and continues to have impact both in and beyond Western societies across the world, including Canada.

Many academics have proposed that this neoliberal philosophy has had detrimental effects on education and, subsequently, on everyday life (Giroux, 2004; Aronowitz, 2000; Freire, 1998). Neoliberal reform policies have been accused of rating, sorting, and over determining students’ futures (Letts & Sandlin, 2016). Paulo Freire, a prominent educator and proponent of critical pedagogy, warned of the impact of “neoliberal fatalism on everyday life, including on the field of education with its degradation to job training… for the neoliberal economy” (Cruz, 2013, p. 179). Neo-liberalistic goals have resulted in a push for academic excellence and performance within increasingly narrow areas of study, standardized-testing that measures said performance, and results in the increasing privatization and corporatization of schooling. Schooling in
this environment can produce damaging results as explained by Brett Veinotte (n.d.) of the School Sucks Project. He noted that “[w]hen we first enter these institutions at age six … we are curious, innovative, unique, creative and hopeful in ways that we will rarely be able to replicate throughout the rest of our lives. But over time, school sucks those essential attributes out of too many of us … and replaces them with predictability, obedience and apathy” (Letts & Sandlin, 2016).

Neo-liberalism infiltrates curriculum and pedagogy whether teachers are aware of it or not. It is imbued in the way society views the purpose of education, the way pre-service teachers are instructed to teach, and the goals school districts set for their districts and, in turn, what administrators set for their schools. Societal influences even dictate whether the use of textbooks is celebrated, expected, or discouraged. These texts govern so much of what happens in a classroom and whether or not teachers are able to have any autonomy at all and yet, John Dewey proposed that “[t]he community’s duty to education is its paramount moral duty…. Through education, society can formulate its own purposes, can organize its own means and resources, and thus shape itself with definiteness and economy in the direction it wishes to move” (1887/1997, p. 23; Hederson & Slattery, 2004).

Educators can still wield power within their classrooms despite societal determinants and obstacles as they exercise a degree of academic freedom. The way teachers conduct them, plan their lessons, deliver their lessons, and assess students can have a dramatic impact on students. For students, these impacts can include the way they not only interact with the content and curriculum, but also the way they perceive themselves and interact with their world, potentially, for the rest of their lives. That
being said, Carr and Kemmis (1990) asserted that “many of the aims and purposes that teachers pursue are not the result of conscious choice so much as the constraints contained in a social structure over which they have little, if any, direct control” (p. 130). This mindless way of practicing produces classrooms where the status quo is maintained and dominant myths, behaviours, and language remains unquestioned and perseveres. However, educators are able to challenge the neo-liberal status quo by “gaining a deeper awareness of the social-political-economic reality that dominants one’s life and the ways to change this reality” (Cruz, 2013, p. 179). This leads to the questions: “Should they?” and “Is there a moral element to teaching?”.

For John Dewey, teachers, who are in a position of authority in their classrooms, are “engaged, not simply in the training of individuals, but in the formation of the proper social life. Every teacher should realize the dignity of his [or her] calling; that he [or she] is a social servant set apart for the maintenance of proper social order and the securing of the right social growth” (1887/1997, p. 23). Newmann (1977) said, “[p]ersons wielding power… have an ethical responsibility to justify their actions and that justification must be grounded in universal principles of justice, human dignity, [and] equality” (pp. 30-31). Teachers who do not participate in critical self-analysis exist in a space where “ontology is colonized by [the] dominant power [and w]e become beings constructed by others – our actions are manipulated to serve their interests” (Kincheloe, 2008, p.89). Kemmis, in writing about professional practice, argued that we “not only want good professional practitioners, we want practitioners who will do good” (2012, p. 148, emphasis in original).
“[A] top-down tyranny of expert-produced interpretations of tradition and its oppressive power can be subverted, and our futures can be reinvented along the lines of a critical and complex system of meaning-making (Kinichloe, 2008, p. 88). Schools and educators can maintain a disposition of phronesis – where the “moral disposition to act wisely, truly, and justly… with both goals and means always open to review” (Kemmis, 2012, p. 149) – or even a critical-emancipatory perspective – where the “disposition toward emancipation from irrationality, injustice, suffering, [and] felt dissatisfactions” (Kemmis, 2012, p. 149) prevails. These perspectives support the idea that both teachers and students need to both understand and be prepared for the fact that their actions are irreversible and those actions in turn produce irreversible consequences.

Critical constructivism, a philosophical viewpoint that focuses on the “construction of self”, develops an “awareness of ourselves as social, cultural, and historical beings” (Kinichloe, 2008, p. 81). It facilitates discernment whereby viewpoints are shaped by prevailing views and, although views are shaped by social action, they can also be modified by social action. Freire argued that it is essential for individuals to engage in conscientização – a “process of reaching critical awareness and acting upon it” (Cruz, 2013, p. 178). He suggested that, by engaging in this process, individuals “recognize the ‘obstacles’ brought about by neoliberalism” and use it as “a means to lay the foundation to overcome these ‘obstacles’ ” (Cruz, 2013, p. 179).

Teachers who embody this critical view of self ask questions for emancipatory action so both they and their students can develop an awareness of their civic self. They do not only ask about how we know, but also why it might matter at this time and place, how historical knowledge impacts us, and what we should do now that we have come to
this awareness (Kincheloe, 2008). Educators provide an opportunity for a “process of social reconstruction, educational reconceptualization and self improvement” when they engage in this form of questioning (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 83). Critical educators guide and empower their students by facilitating their connections with the natural, social, and epistemological perspectives as they participate in desocialization via ideological disembedding” (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 89) and reconstruct how they view themselves.

Both phronesis and a critical-emancipatory perspective do not guarantee praxis on the part of teachers or critical thinking on the part of students. What they do, however, is empower individuals to act in ways that they feel are “for the good” and prepares them to make wise choices regarding obstacles they face. Phronesis is not something learners can develop simply from being taught a particular set of curricula outcomes or through direct instruction. Rather, this way of knowing comes from experiences and awareness. These emancipatory ways of thinking, teaching, and behaving take time and thoughtful action. In Section 3, I will explain how mindfulness can support the development of this critical approach with respect to educator and student self-awareness, curriculum development, and pedagogical practice.
SECTION 3 – LITERATURE REVIEW: MINDFULNESS

1. Mindfulness

The word mindfulness is defined as “the quality or state of being conscious or aware of something” (Oxford Online Dictionary, 2016). Its origins are rooted in ancient Eastern meditative traditions and philosophy (Williams & Kabat-Zinn, 2011) including Buddhist, Hindu, and Chinese philosophies (Ie et al., 2014). It is commonly described as focusing on experiences happening in the moment by continuously regulating attention partnered with an inquiring, open-minded perspective (Bishop et al., 2004). Grossman (2015) observed that “[w]ithin just the last decade, the word mindfulness has gained enormous popularity and traction in Western society, commerce and science” (p. 17). The Garrison Institute (2012a) conducted a search for research that investigated links between mindfulness and education. They determined that contemplative, meditative mindfulness, in particular, appeared to be seeing a surge in popularity and increasing credibility in education including in both schools and universities (Weare, 2014).

With this growth, though, comes confusion. Hartelius (2015) asserted that “[m]indfulness suffers from a lack of a satisfying consensus definition” (p. 1271). Many researchers used the overarching concept of mindfulness, or fail to define mindfulness and discuss meditative mindfulness exclusively, “leaving much research in education and educational psychology unconnected to each other” (Reber, 2014, p. 1054). The omission of this distinction is common not only in research, but in various resources and programs, including many referenced in this section (Stewart Resources Centre, 2015; Dorjee, 2010). This section will clearly define mindfulness and clarify the form of mindfulness my research and this thesis refers to.
There are “two dominant mindfulness camps” (Ie et al., 2014, p. xxxii) that share significant attributes, but differ in theoretical principals. Eastern, socio-cognitive approaches to mindfulness employ both “psychological and meditative elements” (Ie, Ngnoumen & Langer, 2014, p. xxxii) with the aim of facilitating mindful behaviour by lessening or evading suffering and increasing quality of awareness (Djikic, 2014). They focus on “nonreactive awareness and concentration of one’s self and experiences” (Ie et al., 2014, p. 1).

The Western mindfulness model applies a social psychological approach and is the form of mindfulness my research examines. This method had its genesis in the 1970s (Ie et al., 2014) and was largely shaped by Langer’s “pioneering work on mindlessness and choice” (Ie et al., 2014, p. 1). It is commonly referred to as non-meditative mindfulness, “mindfulness without meditation” (Ie et al., 2014, p. xxxii), or “novel distinction-drawing” (Langer, 2014, p. 10). Western mindfulness is described as “the simple process of actively noticing new things” (Langer, 2014). It is “an active state of mind characterized by novel distinction-drawing that results in being (1) situated in the present; (2) sensitive to context and perspective; and (3) guided (but not governed) by rules and routines” (Langer, 2014, p. 11). It emphasizes “activity within awareness” (Djikic, 2014, p. 140) and avoids mindlessness (Langer, 2000).

Mindlessness, according to Western mindfulness, occurs when we commit to a singular way of taking in new information without being aware of or open to alternatives. It transpires when “we rely on distinctions drawn in the past… stuck in a single, rigid perspective and we are oblivious to alternative ways of knowing” (Langer, 2000, p. 220). It can occur as a result of repetition (we do not need to attend to something we do
repetitively) or because of the way we are first exposed to information and subsequently “process… it without questioning alternative ways” (Langer, 2000, p. 220). Western mindfulness challenges individuals to be open-minded and avoid making mindless judgments (Djikic, 2014).

Langer explained that Western mindfulness can work in tandem with Eastern, meditative mindfulness. She said that non-meditative mindfulness is a “different way to get to essentially the same place. When we actively draw distinctions, we come to see that context and perspective matter, we see we didn’t know it as well as we thought we did, and this uncertainty keeps our attention on the topic” (Langer, 2014, p. 10). An important distinction between these two types of mindfulness, however is that, while meditative mindfulness requires significant effort and presence of mind, non-meditative mindfulness “allows for blink-like transformations, sudden revelatory moments, to take place” with little intervention (Saarinen & Lehti, 2014, p. 1115-6). It has the potential to empower people throughout their day-to-day lives because it does not require individuals to find time for it. Non-meditative mindfulness occurs in the hustle and bustle of everyday life, amidst daily concerns and routines. Having defined and explained Western, non-meditative mindfulness, the remainder of this section will explore the application of non-meditative mindfulness in learning, education, professional practice, and home economics.

2. Mindfulness, Mindlessness, and Learning

Searching for links between non-meditative mindfulness and learning is a necessary endeavor. Research supports the idea that “[m]indfulness-based interventions have beneficial applications to educational practices” (Ie et al., 2014, p.
Both meditative and non-meditative mindfulness are developing a presence in school-based programs, perhaps due to an increasing focus on social/emotional learning (Weare, 2014), but mindfulness has the potential to offer more social/emotional learning connections. It offers educators the opportunity to consider and engage in emancipatory action from oppressive elements of their practice include those present due to neoliberalism. This emancipatory awareness and action has the potential to, as mentioned in Section 2, guide educators and their students towards developing an understanding of their civic self.

Weare (2014) asserted that mindfulness is “essentially about learning to pay attention and cultivate attitudes such as kindness, curiosity, and non judgmentalism” (p. 1037). This assertion draws connections between mindfulness and an Aristotelian view of praxis and phronesis. Individuals have the potential to gain practical wisdom (phronesis) through mindfulness and, therefore, have the potential to engage in “morally committed action” (praxis) (Renwick, 2015, p.23). This confirms Weare’s proposition that the “link between education and mindfulness could be seen as… obvious and fundamental” (2014, p. 1037). Moreover, mindful intervention that involves both individuals and the current education system, which creates and reinforces a lack of mindfulness, is arguably more important now than ever. The proliferation of “distraction and confusing ‘information’ offered by the ubiquity of modern media, the Internet, devices such as cell phones, and 24/7 steaming” (Weare, 2014, p. 1040-1) influences members of our society, including educators and students, and the way they are able to “focus, concentrate, and apply critical judgment to sort fact from fiction” (Weare, 2014, p. 1040-1).
In *The Power of Mindful Learning* (1997), Langer drew the distinction between mindless and mindful learning. She outlined how learning in a mindful way (learning with an understanding of context and an awareness of the fluid, malleable nature of information) allows learners to understand more information, more deeply. Langer said “[t]hough we cannot and would not want to be mindful of everything simultaneously, we can always be mindful of something” (1989b, p. 199). She proposed that individuals should aim to reduce mindlessness by creating a mindful perspective with the goal of increasing “cognitive flexibility and to thereby increase behavioural flexibility and the ability to adapt to one’s current environment in a meaningful manner” (Carson & Langer, 2006, p. 29). The majority of Langer’s research at the time of writing considered conditions where “mindfulness is most likely to flourish” (Ritchhart & Perkins, 2000) with short-term studies, demonstrating the simplicity of mindful engagement. Langer’s psycho-social perspective connects strongly with and can be extended into the critical constructivist viewpoint discussed in Section 2.

Langer has argued that our “system of education teaches children to be mindless” (Ie et al., 2014, 1036) and that the majority of what we learn is learned in this absolute, mindless fashion. This form of learning can look like many things in the classroom. For example, students are often encouraged to learn to participate in a task or memorize facts so they no longer have to think about or question them, solve problems from a textbook that have tidy answers, or study for a standardized test. Rationale for teaching in this fashion can vary but this form of learning is promoted by a hidden, and often neoliberal curriculum that values particular forms of knowledge
over others, including excellence and standardization/standardized testing (McLaren, 1989; Giroux & Giroux, 2006).

