

Text of pre-referral letter for Special Education (SPED) testing dated 4.24.06:

Academically, cannot read/write. Can copy some letters. She cannot speak English, understands minimally. Shami does not seem able to practice skills. Cannot follow simple directions. Social/emotional- Shami is very aggressive. She does not seem aware of social boundaries. Hygiene is awful although health teacher and nurse have repeatedly spoken with her. We hoped when Shami's English improved, many of these problems would be resolved. This was not the case.

Massachusetts Definition of SIFE (Student with Interrupted Formal Education)¹

SIFE (Student with Interrupted Formal Education) refers to an English language learner (ELL), who is typically a newcomer [1] between the ages of 8 and 22. The student has experienced an interrupted education or has had little to no schooling experience resulting in an inadequate chance to have made educational gains. Interruptions in academic history may be caused by any factors that would limit the student's ability to perform and achieve in a Massachusetts classroom with students of a comparable age group. These factors may include:

- unavailability of schooling
- civil unrest
- immigration
- transiency
- trauma
- refugee camp experiences
- family constraints
- gender restrictions
- other environmental or socioemotional factors

Moreover, a SIFE may have experienced limited schooling, characterized by a non-rigorous quality of education in the home country. This may include a shorter school day and/or school year, and a curriculum that is not comparable to that of Massachusetts. Also, students may have been educated by teachers who were not high school or college graduates.

Based on assessments, (in native language, if available), the student's academic level is a minimum of two years below grade level in literacy and/or numeracy. Furthermore, the student may lack the general knowledge and/or practical life skills required in a typical Massachusetts classroom.

[1] *Newcomer*

A newcomer is an English language learner who is typically:

- A recent immigrant to the US (having arrived within the last two calendar years) and/or;
- Is new to the American school system and/or; Has little or no English proficiency, performing at the beginner or advanced beginner level.

¹ This definition was drafted by a DESE working group and has not officially been adopted by the state of Massachusetts

Theoretical Bricolage ²used in this study:



² A theoretical bricolage utilizes a "web" of different theories in order to study complex social issues (Kincheloe, 2001; Kincheloe, 2005).

Codes for Community Cultural Wealth and Funds of Knowledge

Code	Description	Author or theory
<i>Funds</i>	“Historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being” (Moll & Gonzalez, 1994, p.443).	Funds of Knowledge, (Moll & Gonzalez, 1994)
<i>Aspire</i>	Aspirational Capital: The resiliency of People of Color to maintain hope, pursue dreams, and have high expectations, for themselves and their children even in the face of both real and perceived barriers.	Community Cultural Wealth, (Yosso, 2005)
<i>Linguistic Cap.</i>	Linguistic Capital: the benefits of the social and cognitive skills attained from communicating in more than one language and/or in more than one style	Community Cultural Wealth, (Yosso, 2005)
<i>Familial Cap.</i>	Familial Capital: knowledge of a specific culture, looked after by families, and keeping a sense of “community, history, memory, and cultural intuition” (Yosso, 2005, p. 79).	Community Cultural Wealth, (Yosso, 2005)
<i>Social Cap.</i>	Social Capital: “networks of people and community resources” (Yosso, 2005, p. 79).	Community Cultural Wealth, (Yosso, 2005)
<i>Navi. Cap.</i>	Navigational Capital: the ability to successfully navigate through institutions not designed with People of Color in mind.	Community Cultural Wealth, (Yosso, 2005)
<i>Resistant Cap.</i>	Resistant Capital: “knowledge and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality” (Yosso, 2005, p. 80).	Community Cultural Wealth, (Yosso, 2005)

Codes for Resiliency

Code	Description	Theorist/s
<i>Temperament</i>	Personality/endearing temperament	Werner, 1989; Garmezy, 1991; Rotter, 1966
<i>Social Comp.</i>	Intrinsic characteristic/social competence	Bernard, 1997
<i>Problem solve.</i>	Intrinsic characteristic /problem solving skills	Bernard, 1997
<i>Autonomy</i>	Intrinsic characteristic /autonomy	Bernard, 1997