This type of repetitive learning and/or over-practice is called learned mindlessness and has been found to decrease mindfulness and students’ ability to look at what they have memorized or learned in different ways (Langer & Imber, 1979). It creates students who attempt to solve problems from the viewpoint of the school classroom, not from the viewpoint of everyday life. They expect answers to add up and find it difficult to consider problems from new perspectives or to question the relevance of assignments (Reber, 2014; Dewey, 1913). Mindless education “is trapped in categories, reinforces linear thinking, strengthens the belief in limited resources, leads to automatic behaviour, and implies that actions in the world originate from singular perspectives that lack complexity [which have the potential to result in] a narrow self-image, loss of control, learned helplessness, unintended cruelty, and stunted potential” (Mani, Elworthy, Gopinath, Houston & Schwartz, 2014, p. 596).

Langer contended that mindlessness can be acceptable in certain rare situations but is justifiable only “when we have found the very best way of doing something, and when nothing changes” (2014, p. 9). However, and perhaps ironically, she also posited “everything is always changing” (p. 9). In the same moment, an object or situation appears differently depending on perspective. Since the circumstance of status that Langer describes is so rare, the discouragement of rote, mindless education that is common in school systems is necessary.

Langer (1990, 1997, 2009) has suggested that education should shift its attention toward assisting students to mindfully attend to the “here and now, with total
focus, with engagement with what is the case and kind, open-minded curiosity towards the new and unexpected, and with discrimination and wisdom” (Weare, 2014, p. 1040). Mindful education, according to Langer, occurs when students are “creating new categories of learning, emphasising process before outcome, welcoming new information, and fostering more than one viewpoint; to her, mindful learning is a process of re-imagining the world as one knows it” (Mani et al., 2014, p. 596).

Research focused on mindful learning has found that people tend to enjoy themselves more and time seems to pass quickly when individuals pay attention to something and draw new distinctions in the process. Mindful attention has been found to facilitate a higher level of and more complex cognitive activity, even with students participating in simple tasks (Saarinen, 2014). This is possible even though the transition from mindlessness to mindfulness can be, and often is, effortful (Langer, 1989a).

Various researchers have elaborated on the connection between mindfulness and learning. Ritchhart and Perkins (2000) considered the trait of mindfulness, questioning if it is appropriate as an educational goal in and of itself, and explored “what it means to cultivate mindfulness” (p. 27) as an enduring trait. Since much of Langer’s research demonstrated the short-term outcomes of mindfulness, Ritchart and Perkins argue that mindfulness must have a long term, worthwhile impact on student learning in order for it to have beneficial value to the educational community. They assessed the value of mindfulness and whether or not it is useful goal through a short study involving college students. Their research led them to conclude that mindfulness should be an “ultimate goal” for educators because it encourages the “ongoing examination of the disciplines… from various perspectives [that] encourages students
to see the world as a place in which they are active agents in constructing meaning and building understanding” (p. 45). After completing research on mindful teachers, Sherretz (2011) resolved that if all classrooms were taught from a mindful perspective, learning could be cross-, multi-, and trans-disciplinary (rather than one particular test or assignment decontextualized and isolated from other domains); mindfulness should be linked to constructivist theories during initial teacher education; and classroom connections (educator to student, student to student) should be facilitated therein.

3. Mindfulness and Teaching

While at school, students learn to expect that their teachers will provide them with an appropriate amount of information and then challenge them with solvable problems (Reber, 2014). While this may help students complete tasks at school, it is not generally representative of the way information is provided and problems present themselves in life. Ritchhart and Perkins (2000) state, “[c]ritical and creative thinking depend on an openness to new ideas and the ability to break out of one’s mind-set” (p. 29). Mindfulness’ “purposefully not linear” (Sherretz, 2011, p. 80), open-minded approach allows students to consider problems from many angles, allowing for various outcomes and solutions. It has the potential to guide students to the critical and transformation stage encouraged by Smith and Peterat (2000) – a stage where students are critically aware of social situations that could change; learn by being a part of our evolving world; see themselves as globally responsive citizens; and participate in critical engagement with the world that leads to emancipatory action.

Transformative ways of thinking are invaluable for our students and our fast-paced, perpetually changing, connected world. Reber contended that it is essential for
teachers to “educate the youth to develop mindfulness as a disposition” (2014, p. 1066). In fact, Willard explained that “[y]oung people already have a head start on mindfulness, … [that they] naturally notice the details in life that… adults overlook, ask the questions [adults] stopped asking, … are open to new experiences without the heavy weight of adult prejudgment… seek and make novel observations and insights, …[and] delight in new perspectives” (p. 1071). Thus creating conditions that facilitate and encourage this natural, mindful way of looking at the world requires a mindful teacher.

Our understanding of the world is established through actions and interactions (Fatemi, 2014). Novel-distinction drawing and actively noticing new things challenges individuals to look at themselves and the way they interact with their world differently and forces them to consider new paradigms of thinking and acting. It modifies the way individuals think, feel, and live and helps them refrain from viewing the world and acting from a single, fixed, and immutable perspective.

The development of new paradigms “is often associated with skepticism, mistrust, and disbelief: the new paradigms are unsettling, as they perturb the longstanding mindset that has already developed familiarity, comfort, and accessibility of the truth” (Fatemi, 2014, p. 116). This can be challenging as it destroys assumptions about individuals and/or the world that individuals may have taken for granted. It also allows individuals to “embrace the complexity, uncertainty, instability, and uniqueness of [a] phenomena” (Fatemi, 2014, p. 117).

What is it, then, that teachers need to do or change in their practice in order to engage their learners in mindful thought processes? Non-meditative mindfulness has
the potential to guide educators towards phronesis and praxis, cultivating what Vaines (1997) refers to as reflective practitioners. Vaines (1997) asserts that reflective practitioners have moral vision, are committed to contributing to the greater good of the world, and are motivated to scrutinize what they believe, know, and do. This step towards phronesis moves professional practice toward the thoughtful action(s) of praxis (Renwick, 2015) in which mindful modifications to the way an educator considers their practice, themselves, and their students can be made.

Educators wield a significant amount of power in their classrooms. The means in which they conduct themselves, plan their lessons, deliver their lessons, and assess students can have a powerful impact on students and the way they, not only interact with the content and curriculum, but also the way they perceive themselves and interact with their world, potentially for the rest of their lives. For example, Langer has posited that “[w]hen information is given by an authority, seems irrelevant, or is given in absolute language, people take in the information without questioning it and become trapped by the substantive implications of that information in the future should that information become relevant and where a deeper understanding would be helpful” (Langer, 2014, p. 8).

Langer argued that teaching “without regard to… conditional truth and overreliance on evaluation (grades), children are taught the mindless illusion of certainty” (Ie et al., 2014, 1035). Reber (2014) explained that if “school wants to teach for life, it has to prepare students to respond mindfully to the problems in the real world” (p. 1055). Teachers put their students at risk when they mindlessly teach without considering the content of their curriculum and/or how it would best be
delivered in their classroom in ways that encourage the specific pupils they are teaching to connect and think critically.

The practice of avoiding mindlessness and increasing the heightened awareness of mindfulness cultivates a variety of attributes including “open-minded curiosity, kindliness, empathy, compassion, acceptance, trust, patience, and non striving, and the skills of focusing, and paying and switching attention” (Weare, 2014, p. 1044) but teaching mindfully is not merely removing drills or rote memorization from the classroom. It is not a passive undertaking. Simply participating in an activity does not qualify as students mindfully engaging in that activity. Teachers cannot simply follow a script or instructions to be mindful in their teaching. This is important to note considering the increasing popularity of mindfulness in education as mentioned previously in this literature review. Researchers (McCown, Reibel, & Micozzi, 2010) have argued that educators who teach mindfulness to or facilitate mindful learning in students must also be mindful themselves. Weare (2014) commented that the mindfulness community should argue for increased and ongoing mindfulness in teaching education and make it widely known that simple “mindfulness activities” do not provide an adequate base for teaching mindfulness to students or incorporating mindfulness into one’s teaching practice. In order to develop a mindful practice, teachers must mindfully engage themselves. Phronesis draws on experiences and “our own attempts to do… good for each person and for humankind” (Kemmis, 2012, p. 157). It cannot be directly taught and tested as though it were a technique or tool (Kemmis, 2012).

Aristotle’s classification of human action connects with motives that may arise
when teachers develop a mindful practice. When teachers are mindfully engaged with their practice, they may seek to develop a technical perspective of technê (craftsmanship) in order to produce something through poïesis (reasoned, instrumental action) (Renwick, 2015). They may value theoretical epistêmê, the attainment of true knowledge, which could guide them through theoria (contemplative action). But, ideally, mindful noticing and consideration would lead educators to phronesis, as noted above, where they aim to “act rightly in the world” (Kemmis, 2012, p. 149). This could potentially even guide them toward a critical-emancipatory perspective where they aim to break down “irrationality, injustice, suffering, and felt dissatisfactions” (Kemmis, 2012, p. 149) through emancipatory action. Mindful educators would develop an awareness that their praxis or action “immediately begins to affect the uncertain world in uncertain and indeterminate ways” (Kemmis, 2012, p. 150) as it happens. They cannot govern this outcome, they can only mindfully prepare for the execution of ethical action. What follows is not fully within their control, which reiterates why fostering mindfulness in students is valuable.

Teaching mindfully offers educators the opportunity to reach the hearts, minds, and consciences of their students. Educators who seek to foster this in their students must carefully consider the details of their practice. Mindful educators are able to recognize and fulfill thoughtful, ethical intentions within their practice and facilitate mindfulness in their classrooms by identifying and reducing mindless tendencies and practices (Weare, 2014). According to Reber (2014), there are two ways teachers can implement mindfulness into their practice. First, teachers can intentionally organize their teaching and classroom activities so they foster mindfulness. Reber refers to this
as situational mindfulness. Second, teachers can promote mindfulness as a quality to be achieved. He refers to this as dispositional mindfulness. Reber contends that, if students learn in an environment that encourages mindfulness as a personal trait through the classroom environment and activities, they will approach activities in the classroom, and hopefully in life, with a “mindful mindset” (p. 1056).

Researchers have examined strategies mindful teachers employ to facilitate both situational and dispositional mindfulness in their classrooms (Langer, 1997; 2000; Ritchhart & Perkins, 2000). These strategies create classrooms where wonder can abound and students are encouraged to think critically, rather than being subjected to the top-down form of learning so common in classrooms influenced by neoliberalism. Although the researchers who looked at these strategies consider them from a sociological perspective of mindfulness, they connect to the critical constructivist perspective because of the ultimate outcome that mindfulness offers.

Praxis of mindful educators translates into pedagogical changes that foster situational mindfulness. Because mindful teachers are interested in emancipatory actions, their language must reflect that goal (Sloan, 2004; Giroux, 2002). Mindful teachers avoid absolute language (Langer, 1997) for example, they use words such as “could be” rather than “is” when describing purported facts. Students understand there may be various perspectives when teachers make statements conditional. This language shift has shown to increase student creativity when encountering learned information in the future (Langer, 2000). Mindful educators also suggest students engage in mindful noticing rather than asking them to “pay attention” to information. This distinction has shown to assist learners in personally connecting with information, focusing on it
longer, and remembering it better (Langer, 1997). Finally, mindful educators carefully consider the way they discuss classroom activities and content. Using positive descriptors for classroom tasks have been found to assist individuals in mindfully attending for a longer time (Langer, 2000). For example, Langer (2000) found people mindfully attended longer and enjoyed an activity or information more if was identified as ‘play’ rather than ‘work’, even if the ‘work’ activity was something they participants considered ‘fun’.

Mindful educators’ praxis translates into a practice that also cultivates dispositional mindfulness in their classrooms. With the intent of acting “wisely, truly, and justly” (Kemmis, 2012, p. 149), mindful teachers take action that supports long term mindfulness in their students. They bring a sense of ambiguity to their classroom that fosters wonder and exploration. The classroom environment and activities within it encourages students to closely examine and question their environment and what they are working on, explore possibilities, and approach problems from various perspectives (Ritchhart & Perkins, 2000). This intentional atmosphere of inquiry and open-ended way of teaching encourages students to notice details and to be open to new information. It stimulates exploration of novel concepts, skills, and/or ideas and facilitates the retention of information that students connect with (Langer, 1997). The pedagogy of mindful teachers aligns itself with critical constructivism as it brings new perspectives to bear ideas and concepts and pursues the reduction or elimination of egocentrism, supporting learners in recognizing and seeing value in others’ perspectives (Reber, 2014).

Further, mindful educators consider the students they are teaching and modify
their practice in accordance to their unique profile. Every class of students is different and each student is unique. Dewey (1913) proposed that educators can increase interest in curriculum by connecting classroom materials to what is going on in students’ lives, stimulating interest. Mindful teachers continuously employ this critical constructivist viewpoint to modify their practice so it is best suited to the students they are teaching in that time and place. Further, not only do mindful teachers practice place-based learning, they also strive to create engaging lessons their students will enjoy. Langer said “[w]e would do better to ask ourselves what would be fun for our students and trust that learning inevitably will follow” (1992, p. 49). Mindlessness abounds when learners are not interested during the learning process (1992).

4. The Future of Mindfulness and Education Research

Research on learning and mindfulness, particularly non-meditative mindfulness, appears to still be in its infancy. While researchers have examined and found positive links between learning and mindfulness, there are still many connections that must be examined. Reber (2014) recorded many of these gaps in the research, including the need for research to investigate the links between mindfulness and activity invention, “metacognition, creativity, sudden insights, [and] art appreciation” (p. 1067). He also mentioned that most research has focused on increasing situational mindfulness but neglects dispositional mindfulness and how mindfulness from teacher and student perspectives impacts students and/or teachers in the long term.

The positive impacts of educators with mindful pedagogy and mindful awareness in students have been described in this section at length, however, Reber’s observations are a reminder that mindfulness is both needed but unlikely to be found in
contemporary classrooms. He said that the “future challenge for studies in education is to find means not only to increase mindfulness on the spot but to cultivate dispositional mindfulness in every future citizen” (Reber, 2014, p. 1067). A subject area in which mindfulness could readily be embedded is home economics.

5. Mindfulness and Home Economics Education

Giroux (1999) proposed that our identity, in general, is largely shaped by more by what we interact with in our everyday lives and what we learn in society and popular culture than time spent in schools. He argued that our pedagogy should reflect this reality. With a one hundred year history, Home Economics consistently has been concerned about human wellbeing at the home level. The discipline of home economics connects with Aristotle’s’ concept of the common good (Smith, 1999). The curriculum of home economics reflects our everyday lives in important and significant ways and provides an exciting opportunity for educators to engage in critical/emancipatory practice. There are three main dimensions of this field of practice: “(a) Core Concepts (basic human needs, community vitality, individual well-being, and family strength); (b) Integrative Elements (human eco-systems and life course development); and (c) Cross-cutting Themes (capacity building, global interdependence, resource development, appropriate use of technology, and wellness)” (McGregor, 2015, p. 11; Nickols et al, 2009). These core concepts are varied, but all connect to the human condition and its relationship to everyday life. Renwick (2015) explained that home economics teachers are central to an educated citizenry “because they connect with students, their families and the wider community in shared learning
about these areas” (p.21) which applies to life outside of the classroom and builds “capacity for a future well lived” (p. 21).

Although home economics offers the opportunity for phronesis and praxis, many home economics teachers focus on developing a technical perspective of technê in order to produce something through poïesis (reasoned, instrumental action) (Renwick, 2015). This makes sense because a fundamental component of home economics is to guide students in navigating everyday life which includes exploring how to meet basic needs such as nourishment, clothing, and shelter (Renwick, 2015; McGregor, Pendergast, Sniuk, Eghan & Engberg, 2008). That being said, home economists have argued (Smith, 2004; McGregor et al. 2008; Renwick 2015) that this emphasis on technê has resulted in “limit[ing] the capacity of the profession to be able to engage intellectually; to be complacent about routine and resistant to change; to be complicit with hegemonic discourse and therefore unable to provide students, families and communities with what they really need” (Renwick, 2015, p. 23). The overshadowing disposition of production may facilitate continued mindlessness surrounding everyday life issues both for educators and students.

The common conception of home economics educators valuing production over seeking truth or doing what is right threatens the future of home economics. It has created an environment where “home economists have been too easily marginalised and are continually forced to engage in the defence of the profession and field” (Renwick, 2015, p. 23). Smith said “for the [home economist] profession to be relevant in the future, it must be involved in creating a more preferable, sustainable society, based on preserving the earth for future generations, increased economic
security, and peace and justice for all” (McGregor, 2015, p. 10). Roubanis mentions that a “preferred future”, such as the one referred to by Smith, can only occur when an assortment of possibilities are considered and dominant paradigms are malleable as a result of alternate thinking and varied perspectives (McGregor, 2015). Theoria and phronesis are inevitably a part of incorporating this type of critical/emancipatory thinking and action in home economists’ pedagogy and classrooms. Mindfulness is a means to facilitate this action and reach the goals described by Smith and Roubanis.

Mindful home economics educators – people whom actively and openly guide learners in the investigation of aspects of their everyday life – provide students with the opportunity to develop mindfulness as an enduring trait. By joining together the social psychological concept of mindfulness with critical theory involving everyday life issues, home economics educators and students have the opportunity to develop a “(1) a greater sensitivity to [their] environment; (2) more openness to new information; (3) the creation of new categories for structuring perception; and (4) enhanced awareness of multiple perspectives in problem solving” (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000, p. 2).

Mindfulness has the potential to lead to improved critical/emancipatory thought and action around everyday life, societal issues including prejudice, educational apprehension, and environmental decline as a result of the reduction of mindless categorization (Djikic, 2014). This could have a great impact in the home economics classroom.

Scholars mention mindfulness as a topic when looking towards the future. Mani et al. (2014) discussed insights made from “a group of women leaders who met in Oxford in October 2013, for five days of intensive thinking and discussion on the
emerging future” (p. 596). They agreed that “more than any other single factor, transformed educational institutions, curricula and methodologies could help meet the challenges of the 21st century and shape a positive future for the earth” (p. 596). In particular, the authors site Langer’s work and how mindfulness (amongst other actions) can help facilitate “Whole Mind” education that focuses on integration, creativity, and peace.

Home economists Pendergast, McGregor, and Turkki (2012) discussed ten megatrends expected to be prevalent in the future that will impact everyday life towards the year 2020. They listed these trends as aging, globalization, technological development, prosperity, individualization, commercialization, health and environment, acceleration, network organizing, and urbanization. Pendergast, McGregor, and Turkki (2012) conceded “[a] future-proofed profession takes steps now in order to avoid having to make radical changes to practice in order to remain viable in the future. [t] is strategically planned so it can remain effective, even, especially, when things change” (p. 4). Mindfulness has the potential to bring phronesis and praxis into the pedagogy of home economics educators. This could facilitate home economic students in becoming mindful, identifying their civic selves, and taking action in their civic responsibility, which could, in turn, impact their own lives and the world in which they live.

Langer expressed her belief that “mindfulness can help solve current problems and address future problems that may result from changes in demographics and technology” (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000, p. 129). Her research connects directly to Pendergast, McGregor, and Turkki (2012)’s concerns. She examined a variety of
societal issues including problems involving aging, ethnic diversity, the changing workplace, (which all connect with everyday life education) and mindfulness in the classroom. Langer and Moldoveanu provide various supporting arguments based on many other pieces of research and explain that “[a] mindful classroom experience breeds the talent and desire to inquire into the possible (the realm of imagination) while treating the actual (the realm of everyday knowledge) as contingent” (p.137). This research demonstrates the link mindfulness could potentially have on developing mindfulness in a particular subject area, home economics, and empowering teachers in that area to mindfully respond to whatever they face in the future with not only a technical response, but with interpretive and critical/emancipatory action.

I believe that mindful curriculum and pedagogy in the practice of home economics educators could produce positive and potentially emancipatory results with respect to students’ perceptions of themselves, their world, and the choices they make. I could not, however, find a body of research that examined the link between mindfulness and home economics education or everyday life education, specifically. This is a gap my research will begin to fill.

6. Summary

This section defined mindfulness; argued for its relevancy and rationale for its inclusion in learning, pedagogy, and education; described what it looks like in classrooms and teaching practice; and argued for its inclusion in home economics. It discussed how mindfulness can work with practical reasoning and critical thinking to promote phronesis. Mindfulness puts a premium on experiences and perceptiveness rather than on formulated
knowledge or theoria. The following section will explore the methods and methodology used to investigate my own mindful practice in home economics education.
SECTION 4 – METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

In this section, I present the methodological and epistemological considerations that guided this paper, the sources of data and a description of my research process. My research question is: In what ways might an educator incorporate mindfulness in her practice to facilitate her students' engagement with independent, mindful critical thought? My research employed a case study action research methodology to investigate: (1) how a home economics teacher might include mindfulness in her practice; (2) discuss what this inclusion looks like in a home economics classroom; and (3) consider the impact this shift in pedagogy has on the educator, classroom environment, and student/teacher/curriculum. In this section, I will argue for the use of a case study action research methodology in my research. Specifically, I will define action research and case study methodology, explain why it is used, describe my research, and describe the benefits of this approach.

1. Ontological and Epistemological Positions

Relevant and quality educational research is comprised of sound procedures with beneficial aims and results (Hostetler, 2005; Brown, 1989). All elements of research should be scrutinized and stand up to critical thought and questioning with the goal of developing good research that pays particular attention to ethics, morality, and the well being of those who will be impacted by the research (Sikes, 2004). Myriad factors influence methods and methodologies employed in research including what can realistically be done, what is practical, situational aspects, and the researchers’ perspective (Sikes, 2004). Researchers must consider these influencers, and in particular, the underlying assumptions, in order to justify the methodology and methods used as well
as the purpose and ethics behind their research (Sikes, 2004).

When designing a study, researchers should consider assumptions involved with the methods and methodology of their research including ontological, epistemological, and ethical issues (Sikes, 2004, p. 18). Ontological assumptions involve the social reality where the research is taking place while the epistemological assumptions are concerned with knowledge in terms of what is possible to know and understand. Ethical assumptions about human nature and agency consider how people behave in and interact with their environment, especially when considering power and agency (Sikes, 2004).

The ontological and epistemological approach I employed for my research is qualitative methodology. My ontological commitments consider educational phenomena to be connected to context, socially constructed, and time sensitive. Reality is constructed through a plethora of factors over time involving social structure, culture, and discourse (McGregor, 2003). Hermeneutics is concerned for ways in which we can emerge or change from a thoughtlessness, unexamined life to be open to experience and understanding about living. This is inherently an educative process that generates possibilities while acknowledging constraints and challenges while we interpret ways to make living it better. Thus, my research is positioned as an interpretive, critical epistemological perspective to attempt to better understand what mindful teacher behaviours might incite emancipatory thoughts and action for both the teacher and their students. I employed a critical approach in the sense that I am challenging traditional views of home economics education and an interpretive approach in the sense that I are seeking to understand the concept of non-meditative mindfulness and its potential for home economics education. I acknowledged many ways of knowing as a holistic
perspective including worldview and spheres of influence (language, time, space, and place) (Vaines, 1996). I regarded knowledge as experiential, personal, and subjective (Sikes, 2004). My aim was to work with a hermeneutic phenomenology (Hultgren, 1989) where I could interpret aspects, influences, and outcomes of my own mindful practice in home economics. I am particularly interested in producing social change in the area of everyday life education and/or home economics and challenging what is considered ‘truth’ (Coomer, 1989) in this area of teaching. My findings are based on analysis and interpretation of my personal journal reflections and classroom documents I developed and modified for my students during my study.

The emancipatory perspective my research takes must be considered through a critical lens. Lather (1989) suggested that it is challenging to assess the quality of critical research. In order to overcome this challenge, I documented my assumptions as the researcher and how they were impacted by the data and subsequent analysis. I also recorded how the research process led to insight and activism with the participant (myself) in Section 6. As a result of my ontological, epistemological, and ethical assumptions, my research uses a case study approach incorporating action research.

2. Research Design

The purpose of this research is to explore the impact Western non-meditative mindfulness can have on home economics teachers and their pedagogy and curriculum. The intention of my research was to inquire about how a mindful teaching practice in everyday life education might positively impact an educator, her students, and the world. I felt this may be possible through mindful teacher pedagogy and curriculum that involves students authentically considering their own lives through a mindful, critical
I hoped this mindful way of thinking would occur by reducing mindlessness both in
the educator and in the students and, thereby, increasing critical thinking and
emancipatory action.

I conducted my research from the perspective of a critical theorist (Sipe &
Constable, 1996) to address my principle research question and employed exploratory
case study and action research methodologies to investigate how a home economics
teacher might include mindfulness in her practice; to discuss what this inclusion looks
like in a home economics classroom; and to determine the impact this shift in pedagogy
has on the educator, classroom environment, and student/teacher/curriculum. I chose to
use an exploratory, qualitative case study to accomplish this. A case study is “an in-
depth description and analysis of a bounded system” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 37).
Case study is a useful method when the context of a contemporary phenomenon is
strongly linked and difficult to separate from the variables involved (Yin, 2014). My
research question asks: In what ways might an educator incorporate mindfulness in her
practice to facilitate her students' engagement with independent, mindful critical thought?
This is a ‘how’-style question, which fits the model for a case study research question
(Yin, 2004). Epistemologically, my research was underpinned by a constructivist world.

The unit of analysis, also known as the case, is an essential component for case
study research. Merriam and Pinnegar (2016) state that “the single most defining
characteristic of case study research lies in delimiting the object of study: the case” (p.
38). Cases can only be used if the system is intrinsically bound and is/can be explicitly
identified. Because of this trait, other forms of research can be involved within a case
study, like action research. Case studies aim to understand one ‘subject’ which is an
example of a “phenomena, a program, a group, an institution, a community, or a specific policy” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 38) that the researcher is interested in.

In this research, I, myself, am the unit of study. At the time of the research, I was a home economics teacher teaching at a secondary school in Port Moody, British Columbia and had taught home economics to students from grades six through twelve for the past five years. I obtained a Bachelor of Science in psychology, a Bachelor of Education with a focus on elementary education, and a diploma in home economics. I was a graduate student at the University of British Columbia interested in increasing the connection and thoughtfulness learners have to their everyday lives and the choices they make regarding what they do/use/consume in their lives. It is this defining and bounding of the case that helps identify my research as a case study of a home economics teacher exploring the notion of mindfulness in her pedagogy and her classroom.

Further, the concept of an exploratory case connects well with my research question. An exploratory case is “a case study whose purpose is to identify the research questions or procedures to be used in a subsequent research study, which might or might not be a case study” (Yin, 2014, p. 238). The ultimate purpose of my research is to observe the impact Western mindfulness can have on educators and students. My current case study research allowed me to examine how mindfulness was incorporated in my practice. The findings of this research may then guide me to another set of research questions, which are discussed in Section 6.

Case study is a good fit for my research for various reasons. First, case study methodology provided me with the authentic opportunity of answering my ‘how’ research question. Second, my research connects to the concept of descriptive case study,
which is “a case study whose purpose is to describe a phenomenon (the ‘case’) in its real-world context” (Yin, 2014, p. 238). I felt this concept could be valuable and useful in the practice of home economics, and education in general, but I was not able to demonstrate why this might be important until I identified what it looked like in practice. Since the only example I knew about this phenomenon was being demonstrated at the time of this research was in my classroom, I chose employ a self-study of my mindfulness practice as the case. This examination of my own practice permitted me to illuminate the phenomenon and allowed others to become exposed to what this type of practice is and what it might look like.

In undertaking my case study, I employed action research. Action research takes a critical science perspective and seeks to improve and involve the participant(s) (Grundy & Kemmis, 1985). It is a “form of self inquiry undertaken by participants in social (including educational) situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of: (a) their own social or educational practice; (b) their understanding of these practices; and, (c) the situations in which the practices are carried out” (Carr & Kemmis, 1983, p. 152). Carr and Kemmis (1983) explained that practice equates to praxis with “its roots in the commitment of the practitioner to wise and prudent action in a practical (concrete historical) situation” (p.182). They surmised that practice could be understood not only by behaviour but also “as strategic action undertaken with commitment in response to a present, immediate, and problematic action context” (p. 38). In action research, practice is critiqued, linking theory and practice (Hittman, 1989) whereby “theory informs practice through being tested in practice” (McTaggert, 1985, p. 102). Action research is cyclical in nature and researchers plan, observe, reflect and act throughout the research
study. McNiff (1993) explained that “[t]he process of practice becomes the object of the inquiry; practice becomes inquiry. The practice… becomes the process of learning about oneself. The process of learning about oneself becomes the object of practice” (p. 59) thus, she surmised that the explicit becomes what is implicit.