<i>Purpose</i>	Intrinsic characteristic /sense of purpose	Bernard, 1997
<i>Family supp.</i>	Familial support	Condly, 2006
<i>Support seeking</i>	External support/support seeking	Milgram & Palti, 1993
<i>Support attracting</i>	External support/support attracting	Milgram & Palti, 1993
<i>Internal Locus of Control</i>	“The degree to which persons expect that a reinforcement or an outcome of their behavior is contingent on their own behavior or personal characteristics” (Rotter, 1966, p.489).	Rotter, 1966, 1991
<i>External Locus of Control</i>	“The degree to which persons expect that the reinforcement or outcome is a function of chance, luck, or fate, is under the control of powerful others, or is simply unpredictable (Rotter, 1966, p.489)”.	Rotter, 1966, 1991

Consent/Assent Procedures for Participants

Part I (All Participants)

The researcher will explain* the following to participants (and to their caregivers if under that age of 18) prior** to the start of the study:

- A research study is going to be conducted (as students/caregivers may not be familiar with what a research study is, the researcher will also explain this).
- The researcher will explain that, at any time during the study, the students (or their caregivers) can decide to no longer participate with absolutely no penalty or punishment.
- If the participants (and their caregivers if under the age of 18) give permission, their identities will be masked by the researcher.

**The researcher will partner with the ESL teacher to ensure that her explanations are comprehensible and appropriate for the CLD students and their caregivers (if under 18)*

***In some cases, getting permission from caregivers can take time. There is a range of reasons for this (such as locating a translator fluent in a student's L1, a caregiver may work hours during the school day, a caregiver may not have a home phone, etcetera). Permission will of course be sought, this it just to note that for some participant's caregivers, this may not occur prior to the start of the study. If, once a caregiver is contacted, they do not wish for their child to participate, that student's data will not be included in the study.*

Part II

SLIFE who are...	Consent/Assent Procedures
18 and older	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Visual permission form accompanied by short explanations in L1 (native language). ➤ Oral consent to researcher. ➤ Students keep a copy of the form for themselves. Visual permission form accompanied by short explanations in L1 (native language).
18 and under	<p><i>Option A</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Visual permission form accompanied by short explanations in L1 is sent home with student to caregivers. ➤ If caregivers do not want the student to participate, they are given three methods for contacting the school. ➤ If caregiver consents, students are then given the choice to assent as described above. <p><i>Option B</i></p> <p>In cases where the caregivers may be preliterate in their L1 the information form is still sent home, however, the researcher or other adult (such as the ESL teacher or ELL Department head) then calls or visits home to seek oral permission. Students are then given the choice to assent as described above.</p>

Information Sheets

Digital Storytelling Project
Information Sheet for Caregivers

Dear _____,

My name is Christina Porter and I am the Director of Humanities for Irvington Public Schools. I wanted to let you know about a study I will be conducting in Ms. Levine's classroom. I am writing you:

- To describe my study
- To ask your permission to include _____ in the study

Part I: Ms Levine's Class Digital Storytelling Project (all students will be taking part in this project)

	<p>Students choose a story from their lives they would like to share with their class</p>
	<p>We will give them cameras to take pictures that help them tell their story</p>
	<p>If they want to, they can also bring in pictures from home</p>



We will teach them to put together their story using their pictures and their words on the computer

Part II: Ms. Porter's Study

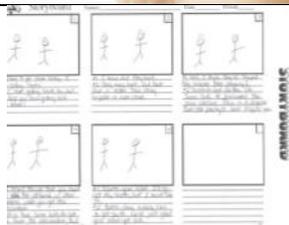
I am also a student at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. I am studying ways to make school better for students like yours who are learning to speak English. With your permission, I would like to include your child in my study. If you consent to this I will:



Work with your child on their project



Record discussions we have about their story



Collect some of the work they do in class (students can say no to anything they do not want Ms. Porter to collect)



- If you agree I will change your child's name in my study and any information that identifies them. I am the only person who will know your child's true identity.
- In the US we do this for a research study to protect the privacy of individuals who choose to participate.
- This study is voluntary. Your child's grade will not be affected in any way if you do not want them to participate. They will still make a digital story like everyone else in Ms. Levine's class.