Action research can be “guided by an interest in emancipating people and groups from irrationality, unsustainability and injustice” (Kemmis, McTaggert & Nixon, 2014, p. 14). Specific forms of action research, such as CAR, can employ a combination of practical action research (research targeting best practices and improving day to day teaching) and critical theory (research aiming to create social change by analyzing social structures) (Given, 2008). The goal of action research is to modify reality to explore it (Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998). Action-based research has a transformative purpose at its core marshaling both theory and knowledge production into action so that social conditions and problems can be addressed. It accomplishes this by assisting individuals or groups to examine and alter their social and educational realities by altering their practice (Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998).

Action research links closely to practical action and the focus of daily life in home economics. It is a “social process,… participatory,… practical and collaborative,… emancipatory,… critical,… and recursive (reflexive, dialectical)” (Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998, p. 24). It can be employed to analyze context, society and personal/public paradigms (Carson, 1990) with the objective of liberating people from things that oppress them (Mack, 2012). It provides an opportunity for educators to explore their own professional practice and make changes to improve their own practice, enabling teachers to philosophize and seek out how to make an impact for the greater good. Creating true
change demand significant shifts in thought and behaviour (Given, 2008), however, Habermas stated “knowledge is produced by the ways people orient themselves to the world” (Carson, 1990, p. 169). Based on that statement, there is potential for CAR to impact the way people produce knowledge production, further impacting their orientation. The action research model includes a cycle of problem identification, data collection and observation, personal and professional reflection, data analysis, action, and application.

3. Theory Development

Theory development happens in case study design and action research while the components are being established and continues to develop afterwards (Yin, 2014). Merriam (1998) advocates for a thorough literature review to supplement research design and theory development, which support the research questions and areas of significance. It is important for the researcher to construct a preliminary theory to facilitate a richer understanding on the topic and literature, which may help strengthen the design and assist in data interpretation. Theory development illuminates important issues involved in the area of research and it can also provide information on practical aspects regarding the issue involved that may assist in the actual execution of the study. Further, theory development assists researchers in understanding how their findings may eventually be generalized. My research and literature review refined my theory and allowed me to refine my research question. Investigating the links between the critical-emancipatory perspective, home economics, and mindfulness coloured the perception that I took in relation to the purpose of my research. Further, becoming more aware of praxis and phronesis refined the scope of my study.
4. Data Collection

It is essential for data collection to produce detailed, in-depth data that involves multiple sources of information over a period of time to allow for ‘process’ to be observed (Yin, 2014). Merriam (1998) and Stake (2005), who support qualitative data in case study research, promoted the use of interviews, observations, and data mining (Merriam) /document review (Stake). My research is qualitative and I employed Merriam and Stake’s suggestions for data collection. Because I was the only person included in the ‘case’, I kept journals with observations and reflections throughout the research period while I taught my Food Studies 9 and Food Studies 12. My class curriculum was not on mindfulness. It adhered to the British Columbia Ministry of Education Food Studies curriculum (2007) and I recorded journal entries based on mindfulness in relation to how I conducted my practice within those confines. I also analyzed ‘data’ used in my practice including classroom documents and different versions of instructional materials (e.g. black line masters) I have updated throughout my practice. My data collection occurred over the course of a semester (a five month period).

Yin (2014) suggested that when a researcher is preparing to begin their research they should have a strong understanding of the skills and values that would facilitate the research. This includes understanding how to ask questions, being flexible, having a firm understanding of the phenomenon being studied, and circumventing biases. I believe I maintained these values throughout the course of my research and during my data interpretation. I completed numerous written reflections and attempted to maintain an authentic mindset for the study before, during, and after conducting the research. I consistently reflected upon my practice, considered how mindfulness may have been
involved or could become involved, and attempted to make modifications to reflect those considerations.

Case study researchers must understand the issue before they research it. Without this understanding, it can be difficult for researchers to avoid bias that may cause their interpretations to unknowingly support their ‘hypothesis’. I intentionally took steps to conduct my research in an ethical way that avoided bias (Yin, 2014). My record keeping involved journaling my thought process and the interpretations and insights based on my observations. These records are subjective as they were recorded from my perspective at the time. Subjectivity, though, is a strength of this study because these personal accounts allow others to view how I felt about on goings regarding the phenomenon in this research. The purpose of this study was to examine those understandings. This differs from bias because I approached the data of this study with an attempt to be both a critical participant and meticulous record-keeper of events, thoughts, and actions. In the Findings and Discussion Sections of this thesis (Sections 5 and 6), I included open-ended conclusions when discussing the data. I treated this self-study as an exploratory research project that provided insights, rather than generalizing my findings to larger populations.

5. Data Analysis and Finding Interpretation

There are a variety of methods available to analyze case study data with the purpose of making meaning. Stake (2005) suggested that the researcher should look for meaning and patterns and that the results should be interpreted in terms of the original research question. They should report how the results add, confirm, or refute what is currently in the literature.

Merriam encouraged researchers to consolidate, reduce, and interpret the data
She stated that data collection and analysis can be done in tandem. This type of data analysis, congruent with action research, provided me with the opportunity to reflect and, subsequently, enhance my practice and research while the data collection occurred. Merriam also offered directions for qualitative research analytical strategies, which assisted me in refining my theory building based on the data I analyzed (Yazan, 2015, p. 146).

The majority of my data analysis involved the coding of my personal journal entries. Yin (2014) suggested looking for themes or patterns. I read and reread my journal entries. Initially, I read over the journals and took notes in the margins, and then I analyzed these notes to search for congruencies. I then worked through the writings again and highlighted sections that connected with patterns I had noted. Eventually, four themes, which I describe in detail in Section 5, began to emerge. I also used Merriam’s strategies to look at documents I gave students and how I modified them over time and the type of lessons I planned or tasks I set for the students. Further, I analyzed the context in which my work was embedded. For example, I considered the impact of support in my community, the amount of planning time I have in my schedule, and my background and education.

6. Validating Data

I believe my research design allowed for effective data validation but there were some limitations. My research was on myself and this limited the number of research collection methods available. I believe my methods, though, fit my research question and provided construct validity. I was explicit about my positions with regard to my research (Merriam, 1998), which exposed taken-for-granted actions and thoughts that were
interrogated more rigorously in the data analysis than typically within the context of the practice setting. I felt that the data I collected was valid as it is conceivable that other educators might observe a relationship between their practice and mindfulness if they consciously journal and reflect upon their practice over a semester. I believe that my data was reliable because I deliberately and systematically recorded, tracked, and coded a variety of data sources. Further, I was explicit in the methods used and the manner in which those methods were incorporated in this study.

7. Summary

Case study research and action research methodologies allowed me to examine connections between mindfulness, my practice, and my subject area of home economics. This section considered my research question, the strengths and drawbacks of case study and action research methodologies, what both case study and action research methodologies are, how my research fits in with these methodologies, and argues that case study and action research are suitable for the questions that I posed at the outset of my research. The following section will explore the results and interpretations of my research.
SECTION 5 – FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

This section will explore four themes that surfaced during the data analysis with the intention of addressing my research question: “In what ways might an educator incorporate mindfulness in her practice to facilitate her students' engagement with independent, mindful critical thought?”. I reviewed the data through an interpretive, critical epistemological lens. My hope was to understand and discover outcomes that allow for emancipatory pedagogical practices for educators and students. By examining my practice, I came to better understand how a mindful teacher teaches and gives meaning to mindful teaching and mindful learning with the hope of bringing about better teaching and learning opportunities, especially in regard to the education of everyday life topics.

There are four major themes that connect to mindfulness that emerged during the analysis. First, the data demonstrates that my pedagogy and curriculum continuously evolved. Second, authentic, personalized, placed-based education is an essential component of my pedagogy. Third, inquiry based learning opportunities are paramount in for mindful pedagogical practices. Finally, external validation and encouragement regarding my practice encourage me to further engage in mindful teaching practices.

1. Theme One: Evolving Pedagogy and Curriculum

It is evident in analyzing the data for this project that intentionally assessing and modifying my practice is a central part of my pedagogy and the curriculum I develop for my students. This constant pursuit to explore alternate ways of knowing and improve what and how I teach demonstrates my openness to reduce mindlessness in my practice. There was an obvious optimism in my journal writing regarding modifying my practice
and curriculum over time and the results I hoped would ensue. For example, I was quite explicit in this intention in noting, “[t]eaching is an evolving practice and one that I will continue to reflect on” (Personal journal, p. 16). It is evident in the continuous drive to improve my pedagogical practice, such as through the modification of assignments and lessons that the pedagogy of mindfulness gradually evolved from simple to complex in terms of content and process. In other words, the shifting and growth of my practice, which I mention in my journal, demonstrated the impact of a continual reduction of mindfulness and evolution of mindfulness in my practice. Examples of this growth are provided in the paragraphs below.

a) Observable Attributes Connecting to a Mindful Practice

There were a variety of attributes I noted from the journal entries and classroom documents that suggest I possessed a desire to propel my practice forward, in a way that encouraged me to modify my curriculum and pedagogy and potentially impact my connection to mindfulness and the development of a mindful practice. These traits include a readiness to be flexible, an enthusiasm for bringing “fun” into my classroom, a willingness to take risks, and an intentionality regarding various aspects of experimenting with my practice.

Allowing myself to have flexibility in my practice afforded me a variety of opportunities to be mindful about my practice and adjust my lessons accordingly. This flexibility can be found in my journal entries in a variety of places, including when I described an exploratory lesson I taught about local food. I noted how I had adapted the lesson “as it was happening based on students’ informal feedback and then proceeded to develop and teach a follow up lesson meet the unique needs of my students” (Personal
Focusing on the students and their questions and needs, rather than mindlessly pushing through my planned lesson, allowed me to consider what I was teaching and why. This led me to feel motivated to make these adaptations.

Incorporating ‘fun’ in my classroom stands out as an important objective in my journal entries. The word fun is used several times throughout the journal. I explained that I was actively working towards incorporating more fun in my classroom (Personal journal, p. 2). I used it to:

- describe what I expected the week ahead to be such as when I said “We have a fun week ahead” (Personal journal, p. 11);
- quote what a student thought of my class, for example when coming back from a two week break I mentioned in my journal that I overheard a student say “I didn’t want to come back to school, except for foods, which is fun” (Personal journal, p. 12);
- describe activities such as explaining that I was attempting to work in the “‘fun’ with a problem based learning project for my grade 9s…. zombie unit”;
- and justify activities such as when I was putting theory into practice as I mentioned I was working on bringing a variety of aspects of research into my practice including Langer’s finding that “people mindfully attend longer and enjoy an activity or information more if it is identified as ‘play’ rather than ‘work’, even if the ‘work’ activity was something they consider fun (Langer, 2000)” (described in more detail in Section 3) (Personal journal, p. 6).
This inclusion of fun throughout my journal suggests that growing in my ability to be mindful about engaging my students helped me to consider how to reduce the frequency of burdensome and/or boring activities. This insight is likely lead to my desire to include challenging or “hard fun” (Papert, 1996) with the intention of intriguing and delighting my students to help them make meaningful connections with the content and/or activities. I believe that fun connects with a mindful practice because it brings in an entertaining and engaging factor to the classroom where students become delighted and intrigued more easily. I think it helps make lessons more interesting for students, they become excited about the class, and they more readily connect to the content.

I took risks with my practice. The Problem Based Learning (PBL) project is evidence of this. I had never taught a project in this way before and, with peer encouragement from another home economics educator Lee Wood (who I developed the activity with and was planning on using it at another school with her class), I took a risk to commit significant class time to the project without knowing how it would turn out. I ended up having to bring closure to the undertaking before it reached completion due to a number of logistical constraints including a significant plot modification I had to make the night before we started the project due to the nature of the project and a terrorist attack that occurred (this is discussed in more detail later in this section) and the disjointed nature of working on the activity once a week, but I recorded how I would change it the following term so I could try it again. Further, I noted in various places in my journal how I enjoy having students determine the outcome of their class work or projects. It is a risk for me, as a teacher, to allow students to take the reins and determine what the outcome will be, however the positive outcomes appeared to encourage me to
continue taking these risks and encouraged autonomy and mindfulness in the students, such as in the grade twelve blog projects (Personal journal, p. 15) or various classroom cooking labs where the students designed recipes, ordered their ingredients, and prepared their food without my direction.

I am intentional in my practice. The journal entries demonstrate that I intentionally challenge myself with goals in mind and seek out feedback to judge if I am meeting my goals. The goals noted in the journal entries are similar and unanimously connect to critical thinking and mindful noticing. For example, when providing a rationale for a guest speaker I brought in I stated that: “[w]ith this activity - and really all my activities in our foods classroom - the hope from me is that the students have an authentic experience [an experience that relates directly to their lives] that they connect to that might challenge the way they look at the world... and potentially modify their sense of self and their feelings of power in the world” (Personal journal, p. 4). These sentiments are echoed on pages 5 and 9 when I discussed other activities. It is obvious that I strongly believe in and hope to meet my goal of a mindful practice and that, through modeling and raising their awareness, my students would be encouraged to be mindful about their everyday life.

I used the phrase ‘my hope’ four times in journal over the course of the research. This phrase stood out to me because of what hope represents. Each time I used this phrase, the hope concerned conjuring up authentic learning experiences that impact students with the prospect of them feeling compelled to mindfully notice and think critically about their everyday life. For example, I discussed ‘teatoxes’ (diet products some of my students were using that had been marketed to young women and teenage
girls on social media) and incorporated an activity to directly address this phenomenon in my Food Studies 12 class. This signifies my mindful engagement because, rather than simply using my already prepared project that I felt was useful, I noticed something my students were, in my opinion, mindlessly interacting with, and included that in my project so the students would have the opportunity to investigate this topic and have the opportunity to become mindful about it. I rationalized this new addition to my old project by saying: “My hope is that they can make some conscious, mindful decisions about what they do in regards to food and other things in their lives. Instead of blindly doing something, hopefully this will empower students to think before action even in the midst of intense marketing” (Personal journal, p. 9).

My journal entries also demonstrated the desire I have to seek out student feedback to modify my practice. It is evident that I observe and note what is successful in my class and how students respond. I did this informally both through observations, such as watching student body language during lessons or listening for a ‘buzz’ in the classroom when students were engaging with a topic, as well as verbally, including asking them what they are interested in, what they want to learn about, and how they enjoyed activities we did. This was demonstrated throughout the journal when I noted adjusting lessons based on my informal assessments of students’ interests, understanding, and learning needs. For example, this is evident when I modified my local foods lesson and my project based learning activity, both mentioned earlier in this section. Further, I reference formal feedback that I had collected including surveys my grade nine students completed at the beginning and end of the semester for comparison as well as end of term feedback. These were spaces where I sought out students’ opinions regarding what they
liked, what they learned that stood out, and suggestions for how to improve the course. I explained in the journal that this feedback impacted my planning for following term regarding activities and labs I would remove, continue to include, or modify as well as teaching practices I would include or modify.

This desire for feedback suggests that I value students’ opinions about my courses and what they feel they are taking from my class when they finish it. It also has the potential to help me determine how I was mindful in my role as an educator such as when my students told me they enjoyed learning about food through a critical lens (Personal journal, p. 15) or when they said they thought my class was “fun” (p. 12). Further, this feedback provided insight into how my mindfulness encouraged my students’ mindfulness regarding their relationship with food, which may have been a result of their participation in my class. For example, I recorded entrance and exit slips for my grade 9 Food Studies students for my own curiosity. Many of their slips suggested they may have developed a more mindful way of thinking about food such as an increase from the beginning of the semester in the value students placed on eating local foods and on thinking about the impact their food choices make on themselves, their local community, and the world.

b) Professional Connections

There are a variety of professional connections that appear to have facilitated the advancement of mindfulness in my curriculum and pedagogy including the importance of peers and a commitment to professional development. The importance of peers in the development of my mindful practice is evident in my journal entries. I stated in my journal that I was “inspired by a handful of home economists both in positive and
negative ways” (p. 17). Lee Woods, another mindful home economics educator who
teaches in my district, was mentioned seven separate times in the journal. I explained
that Ms. Woods had “become an incredible colleague who I ha[d] been inspired and
moved by! She has incredible ideas about how to actually put my ideas into practice” (p.
17). For example, Ms. Woods was the educator who developed a project based learning
assignment and pushed me to take a risk and run the activity in my class. I also indicated
that I was influenced by two of my professors from the University of British Columbia
who “pushed me in my diploma to make… critical connections” (p. 17). Finally, I
mentioned that I incorporated ideas that I got from my online community in my lessons (I
specifically mentioned this blog post:
http://ashleysfacsoflife.blogspot.ca/2014/11/teaching-herbs-and-spices.html in my
journal).

I referenced my participation in both informal and formal professional
development throughout the journal. There were several instances where I mention
informal professional development experiences I participated due to my own interest and
motivation. For example, I read a book about habit making that made me wonder and ask
questions about my practice (Personal journal, p. 7). I also discussed an activity I
developed that was inspired by an article I found when I was on a holiday. I recounted
that “[e]ven though I took a break, [I was] still… on the look out for ideas” (Personal
journal, p. 14). Further, formal professional development and intentional inclusion in the
education and home economics community were also evident in my journal entries. I
reported that I was enrolled in a University masters program and became the president of
the home economics local specialist association for my district. At the time, I also was a
social justice facilitator for the BCTF (British Columbia Teachers Federation), an executive member of THESA (Teachers of Home Economics Specialist Association) for British Columbia, and a member of the Applied Design Skills and Technologies curriculum writing team for the Ministry of Education. These activities are evidence of growing mindfulness as a home economics educator.

When explaining my motive for such extensive involvement, I said I was “determined to continue to make a difference and inspire, not only students, but also other home economics teachers to bring that difference making mindfulness into the classroom. I started to view the exclusion of this mindful way of teaching home economics as unethical!” (Personal journal, p. 17). I explained “[m]y passion for this brought me to being accepted to write the new BC curriculum for home economics where I got to explicitly bring ethical, social, and cultural issues to the forefront!” (Personal journal, p. 17). It is obvious that I am passionate about the subject area and about sharing mindful pedagogy with other teachers.

c) Challenges

All of the attributes listed in this section appear to impact and influence my constantly developing practice, but my journal entries also indicate that having a mindful practice that is evolving is not always easy. Even though I appear motivated and excited to continually push myself to create the most effective environment for engaging my students in mindful learning in my classroom and that I am passionate and enthusiastic about my job, I noted that:

“I believe that being mindful has sometimes made my job more stressful.

Sometimes I think baking muffins in blissful ignorance might have been fun....
and easy... where all I have to worry about is if there are tunnels in the muffins and if students cleaned up properly and wiped down their sinks. But the challenge to bring today into the classroom and push myself to develop an environment where students are suspended in wonder about something they’ve been interacting with, and likely taking for granted, all their lives. I feel privileged and overwhelmed sometimes to have the opportunity to impact them in the way I do” (Personal journal, p. 17).

I think what I am saying in this quote is that reducing mindlessness brings an awareness and a feeling of responsibility to the way I look at my practice. Reducing mindlessness and engaging in phronesis does not necessarily always lead to praxis, but it creates a feeling of responsibility to teach in a way that best suits my particular students at that specific time and place. That means I cannot, with a clear conscious, simply pull out the same units or lessons every semester or teach based solely from a repetitive technical perspective. Mindfulness does not necessarily take up more time but it does, however, challenge me to think deeply about my practice, which can create stress because I feel ethically obligated to produce the best units and lessons I can for my specific students at the specific time and place I am teaching them that will not only challenge them to think critically about themselves, but also the world around them. This can be difficult, but incredibly rewarding as my students demonstrate their growth and a mindful disposition that validates the mindful approach I take toward my practice. The importance of this validation to me is discussed later in this section.
2. Theme Two: Place-Based Education

Second, authentic, personalized, placed-based education is an essential component of my evolving mindful pedagogy. Place-based education is “[t]he process of using local community and environment as a starting point to teach concepts” and it emphasizes “hands-on, real-world learning experiences” (Sobel, 2004, p. 7). Intentionally including content that connects to my students’ community, interests, and events provides the opportunity for both my students and myself to actively notice and reduce mindlessness about things in our everyday lives. This augmented way of looking at our own lives affords us the opportunity to recognize mindless habits and categories for both my students and myself. Subsequently, it provides a chance for my students to adjust to a new awareness of their environment in meaningful ways by increasing cognitive flexibility and, hopefully as a result, behavioural flexibility (Carson & Langer, 2006).

Throughout the journal, there are details describing lessons or activities that resonate with the attributes and goals of place-based education. First, food, the overarching topic of my classes is, inherently, personal. It is something that all of my students have opinions on, interact with daily, and connect to in authentic ways. There are numerous examples of how I bring in the local aspect of food into the classroom. On one occasion, I taught lessons and facilitated activities that promoted and helped students understand local and seasonal foods from their area. In the journal, I described how students used a farming map of British Columbia, the province where my students lived, to analyze local, seasonal foods that they could access within 150 miles from where they
lived (Personal journal, p.2). This mindful attention to location and place underscores the often taken-for-granted nature of food, sustenance, and sustainability in our world.

Further, I mentioned bringing in various local guest speakers. I explained that having a guest speaker, an expert in their field, provides a message delivered “in a more authentic and powerful way than I could” (Personal journal, p. 4). One example of when this was particularly effective is when *Poultry in Motion* (http://bcchicken.ca/consumer/poultry-in-motion/) came to visit. Two local poultry farmers came in to discuss their profession and the animals they keep. They also brought chickens of various ages in a portable barn and the students had an opportunity to view the animals and their living conditions. I noted that “[s]eeing these chickens was exciting for the kids... many of them had not seen chickens in person” (Personal journal, p.5). Students referred to this experience throughout the semester and many of them mentioned this experience as one of the best in the semester in their end of term reflections (APPENDIX A). This connection between the ‘real’ world of food and themselves prompted a thoughtfulness (or mindfulness) that I had not seen in the students before.

Moreover, throughout the journal, I demonstrated that I value keeping my curriculum and being mindful of circumstances in both our local and global communities. I paid close attention to my students by considering what was going on in their lives, what they were interested in and what they cared about both in and out of my classroom. Being sensitive of what is going on in both the local and global community connects with place-based learning. I mentioned an activity called *Food in the News* (APPENDIX D) in my journal as something I identified with as being connected to mindfulness/critical thinking. I explained that “food is constantly in the news... students sought out news
articles and shared them with the class. Some were controversial, some were editorial, and some were breaking news” (Personal journal, p. 1). Topics students chose to present on relevant topics that piqued their interest including controversy regarding a new kale salad at McDonalds, updated information about genetically modifying foods, popular juice cleanses, and a food borne illness outbreak in our area. At the end of the presentation, the students were required to pose a question to their peers regarding the content of their article. I believe the presentation and subsequent discussions that followed had the potential to further engage students and facilitate the reduction of mindlessness on various topics regarding food. I found, throughout the semester, talking about something that students were hearing about in their community helped students make connections to the content of the classroom to their lives in an authentic way.

My sensitivity to community came into play in other more complex ways as well. This is evident in my addition of ‘teatoxes’ being a part of a project, as mentioned earlier in this section, as well as when I was planning my PBL project. This project involved students imagining the world was ending through a zombie-type apocalyptic event, something students were interested in at the time, but the night before I planned to start the project there was a horrific terrorist attack. I determined starting a project where the world ended could be inappropriate and insensitive at that time. Instead, I modified the premise of the problem in the PBL, and revised the project in a way that I believed would better support my students’ learning amid the chaos of that international event. Specifically, instead of a zombie apocalypse plot, the problem was based on a scenario where NASA asked the class to be in charge of developing a food system for the first humans to colonize Mars.
In my opinion, this sensitivity to place-based learning comes into play even when planning around the yearly schedule. I noted that I planned a gingerbread village building activity before the winter break that allowed students to engage in “social, stress decompressing time that is productive and they [were] motivated” (Personal journal, p. 12). I also mentioned that after the break I got students to do an activity that “got them to do the chatting they wanted to… do, and also be productive” (Personal journal, p. 12). This more mindful approach to classroom planning, with attention to time and space, allowed students to be productive during times that I knew they might otherwise not be.

Finally, I make a point, according to my journal, to include opportunities for students to investigate topics they are interested in. My final assignments for both grades twelve (APPENDIX B) and nine (APPENDIX C) involved students investigating topics involved in food that have controversial issues connected to it. For the grade nine activity, I said:

I love doing this activity with my 9s…. The diversity and interest in subjects is inspiring…. I love how the students share just an idea they’re interested in. It’s like planting a seed…. I find most students really connect with this project as they can connect with whatever topic area they are interested in (Personal journal, p. 14-15).

Students chose to investigate a wide range of controversial topics that span the concept of a food system including concepts. Some examples include shark finning for shark fin soup, the proliferation of genetically modified organism, and food packaging.

The topics in home economics are all topics regarding everyday life. I explained that “[e]very single student authentically connects with food, textiles, and
family/relationships…. Having a class where students not only all connect, but also have a vested interest and knowledge base is amazing!” (Personal journal, p. 17). This connects with Dewey’s (1913) philosophy of connecting classroom content with students’ lives to increase interest. In my opinion, this inherent connection coupled with a pedagogy that includes personalized forms of learning and that is intentionally authentic and place-based learning allows students to be more mindfully engaged with their learning. Place-based education is deliberate in making connections between schools and the local community that students live and play within. As a focus, place-based education offers students learning experiences that link where and how they live in their local community and regions. Sobel (2004) ascertained that the place-based “approach to education… helps students develop stronger ties to their community … and creates a heightened commitment to serving as active contributing citizens” (Personal journal, p. 7). This adherence to time and place in place-based learning connects strongly with the critical-emancipatory goals I have for mindful home economics education.

3. Theme Three: Inquiry Based Learning Opportunities

Third, inquiry based learning opportunities are paramount in my practice. As mentioned in Section 3, “open-minded curiosity towards the new and unexpected” (Weare, 2014, p. 1040) where students can “re-imagin[e] the world as one knows it” (Mani et al., 2014, p. 596) is an integral component of mindful education. Mindful, critical practices, and especially emancipatory thinking, involve individuals questioning things they are a part of, engage with, as well as the status quo of things in the world about them. I mention in my journal that one of my goals was to facilitate wonder regarding everyday life (Personal journal, p. 11) and I described the value I place on
students asking questions. My enthusiasm for this is obvious. On various occasions I listed questions students asked as a result of an activity they are participating in and I described how a simple lesson where students were flipping through a magazine looking for dishes with beef in them “[b]rought up lots of authentic questions as they searched [such as]… “is veal beef?” , why is fish called fish but cow is called beef?, is lamb beef?, do we eat girl cows and boy cows?, do both give us milk?” (Personal journal, p. 13). I explained that the interactive sharing of a project completed by my grade nine students was like “tiny seeds planted by their peers re: things in our world to be mindful of regarding food and our impact on food both locally and globally” (Personal journal, p. 14).

My enthusiasm is palpable when I delight in students obviously connecting to and being curious about class content. I described an instance when, after doing many Naked Egg (Steve Spangler Science, n.d.) experiments (an activity where the qualities of eggs are explored by dissolving the shell), I mentioned to my students that I was going to cook the egg the following day at a specific time. I explained that my classroom “without a reminder, was PACKED with students! Even some students I taught last year. I totally forgot we were going to cook it” (Personal journal, p. 5). I continued to explain that this was “another authentic, memorable experience that [the students] connected to… they learned without trying!” (p. 5). It is obvious that blatant curiosity of the students had me thrilled! I finish discussing this incident by saying it “was an awesome day all around” (Personal journal, p. 5).