If, at any time for any reason, you decide that you do not want your child to participate, you can contact:

- Me: Ms. Porter (cporter@XXX) 555-286-XXXX
- Your child's teacher: Ms. Levine (jLevine@XXXXXX) 555-555-5555
- The director of English Language Learners: Mr.XXXXXX(aXXXXXXX) 555-555-8453

Proyecto de narración de historias digitales³
Hoja de información para cuidadores

Estimado/a _____:

Mi nombre es Cristina Porter y soy la Directora de Humanidades de las Escuelas Públicas de Irvington. Quería informarles acerca de un estudio que realizaré en el aula de la Sra. Levine. El objetivo de mi carta es el siguiente:

- Describir el estudio que llevaré a cabo
- Solicitarle permiso para incluir a _____ en el estudio

Parte I: Proyecto de narración digital de la clase de la Sra. Levine (todos los alumnos formarán parte de este proyecto).

	<p>Los estudiantes eligen una historia de sus vidas que desean compartir con el resto de la clase.</p>
	<p>Les daremos cámaras para que tomen fotografías que ayuden a contar sus historias.</p>
	<p>Si lo desean, también pueden traer fotografías de sus hogares.</p>

³ Forms were also translated into Arabic and French



Les enseñaremos a organizar sus historias utilizando las fotografías y sus palabras en una computadora.

The Culturally Responsive Classroom

Category	Characteristic/s	Author/s or Theory/ies
Curriculum	○ Relevant curriculum (sometimes theme-based) presented in an interpersonal setting.	MALP ⁴ (DeCapua & Marshall); Four Keys (Freeman & Freeman, 2002)
Curriculum	○ Curriculum that builds on students' prior knowledge (including language and culture) and Funds of Knowledge.	MALP (DeCapua & Marshall); Four Keys (Freeman & Freeman, 2002)
Instruction	○ Conscious inclusion of students' experiences, strengths, and culture into instruction (Gay, 2010).	CRP ⁵ (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billing, 1995)
Instruction	○ Classroom activities organized collaboratively.	MALP (DeCapua & Marshall); Four Keys (Freeman & Freeman, 2002)
Instruction	○ Explicit teaching of processes unique to American schooling or unfamiliar to students.	MALP (DeCapua & Marshall)
Instruction	○ High academic expectations (appropriately scaffolded).	Culturally Relevant Pedagogy
Literacies	○ Literacy practices beyond reading and writing (such as speaking, listening, storytelling, visual literacy, critical literacy).	Critical Literacy, Freire, Multiliteracies
Literacies	○ Students analyzing power structures of school or society in relation to being a CLD student.	Critical Literacy, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy
Literacies	○ "Problem posing" environment where students are encouraged to take part in debate and critical thinking around the content.	Critical Pedagogy

⁴ Mutually Adaptive Learning Paradigm

⁵ Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

A Sample of Ways to Define “Literacy”