Further, I also express enthusiasm about students inquiring and experimenting in our class independently. I justified a gingerbread village building during a week of class
time by the fact that students “got to experiment with a product and that sometimes worked and sometimes [did] not [for example when] big walls collapse” (Personal journal, p.12). I also described labs where students employed their skills and understanding of food and food preparation to experiment and create their own recipes. I seemed to place value in my students experimenting and finding success (or learning from failure) in labs and projects that encourage them to wonder and try things, facilitating confidence, curiosity, and independence. I said: “I love the interactive labs I do with the students. Giving them ownership and creative power really seems to facilitate their independence and enthusiasm regarding food and thinking about preparing food” (Personal journal, p. 15). This is, in terms of the definition provided earlier, *mindful teaching and learning* in the home economics classroom.

4. Theme Four: External Validation and Encouragement

External validation and encouragement regarding my practice inspired me to further engage in mindful teaching. This can be interpreted in a variety of ways throughout my journal entries and I inferred that validation came from students, peers, administration, parents, and even the larger society. It can be deduced that I felt validated and encouraged through the acceptance and support I received by being accepted and supported by the variety of roles I was chosen to fulfill around the province (such as being selected to write curriculum) but the validation that I demonstrate significant enthusiasm for in my journal entries is from more personal and intimate types of encouragement. I describe the variety of ways I felt this validation and encouragement in the paragraphs below.
First, it is obvious that I highly value validation and encouragement from my students. There is evidence of me receiving this validation and encouragement randomly, but there is also evidence of me seeking it out. In the journal I wrote that “SO many Snapchat photos and videos [were] being taken and sent” (p. 5) when the students saw the chickens for *Poultry in Motion* and that my classroom was “PACKED with students” (p. 5) for the *Naked Egg* (Steve Spangler Science, n.d.) experiment. These were two moments I intentionally developed as a result of being conscious of mindful teaching in the hope of increasing student mindfulness during their learning.

I also interpret the feeling of validation when I noted a student said after school holidays that they “didn’t want to come back to school except for foods which is fun” (Personal journal, p. 12) and when I mentioned a student thanking me for running a lab by saying “[t]hat recipe was delicious. I loved it! (from a student who doesn’t dole out compliments or comments often). He went out of his way to tell me” (Personal journal, p. 10).

I discussed positive feedback students provided regarding projects we did and I said that I found formal end of the term feedback from my students, which I sought out, to be “so encouraging” (Personal journal, p. 15). I said that “I could tell from the engagement of the students that they enjoyed the projects and connected deeply with them, but I was so pleased to see them reflect on them weeks later” (Personal journal, p. 15) at the end of the semester. Additionally, it is clear that I explicitly sought to observe changes in my students’ mindsets from the beginning to end of the term with the Before and After surveys (APPENDIX E). I explained they were “just informal for me to see if there were any differences” (Personal journal, p. 15) and I acknowledged that they were
likely not statistically relevant and that the students might just be telling me what they want me to hear, but I did say that it was “empowering to see [the positive] results and hope (hope!!!) that this class has made a difference in their lives” (Personal journal, p. 16).

I also mention the importance of validation and encouragement from others. Throughout the journal I mention my cooperative and encouraging relationship with Lee Woods (pseudonym), a home economics teacher in my school district. This working relationship supported risk tasking in my practice and provided inspiration for new ways to teach in mindful ways. I also seemed encouraged by a tweet Tom Marks (pseudonym), a socials studies and geography teacher who followed me on Twitter. He posted about me, my class, and, ultimately, my pedagogy. I noted in my journals that Mr. Marks “tweeted out – totally randomly – to his 2000+ followers” (Personal journal, p. 10) about my grade twelve blog project. After I thanked him for the compliment, he tweeted “you do great work. Love the idea of making Foods about more than recipes. You’ve inspired [students] to think about lifestyle & values”. I explained in the journal that this interaction was “refreshing to hear” and that it was “[c]ool that this is getting noticed from people NOT involved in [home economics]” (Personal journal, p. 10).

That being said, I noted that I did not always describe the inclusion of mindfulness as easy. I acknowledged a variety of challenges I faced. Although I had the autonomy to modify and adjust how and what I teach in my classroom there are also myriad restraints, which I feel should be noted. I mentioned a variety of times that I did not have any preparation time in the semester. The school and school district plan the distribution of preparation time for teachers in our school district. In my school, teachers
who teach a semester schedule teach for the entire school day for one semester and are
provided with one preparation ‘block’ in the other school semester. This means that,
during the time of my research, I taught throughout the entire school day and was not
provided any preparation time during the school day (i.e. time where I could develop unit
and lesson plans and prepare my lesson materials). Preparation for my classes was done
either before or after the school day. I mentioned in various places that it was nice to
have a break because “[t]eaching without a prep is hard!!!” (Personal journal, p. 10). I
explained that I had been neglecting the intentional inclusion or noticing of mindfulness
in my classroom for a few weeks before a winter break, noting that “teaching without a
prep can cause a bit of a struggle towards a break. I always feel like I’m behind!”
(Personal journal, p. 11). Although teaching mindfully does not take up extra time in a
teachers’ planning, in my opinion, this comment suggests that it was difficult to practice
mindfully when I felt like I had little time for teaching tasks such marking projects and
preparing resources for my lessons. I interpret these comments as myself experiencing
exhaustion from my demanding teaching schedule. This taxing schedule, directly caused
by provincial funding and administrative choices, directly impacts my ability to
incorporate mindfulness in my classroom. Burn out is a major factor in whether or not I
can successfully include mindfulness in my curriculum and pedagogy.

Attempting to improve my practice involves risk taking and sometimes the risks
did not work out. For example, I attempted to run an ongoing PBL activity as I had
anticipated it encouraging critical thinking about food systems both locally and globally.
Ultimately, I stopped the activity a few weeks before it was completed. This challenge,
and ultimately what I saw as the failing of an activity pushed me to take risks with my
practice and to try something new. It may have been discouraging, but, instead of giving up all together, I recorded insight for how I could make it more successful when I try it another time. On the other hand when things go as planned and well it can be harder to engage and reflect with a critical lens. The positive feedback from students does not immediately push me to be mindful about what worked in the same way as when I reflected in what didn’t work with my students.

5. Summary

When analyzing my data and attempting to answer my research question through the critical-emancipatory lens, these four themes stood out. The implications of these findings will be further discussed in the following section.
SECTION 6 – DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

An important consideration in this research is thinking about how a teacher might change or transform her practice from merely being mindful and noticing the social environment to also being reflexive to enable a different and possibly better action. Thus, being mindful can be a bridge to critical thinking about teaching practices. This section will discuss the findings described in Section 5 including: why I believe these results occurred; what I would do differently next time; and what this means for my practice, home economics, and curriculum and pedagogy. This section will also respond to research question “In what ways might an educator incorporate mindfulness in her practice to facilitate her students’ engagement with independent, critical thought?”

1. Discussion of the Findings

As already discussed in the Introduction, my work draws on Hermeneutic philosophy where I have learnt about the social world of my classroom through participation, observation, experimentation, and reflection (Daines, 1989). The four themes I identified from the journal entries record both my experiences of the classroom and my reflections with attention to how all appear to reduce mindless tendencies in my practice. These emergent themes from the data analysis demonstrate both my commitment to intentionally organizing my teaching and classroom activities so they foster mindfulness (situational mindfulness) as well as to promote mindfulness as a quality to be achieved (dispositional mindfulness) (Reber, 2014).

(1) Intentionally evolving curriculum and pedagogy – this theme was evident when I explained my experience of adapting my lesson about local food (Personal journal, p. 2-3), recounted when I tried new and more risky
activities such as the problem based learning project I ran with my grade 9 Food Studies students, discussed rationale for adapting a Food Studies 12 digestion project based on the popularity of ‘teatoxes’ with my students, explained various ways of collecting formal and informal feedback (APPENDIX A, APPENDIX E) from students, and described my involvement and interest in professional development (Personal journal);

(2) The inclusion of place-based learning opportunities – could be seen when I described how students used a farming map of British Columbia, the province where my students lived, to analyze local, seasonal foods that they could access within 150 miles from where they lived (Personal journal, p. 2), recounted and rationalized the inclusion of various local guest speakers such as Poultry in Motion, explained the activity Food in the News in my journal as something I identified with as being connected to what was going on in our local and global community, and described how I modified my grade 9 Food Studies problem based learning project because of the planned content became inappropriate due to a recent terrorist attack;

(3) Inquiry based learning opportunities – such as when I described my students bringing up authentic questions and being curious regarding the Naked Egg (Steve Spangler Science, n.d.) experiment (Personal journal, p. 5) and professed my satisfaction with students participating in labs where they were able to be interactive and experiment (Personal journal, p. 15); and

(4) The importance of external validation - provided in particular through formal and informal student feedback and my teaching colleagues - facilitated
mindfulness for me when it challenged me to continue engaging my students in thoughtful activities that reduce mindlessness and stimulate critical though regarding food.


My commitment to practice with moral vision as a reflective practitioner (Vaines, 1997) is reflected in my goal setting and reflective tendencies, demonstrated when I attempted to improve my practice and challenged my students with the intention of emancipatory action. My data analysis revealed my drive to establish phronesis and praxis within my own teaching with my desire to not only identify where I can improve but also act on those improvements, thus, drawing connections with Freire’s conscientização (Cruz, 2013). These improvements illustrated my desire to incorporate wonder in my classroom while focusing on the construction of my civic self (Kincheloe, 2008) to continually work toward self-awareness as a social, cultural, and historical being within the classroom and to encourage my students to do the same. This was evident when the students were able to, in their final assignments, demonstrated thoughtful, critical thought regarding controversial food issues they were interested and/or invested in and share and ask questions about other controversial topics with their peers (p. 14-15).

2. Components that Facilitated the Findings

In trying to determine a response to the Research Question, “In what ways might an educator incorporate mindfulness in her practice to facilitate her students' engagement with independent, mindful critical thought?” there a number of components in and through my practice, reflection and critical thinking about my work that that both led and
allowed me to practice in a mindful way. First, I am teaching in a Canadian school and studied at progressive Canadian universities. In Section 2, I explained that political and economic realities are powerful influencers on education and educators. I had a goal of being mindful for the purposes of critical emancipation and I was able to explore this way of teaching in part as a result of the political and economic realities of where I teach.

While neo-liberalistic values undoubtedly influence my practice, certain freedoms and circumstances allowed me to attempt to teach in a mindful fashion that eschew some elements of a neoliberal approach that are evident in Canadian education. I was taught to teach through a critical lens during my teacher professional development at the University of British Columbia. I have significant access to open-minded educators and I am encouraged by a community of educators, administration, students, parents, and our provincial curriculum to teach in thoughtful ways that engage students and help all learners learn to their best of their abilities. I am free to exercise autonomy in my classroom, have an open-ended provincial curriculum, which lends itself to mindful, emancipatory ways of thinking instead of having to comply with a high-stakes testing regime. Additionally, I have a reasonable budget afforded to me to purchase supplies, such as nutritious food and cooking equipment, for my class. Consequently, I am able to plan lessons that support mindful practice as a teacher. Moreover, I am highly involved in an inspiring education community. The powerful influence of this community is present in my practice as a result of freedoms and opportunities available and accessible where I live and teach. This environment allows me a considerable degree of freedom to engage mindfully in my classroom. Not all educators are afforded the same opportunities in their respective subject areas.
3. Reflexivity

My personal journal entries and data analysis have a reflexive relationship. Participating in this action research caused me to consider mindfulness in my practice. There is a high level of social reflexivity in the research since I was influenced by my environment, I mindfully shaped the actions I took throughout the research period in regard to what I was observing/recording. This gave me the opportunity to modify my practice throughout the time period of the research; however, it resulted in there not being a cause or effect, per se, to identify in my data analysis. My environment, experiences, disposition, and motivation led me to praxis and phronesis with the desire to develop a critical emancipatory curriculum and pedagogy. The actions I took and the experiences I had, as a result of this praxis, further impacted me and influenced the adaptation and implementation of my curriculum and pedagogy.

In being reflexive about this research my thoughts include how I might, in retrospect conduct this research since there are many things I would keep the same, but there are some things I would change. Firstly, I would attempt to record more journal entries so there would be a greater depth and breadth of information to glean insight from. For example, I would have liked to read more about my relationship with my administration and what my feelings were on the state of our provincial education, especially considering the focus this thesis considers emancipation from neo-liberal discourse. Secondly, I would also like to read more student feedback explicitly regarding mindfulness itself so I would seek out quotes that relate to this and record them in the journal.
4. Impact of the Research

This research impacts my current practice. Determining the four themes that link to my mindful curriculum and pedagogy was intriguing and will impact my practice going forward. The first theme, having an evolving pedagogy and curriculum, and third theme, the inclusion of inquiry based learning opportunities, did not surprise me. I was aware of my desire to improve my practice and include inquiry, but the depth and breadth in the ways I participated in this endeavor surprised me.

The second theme – the inclusion of place-based education – and fourth theme – my value of external validation and encouragement – did surprise me. I knew I valued place-based education but did not realize how strongly it would stand out in my journals. I had not considered the link between place-based education and mindfulness before the data analysis process. I intend to build on my inclusion of place-based education and use those teaching opportunities more intentionally in my curriculum and pedagogy. Lastly, I had not realized the importance of external validation on encouraging my mindful pursuit. This discovery suggests that I should intentionally seek out formal and informal validation from students regularly – not just after projects or at the end of the semester. The data analysis demonstrated how valuable this feedback is to me, and I think this will have a positive impact on the way I incorporate mindfulness into my practice. It also affords me the reason to embrace this change, to ensure that I deliberately engage in reflective and reflexive practices with my students.

I believe this research has the potential to impact education generally and, more specifically, home economics education. I believe non-meditative mindfulness could be appealing for educators because it offers the opportunity for individuals to experience
empowering, transformative ways of thinking without demanding the individuals commit significant amounts of time to modifying their practice. Mindfulness involves the simple step of mindfully noticing what we do and question why we do it. It involves “being open to novelty, being sensitive to content and perspective, creating new categories, changing mindsets, challenging assumptions, breaking set, getting involved, and taking responsibility” (Mikulas, 2010, p. 5). A mindful perspective allows educators and students to “see the world as a place in which they are active agents in constructing meaning and building understanding” (Richhart & Perkins, 2000, p. 45).

The themes I identified could act as a guide to support teachers who are seeking to become more mindful in their practice. This would be more authentic than simply providing a script or a unit plan and more directed than educators grappling with how to infuse the simple but somewhat elusive idiom of non-meditative mindfulness that instructs users to simply actively notice new things (Langer, 2014). Mindfulness is an inherent component of each of the four themes. Facing the challenge to evolve and change as an educator based on student needs can be supported by connecting with the themes of evolving pedagogy and curriculum, the inclusion of place-based and inquiry based pedagogy and curriculum, as well as receiving external feedback and validation. These pedagogical and curriculum based themes could inspire and invigorate the educator’s practice. These, along with seeking and watching for feedback and encouragement from students, peers, and administration could help propel the mindful momentum that we hope these teachers might develop. There is a challenge in trying to identify specific actions about how to achieve mindfulness about one’s practice in that it is fundamentally a philosophical positioning that is relative. Thus, being mindful is not a
destination *per se* rather an expedition of praxis where what you can do about mindful practice depends on where you are starting from.

However any expedition has to begin from somewhere and so the four themes identified in this research provide one launching place. Thus, incorporating these themes into educators’ practices could help them eliminate mindless education which is “trapped in categories, reinforces linear thinking, strengthens the belief in limited resources, leads to automatic behaviour, and implies that actions in the world originate from singular perspectives that lack complexity” (Mani, Elworthy, Gopinath, Houston & Schwartz, 2014, p. 596). Reducing mindless education would facilitate critical self-analysis where teachers seek to educate in intentional, mindful ways with the goal of teaching to what the specific students in their class(es) need and/or connect with at that specific period of time in that specific location. Critical constructivism (Kincheloe, 2008) can emerge when educators incorporate these themes, with the intention of becoming more mindful. These educators then have the potential to embrace phronesis and become empowered by the understanding that their and their students’ views can be modified by social action.

Actions such as incorporating inquiry and place-based activities in the classroom, seeking feedback and validation from students and colleagues, and being committed to professional development with the goal of continually developing one’s practice provide some ways for teachers to think about mindful practices.

As mentioned in Section 3, phronesis and the critical-emancipatory perspective do not promise praxis or action from teachers, but they do empower individuals to act in a way that they feel are “for the good” and prepare them to make wise choices regarding obstacles they face. For example, a home economics teacher who focuses mainly on
developing a technical perspective or technê could be propelled into the “morally committed action” (Renwick, 2015, p. 23) (praxis) because of discoveries s/he makes while moving away from mindlessness and becoming more mindful and critically aware. He or she might mindfully consider why and how they know what they know and follow up by asking how they are teaching and why what they are teaching matters at that specific time and place to both themselves and their students. This mindful noticing involves a shift in thinking with little intervention and may create space for “blink-like transformations [or] sudden revelatory moments” (Saarinen & Lehti, 2014, 1115-6) to occur. They may be inspired to participate in conscientização, - “a process of reaching critical awareness and acting upon it” (Cruz, 2013, 178) - to overcome neo-liberal constraints and assist students in discovering how employ critical consideration and mindfully behave in their everyday lives as global citizens.

In my opinion, the incorporation of these mindful themes is important for home economics educators because of the subject area’s intimate connection between its content, our students lives and our world. Home economists have argued that the goal of home economics is to achieve “the highest quality of human life” (East, 1980, p. 38) with a purpose of helping individuals develop ‘moral vision’ where they work together in “caring relationships… for the common good of all living systems” (Heinilä, 2003, p. 111) and become “responsible, caring citizens by living everyday life mindfully” (Heinilä, 2003, p. 114). Vaines argued that all endeavors within the profession of home economics must have meaning or they risk lacking moral clout (Heinilä, 2003). I suggest that, because of the unique content and goals of home economics, it is unethical for home economics teachers to, either knowingly or unknowingly, teach in a mindless fashion. If
educators are not mindful of their epistemological stance, their mindless teaching could result in unintentional, unfortunate consequences by propagating ideas that could be harmful and even inappropriate in today’s world such as racist, or sexist ideals. Moreover, I believe educators must continually participate in mindful noticing because our environment and world are ever-changing and, according to Vaines, a “person is never completely enlightened, empowered, or emancipated” (Kieren & Badir, 2004, p. 19).

Being mindful allows home economics educators to continually work on evolving their practice. It permits them to question whether they are meeting their objectives in concert with mindful thought. I believe our students are more likely to complete their home economics course(s) feeling empowered and in touch with their civic selves if home economics educators teach with the goal of mindful emancipation with regard to the home economics curriculum. Mindful curriculum and pedagogy may, over the course of a term, assist students in developing a mindful disposition, critical/emancipatory thinking capabilities, and a desire to take critical action in their daily lives. This could result in teachers and students contributing to a “preferred future”, which Smith said is possible when various potentials are considered and prevailing paradigms are flexible as a result of, what could be described as, mindful consideration (McGregor, 2015).

Finally, my research points to the possibility that mindfulness could assist home economics overcome the common misconception that home economics educators value production over seeking truth or doing what is right (Renwick, 2015). A mindful practice offers the potential to reduce mindlessness in an educator’s curriculum and pedagogy. As discussed in Section 4, non-meditative mindfulness has the ability to bring phronesis and
praxis to life in our schools. In order for home economics to be relevant in the future, it, according to Smith, needs to be “involved in creating a more preferable, sustainable society, based on preserving the earth for future generations, increased economic security, and peace and justice for all” (McGregor, 2015, p. 10). I believe mindful home economics educators have the ability to make home economics embody this description and shift.

5. Areas for Future Research

This research on mindfulness in the classroom lends itself to additional potential research opportunities. If I were to extend this research, I would like to conduct a study with other teachers who are mindful and explore how they incorporate mindfulness in their classrooms, and how mindfulness impacts their curriculum and pedagogy. It would be useful to begin to determine Langer’s (1997, 2000) lists of mindfulness attributes identified in her relatively brief interventions were shared by teachers at different stages of their professional experience and over sustained periods of time. Additionally, I would like to further investigating the relationship between mindfulness and critical theory in education and, finally, I am interested in how a mindful teaching approach impacts students, especially regarding the impact it may have on their own mindfulness and emancipatory actions.

6. Conclusion

In my journal, I mused that “[m]indful practice and pedagogy is a constantly evolving thing and I can see myself being pushed by this mindful way of thinking for the remainder of my career.... hopefully with the impact of positively motivating students to become mindful about their everyday lives too. I think this potential is infinite in terms of
how the world could be changed and it is humbling to know that my impact on 5 years of students may be changing the world right now, as I type, in small ways and maybe even earth moving ways” (Personal Journal, p. 17). My research analysis has only strengthened this musing.

My five-month action research case study on myself resulted in the identification of four major themes that connect with my mindful practice. These findings highlighted how I can improve my practice and engage more deeply with mindfulness and emancipatory action in my pedagogy and my home economics curriculum. It also emboldened me to share with others the potential I see for mindfulness in education generally and home economics. By considering my research question “In what ways might an educator incorporate mindfulness in her practice to facilitate her students’ engagement with independent, critical thought?” I was interested to see how four themes emerged, of which two seemed almost predictable but two were clearly relevant if less obvious at the beginning. Based on my research, I conclude that I think if other teachers were able to observe and reflect on the above-noted themes in their classroom(s), it may assist them to mindfully engage with their curriculum and pedagogy as well as help their students mindfully engage in their everyday lives in an authentic way. I believe that developing curriculum and pedagogy through the lens of mindfulness can and does guide students toward becoming aware, mindful, critical citizens who understand more information, more deeply (Langer, 1997); question the status quo more readily and more confidently; and make revolutionary, emancipatory change more eagerly.
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APPENDIX A – FOOD STUDIES 9/12 END OF TERM SELF EVALUATION

Name:_________________________
Block:________

Foods Self Evaluation

1) Based on my performance in labs, (including behavior and attentiveness during demos, and cooperative accomplishment of duties), my preparedness for all classes, my attitude towards developing and practicing new skills, and trying new foods, and my achievement on assignments; I think my WORK ETHIC should be ____________ and my mark should be ____________. I believe:
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

2) a. My favourite recipes this term were: ________________________________

   b. Recipes I did not enjoy this term were: ________________________________

   c. One thing I wish we made or a skill we learned this term is: ________________________________

3) What do you think is the most important/best thing you learned in this class? (Be specific! Don’t say "cooking".) ________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Anything else you want Ms. E to know? Please include any activities you think I should include in this course again.
APPENDIX B – FOOD STUDIES 12 FINAL ASSIGNMENT

Individual Blog Post Assignment /25

Blog: /blog/

define
1. a website containing a writer’s or group of writers’ own experiences, observations, opinions, etc., and often having images and links to other websites.
2. a single entry or post on such a website. She regularly contributes a blog to the magazine’s website.

Anything and everything to do with food is being blogged world-wide by food bloggers. Some people make it their career, some people do it as a hobby, but regardless, they are communicating and sharing about food in one way or another.

PROJECT

Create a blog post or a blog with a variety of posts that has/have to do with food. Your target audience could be anyone you choose, but ideally it would be people in your age group (feel free to choose something more specific). Each blog post will connect to some type of career in food. Some examples of topics you could choose from include:

- Develop an interesting recipe and document it
- Read a book about food and critique the book
- Watch a food documentary and critique the film
- Analyze the history of a food or type of food OR analyzing food advertisements or one food advertisement
- Reflect on a style of eating or way to eat (e.g. dietary restrictions such as a plant-based diet, celiac disease, 100 Mile Diet)
- Consider food in a particular culture
- Investigate a food practice, trend, habit, or event (e.g. community gardens, “family dinner”, protein shakes, veganism, lunch)
- Review a restaurant (this one can be tough to meet the criteria below)
- Reflect on nutrition, a specific nutrient, a nutritional philosophy, or a “super food”
- Reflect on a topic regarding social justice and/or ethics and/or sustainability & food (e.g. eggs, shrimp, food miles, fair trade)
- OTHER? There are infinite options!

Your blog will be unique from others but all blog posts must include:

1. a discussion and an educated opinion (your own) on a controversial issue regarding food
2. content written in an interesting style & voice (this is not Wikipedia)
3. informative & reflective content (you can use the word “I” when you write)
4. good organization
5. at least three pieces of multimedia that add new information or perspective to the post
6. at least three links to sites/pages that add to the reader’s understanding of the topic
7. at least 350 words
8. references for claims you make unless they are your opinions (you can hyperlink them)
9. a question at the end of the post(s) that challenges readers to think deeply about the topic

STEPS

Follow these steps to complete the project:
1. Complete the plan on the following page.
2. Research/do activity/read/watch (whatever you need to do to prepare to write your blog post) and record your sources along the way.
3. Sketch or block out your ideas for the post on the back of this page. Consider the images, words, colours, and product placement.
4. Create the blog post in a document (include all multimedia)
5. Email to Ms. E (medstrom@sd43.bc.ca) by ____________
6. Be prepared to share your blog in a class assessment activity online (we can do this in a variety of ways).

Note: If your blog is “personal”, we will make an exception. Talk to me about this if it applies to you.
Food and the way people consume food are connected to many, many controversial issues. Make a web or list some “controversial” topics involving food in the space below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrition</th>
<th>Ethics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Global</td>
<td>Eating</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>Environmental</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food Systems</td>
<td>?</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FS 12

PLAN - **THIS MUST BE DECIDED ON AND REPORTED TO MS. E BY**

1) What is your general theme or topic (see ideas listed on previous page)?

2) What, specifically, will you do your post on?

3) What controversial issue are you going to discuss?

4) a. Who is your “target audience”?  
   b. What do you need to do in order to get this done on time?

5) How are you going to communicate your information? writing+photos/video /other?

6) Use the space **on the following page** to record research and do a rough draft/plan  
   for your blog post and record your sources.
FS 12

PLAN:

Record your RELIABLE sources below. Include all important information (e.g. the author of the page, the date the information was provided or retrieved from the internet, the URL, the title of the page or article).

Sources:
# Blog Post Assignment Rubric

Please complete the short reflection and mark your blog with the rubric below. Email your blog post to medstrom@sd43.bc.ca

**Short reflection:**

1. Name: ___________________________ Block: ___________________________
2. Blog Title: ___________________________
3. One thing I want to point out: ___________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan</th>
<th>Not Meeting</th>
<th>Minimally Meeting</th>
<th>Meeting Expectations</th>
<th>Exceptional</th>
<th>GOLD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Plan is not complete</td>
<td>Student is somewhat prepared to begin project</td>
<td>Plan is well developed</td>
<td>Plan is thorough and very well developed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Student is ill prepared to begin project</td>
<td>- Student is somewhat prepared to begin project</td>
<td>- Student is extremely well prepared to begin project</td>
<td>- Done on time</td>
<td>- Done on time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Not done on time</td>
<td>- Done on time</td>
<td>- Done on time</td>
<td>- Done on time</td>
<td>- Done on time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>No thoughtful consideration</th>
<th>Little thoughtful consideration</th>
<th>Some thoughtful consideration</th>
<th>Deep, thoughtful consideration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Demonstrated re: controversial issue</td>
<td>Demonstrated re: controversial issue</td>
<td>Demonstrated re: controversial issue</td>
<td>Demonstrated re: controversial issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- no level of critical thought demonstrated</td>
<td>- unsatisfactory level of critical thought demonstrated</td>
<td>- decent level of critical thought demonstrated</td>
<td>- deep, thoughtful consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- no question posed</td>
<td>- primary question posed</td>
<td>- secondary question posed</td>
<td>- deep, thoughtful consideration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of Writing</th>
<th>No style or voice</th>
<th>Poorly organized</th>
<th>Written in an interesting style and voice</th>
<th>Well organized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>- post has no style or voice</td>
<td>- post has little style or voice</td>
<td>- written in a somewhat interesting style and voice</td>
<td>- written in an interesting style and voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- poorly organized</td>
<td>- poorly organized</td>
<td>- well organized</td>
<td>- well organized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- at least 350 words</td>
<td>- at least 350 words</td>
<td>- at least 350 words</td>
<td>- at least 350 words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation</th>
<th>Many words misspelled</th>
<th>Many grammar errors</th>
<th>Formatting makes post difficult to follow or read</th>
<th>All words spelled correctly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>- several spelling errors</td>
<td>- several grammar errors</td>
<td>- formatting makes it difficult to follow or read</td>
<td>- all words spelled correctly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- many grammar errors</td>
<td>- many spelling errors</td>
<td>- formatting makes it difficult to follow or read</td>
<td>- no grammar errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- formatting makes post difficult to follow or read</td>
<td>- formatting makes it difficult to follow or read</td>
<td>- formatting makes post difficult to follow or read</td>
<td>- no grammar errors</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- at least 350 words</td>
<td>- at least 350 words</td>
<td>- at least 350 words</td>
<td>- at least 350 words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multimedia</th>
<th>No evidence of multimedia enhancement</th>
<th>Enhanced post to some extent using a variety of images or other add-ons</th>
<th>Greatly enhanced post to other sites and/or that add to readers understanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>- blog is primarily text-based.</td>
<td>- enhanced post to some extent using a variety of images or other add-ons</td>
<td>- greatly enhanced post to other sites and/or that add to readers understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- very little evidence of multimedia enhancement</td>
<td>- enhanced post to some extent using a variety of images or other add-ons</td>
<td>- greatly enhanced post to other sites and/or that add to readers understanding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>No links</th>
<th>One or more links</th>
<th>- at least 3 links included that add to the reader’s understanding</th>
<th>Wide-range of several links to other sites and/or that add to readers understanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>- no links</td>
<td>- only “easy” links</td>
<td>- at least 3 links included that add to the reader’s understanding</td>
<td>- wide-range of several links to other sites and/or that add to readers understanding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>No references and/or connection made to sources used</th>
<th>- little references and/or connection made to sources used</th>
<th>- some references and/or connection made to sources used</th>
<th>Excellent references and/or connection made to sources used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>- no links</td>
<td>- little references and/or connection made to sources used</td>
<td>- some references and/or connection made to sources used</td>
<td>- excellent references and/or connection made to sources used</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student Mark /25**

**Teacher Mark /25**
Controversial Food Topic Book Cover Assignment / 25

Exploring a controversial aspect of food and sharing it!

Controversial: / kon-truh-vur-shuh l/
adjective
1. of, relating to, or characteristic of controversy, or prolonged public dispute, debate, or contention; polemical: a controversial book.
2. subject to controversy; debatable: a controversial decision
3. given to controversy; argumentative; disputatious: a controversial public figure.

Food and the way people consume food are connected to many, many controversial issues. Make a web or list some "controversial" topics involving food in the space below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrition</th>
<th>Ethics</th>
<th>Global</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eating</th>
<th>Sustainability</th>
<th>?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>-</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

PROJECT
Create a BOOK COVER about a controversial food topic. Your target audience could be anyone you choose, but ideally it would be people in your age group (feel free to choose something more specific). You should choose a specific topic and one that you are interested in.

Your book cover will be unique from others, but in general, all projects should include:
- A great title, a captivating image (can be hand drawn or print)
- Content written in an interesting style and voice (this is not Wikipedia)
- Informative and reflective content (you can use the word "I" when you write)
- Good organization

STEPS
Follow these steps to complete the project:
1. Complete the plan on the following page.
2. Research/do activity/read/watch (whatever you need to do to prepare your project) and record your sources along the way.
3. Sketch or block out your ideas for the post on the back of this page. Consider the images, words, colours, and product placement.
4. Create the book cover according to the criteria on the back of this page.
5. Be prepared to share your project in a short presentation in small groups. This project will be peer assessed. Prepare one question for the class to engage them in conversation about your topic at the end of your presentation.
FS 9

CRITERIA:

(1) On the Front Cover (/4)
Must have:
✓ An interesting title
✓ A captivating/thought provoking image that directly connect to the story as you understand it - it can be in black and white or colour
✓ Optional: awards the book has received - feel free to make-up your own to honour the book in some way
✓ Optional - the price of the book
✓ Optional - pop-up picture for a 3D effect

(2) On the Inside Left Flap and Inside Right Flap (/8)
✓ LEFT - Write biographical information about the author (/4)
  o This can be you, if you imagine you are an expert in this subject, an actual specialist in this subject or someone you make up.
  o Summarize important parts of the author's life.
✓ RIGHT - A short summary of the book (/4)

(3) On the Back Cover (/4)
You must have:
✓ a "hook" of the book
  - this is where the reader checks to see if they should read the book - explain what would this book discuss?
  - what are the most important points the author will discuss?
  - what are some conclusions or opinions the author has?
  - why should your classmates read the book
✓ Optional
  o the ISBN number with bar code, the price, an illustration, a recommendation to read the story from friends and family who have read the book, a passage from the book to give a taste to the writing style

Optional - On the Spine
You must have:
✓ title of the book, the author's name, an illustration or symbol.

ASSESSMENT: /25
Peers will assess the projects based on the following criteria.
- a check list from above (/16),
- the level of thoughtful, critical consideration of the topic (/4),
- accurate sources recorded (/1),

Due Date for Project:
Presentation:
(1 block of the computer lab and one day of class time will be provided. If not finished, it is to be completed at home.)

***Make sure the book jacket you are making is your own work. Do not copy summaries, the author's biography, or reviews. Make sure the ideas are the work of your very own!

Enjoy! Soon you will be a class expert that will help your peers consider a controversial issue about food. This has the true potential to make our world a more thoughtful, empathetic place full of empowered citizens... because of you!
FS 9

**THIS MUST BE DECIDED ON AND REPORTED TO MS. E TODAY**

1) What is your general theme or topic (see ideas listed on previous page)? ______________________________

2) What, specifically, will you do your post on? ________________________________________________

3) a. Who is your “target audience”? ______________________________________________________

   b. What do you need to do in order to get this done on time?

4) Use the space on the following page to record research and do a rough draft/plan for your blog post and record your sources.
Presentation Question for the Class: __________________________________________

Record your RELIABLE sources below. Include all important information (e.g. the author of the page, the date the information was provided or retrieved from the internet, the URL, the title of the page or article).

Sources:
Controversial Book Cover Peer Assessment

Short reflection – BOOK TITLE:

1. One thing I think you did really well:

2. One thing I learned:

3. One question I have about this topic:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not Meeting</th>
<th>Minimally Meeting BRONZE</th>
<th>Meeting Expectations SILVER</th>
<th>Exceptional GOLD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| COVER         | Not included| Missing one of the criteria | Good job on the criteria   | Excellent job on the following criteria:  
|               |             |                           |                             | An interesting tile  
|               |             |                           |                             | A captivating/thought provoking image that directly connects to the story as you understand it - it can be in black and white or colour |
| Author        | Not included| Missing one of the criteria | Good job on the criteria   | Excellent job on the following criteria:  
|               |             |                           |                             | Descriptive description of author  
|               |             |                           |                             | Text helps understand the background of the person who would write this book (connects to the topic) |
| Book Summary  | No cover    | Missing one of the criteria | Good job on the criteria   | Excellent job on the following criteria:  
|               |             |                           |                             | Descriptive Summary of book is detailed and covers a variety of issues involved in the controversial topic |
| Hook Paragraph| No cover    | Missing one of the criteria | Good job on the criteria   | Excellent job on the following criteria:  
|               |             |                           |                             | a “hook” of the book  
|               |             |                           |                             | explains what would this book discuss?  
|               |             |                           |                             | most important points brought up  
|               |             |                           |                             | or opinions the author has |
| Critical Thinking | Not meeting criteria | meeting criteria | Good job on the criteria | excellent level of critical thought demonstrated |
| Book Design   | Unsatisfactory appearance and design | Acceptable appearance and design | Good appearance and design | Excellent appearance and design |
| Sources       | No sources  |                           |                             | sources recorded |

/25
APPENDIX D – FOOD STUDIES 12 FOOD NEWS ASSIGNMENT

Food will evolve over the course of this semester; it evolves constantly! This assignment will allow you and your classmates to expose each other to some relevant issues involved with the multi-billion dollar industry we think of as food. These current events will bring up trends, various viewpoints, controversial issues, and - hopefully - some interesting, thought-provoking information.

SO, WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?

1. Sign up for a presentation date (we will have 3 students share each week Ms. E is teaching).
2. A week (or so) before your date, find something going on with food that is current.
   You can find this through a google news search of a food you are interested in, through a Facebook news feed, through something your family is talking about, through a news story you heard on the radio on the way to school… whatever!
3. Develop a short presentation to introduce your news story to the class.
4. Be prepared to present (however you choose) on the day you signed up for. Present. ®

NEWS STORY/PRESENTATION CRITERIA

- News story must:
  - be something relevant and current (not older than 3 weeks from your presentation date)
  - be something you find interesting or useful to know
  - be factual (to your knowledge) and come from a reliable source
- Presentation must:
  - be 1-3 minutes long
  - explain your news story in a clear and interesting way
  - provide any background or information that would be useful to know to help your peers understand the story
  - explicitly note controversial issue(s) involved in the story
  - include at least one good question you have about the news story
  - provide the source for the story

YOUR PRESENTATION DATE: __________________________________________

TOPIC(S) OF INTEREST: __________________________________________

See suggestions for websites to check out to find interesting articles on the back of this page.
# APPENDIX E – FOOD STUDIES 9 BEFORE AND AFTER SEMESTER SURVEY

**BEFORE**  
**Food Studies 9 Survey**

### A. Circle the response that best applies to your present food habits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I eat 3 or more vegetables every day.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I eat 2 or more fruits every day.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I drink 3 or more glasses of water every day.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I read labels on food packages/boxes/cans.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I eat fish and/or shellfish at least twice per week.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I eat lentils, beans or peas at least twice per week.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I eat nuts like almonds or brazil nuts at least twice per week.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I eat meals together with my family most days.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I prepare my own lunch to bring to school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I cook meals for my family on my own at least once a month.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I bake at home at least once a month.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I eat breakfast every day.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>My family and I shop at Farmer's Markets or local farms.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### B. Circle your response to the following statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I think there is a connection between the food I eat and the way I feel.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I think homemade food has more flavour &amp; is healthier than prepared food.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Spending time to prepare food from scratch can be fun, creative, and satisfying.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Knowing where &amp; how the food I eat is grown and produced is important to me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>My family grows some of the food we eat.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Shopping with my family for the food we eat is part of my family responsibility.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>My food choices can make a difference on the environment.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>My food choices can make a difference on people around the world.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I enjoy trying new and different foods.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I think people should try to buy organic foods as much as possible.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I think people should try to buy foods locally as much as possible.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I’ve spent time thinking about the impact the foods I eat regularly make on myself, the people and places near where I live, and the world.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. Eating Sustainably means: ____________________________________________  
    an example of how you can do this is: ____________________________

14. What does it mean to make an Ethical Food Choice? _________________________
    an example of a food you could make an “ethical food choice” about is: ____________________________

15. Eating Local means: ________________________________________
AFTER

Food Studies 9 Survey

A. Circle the response that best applies to your present food habits.

1. I eat 3 or more vegetables every day.  
   Always  Sometimes  Never
2. I eat 2 or more fruits every day.  
   Always  Sometimes  Never
3. I drink 3 or more glasses of water every day.  
   Always  Sometimes  Never
4. I read labels on food packages/boxes/cans.  
   Always  Sometimes  Never
5. I eat fish and/or shellfish at least twice per week.  
   Always  Sometimes  Never
6. I eat lentils, beans or peas at least twice per week.  
   Always  Sometimes  Never
7. I eat nuts like almonds or brazil nuts at least twice per week.  
   Always  Sometimes  Never
8. I eat meals together with my family most days.  
   Always  Sometimes  Never
9. I prepare my own lunch to bring to school.  
   Always  Sometimes  Never
10. I cook meals for my family on my own at least once a month.  
    Always  Sometimes  Never
11. I bake at home at least once a month.  
    Always  Sometimes  Never
12. I eat breakfast every day.  
    Always  Sometimes  Never
13. My family and I shop at Farmer’s Markets or local farms.  
    Always  Sometimes  Never

B. Circle your response to the following statements

1. I think there is a connection between the food I eat and the way I feel.  
   1  2  3  4  5
2. I think homemade food has more flavour & is healthier than prepared food.  
   1  2  3  4  5
3. Spending time to prepare food from scratch can be fun, creative, and satisfying.  
   1  2  3  4  5
4. Knowing where & how the food I eat is grown and produced is important to me.  
   1  2  3  4  5
5. My family grows some of the food we eat.  
   1  2  3  4  5
6. Shopping with my family for the food we eat is part of my family responsibility.  
   1  2  3  4  5
7. My food choices can make a difference on the environment.  
   1  2  3  4  5
8. My food choices can make a difference on people around the world.  
   1  2  3  4  5
9. I enjoy trying new and different foods.  
   1  2  3  4  5
10. I think people should try to buy organic foods as much as possible.  
    1  2  3  4  5
11. I think people should try to buy foods locally as much as possible.  
    1  2  3  4  5
12. I’ve spent time thinking about the impact the foods I eat regularly make on 
    myself, the people and places near where I live, and the world.  
    1  2  3  4  5

13. Eating Sustainably means: ___________________________________________________________

   an example of how you can do this is: __________________________________________________

14. What does it mean to make an Ethical Food Choice? ___________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________

   an example of a food you could make an “ethical food choice” about is: __________________

15. Eating Local means: ________________________________________________________________