Authors/ Major Theorists⁶	Chomsky (1968); Moats (2001); Wolf (2007)
School of Thought	Cognitive/Linguistic
Explanation of Literacy (Literacy as...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The cognitive process of learning to read print and to write divided into unique stages: <p>Phonological Development: learning to hear, identify, and segment sounds.</p> <p>Orthographic Development: process of learning the writing system that accompanies the sounds of a language.</p> <p>Semantic and Pragmatic Development: process of learning more about the meanings of words based on the context and culture.</p> <p>Syntactic Development: process of learning the grammatical rules of a language, which leads to the ability to write sentences and paragraphs that make sense.</p> <p>Morphological Development: process of learning the rules of how words are formed from smaller parts or morphemes. For example, the word “unbecoming” is made of three morphemes un-becom-ing.</p>
Connection to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ These rules vary greatly by language. English, for example, has 44 phonemes (sounds) whereas Arabic has 28. ○ “A person who learns to read in Chinese uses a very particular set of neuronal connections that differ in significant ways from the pathways used in reading English. When Chinese readers first try to read in English, their brains attempt to use Chinese-based neuronal pathways” (Wolf, 2007, p. 5). ○ If a CLD student has no written form of L1 or is preliterate in L1, there are no neuronal pathways formed in the brain for reading.
Author/s or Major Theorists	Goody (1963,1977); Havelock (1963); Ong (1977, 1982)
School of Thought	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Described as the “strong-text characterization” of literacy (Brandt, 2011, p. 3)
Explanation of Literacy (Literacy as...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ [Print] Literacy shapes cultures and separates the primitive from the civilized ○ Print literacy linked to intellectual abilities
Connection to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Creates a dangerous hierarchy between cultures with and without print literacy <p>“Writing, commitment of the word to space, enlarges the potentiality of language almost beyond measure, restructures thought... Writing gives ...a power far exceeding that of any purely oral dialect” (Ong, 1982, p. 7).</p>

⁶ The authors/theorists are in no way all encompassing of all experts in the field, they are merely representative of a particular school of thought surrounding literacy.

Author/s or Major Theorists	Barton (1994, 1998); Gee (1991, 1996a, 1996b, 1998); Heath (1982, 1983, 1991, 1994); Scribner & Cole (1981); Street (1984)
School of Thought	Sociocultural
Explanation of Literacy (Literacy as...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Language and communication as a social practice <p>“Sociocultural perspectives on literacy are related to sociolinguistic conceptualizations of the ways in which language instantiates culture, the ways in which language use varies according to contexts, the relationship between language use and power, and the ethnography of communication” (Perry, 2012, p. 52).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Three Major Sociocultural Theories of Literacy (Perry, 2012) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Literacy as social practice: Focuses primarily on print literacy but in relation to the social practices and specific contexts that influence meaning. Perry (2012) gives the example of a refugee family believing they had won \$1,000,000 because they received a sweepstakes letter in the mail (in other words, they comprehended the print but did not understand the concept of junk mail in the US). 2. Multiliteracies: “Those who ascribe to the Multiliteracies perspective actively reject definitions of literacy that focus solely on print or written texts and instead view literacy as involving multiple modes of visual, gestural, spatial, and other forms of representation”(Perry, 2012, p. 58-59). Print literacy is not rejected altogether, just considered one of several literacies. 3. Critical Literacy: “...critical theories emphasize both power and empowerment, and recently have expanded to include issues of agency and identity” (Perry, 2012, p. 60).
Connection to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Issues of identity related to language if programs of instruction focus on replacing L1 with English ○ Connection between language use and power in a given context ○ Use of more than one language in different contexts (multiliteracies)
Author/s or Major Theorists	Paulo Freire (1993, 2001)
School of Thought	Sociocultural/Critical Literacy
Explanation of Literacy (Literacy as...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Literacy as a “political project: It involves a ‘reading of the world’ as it does the reading and writing of words to describe it” (Walsh, 1991, p. 15). ○ “To acquire literacy is more than to psychologically and mechanically dominate reading and writing techniques. It is to dominate these techniques in terms of consciousness; to understand what one reads and to write what one understands; it is to <i>communicate</i> graphically. Acquiring literacy does not involve memorizing sentences, words, or syllables – lifeless objects

	unconnected to an existential universe – but rather an attitude of creation and re-creation, a self-transformation producing a stance of intervention in one’s context. (Freire, 2001, p. 86).
Connection to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Offers CLD students a vehicle to utilize the printed word in English to analyze the world around them and to challenge inequalities○ Expands “literacy” to a reading of the world and environment, not just a reading of the printed word

Student: Zahra

Story Title: My First Day in a US School

Narration	Visual	Student explanation of visual
	Title Slide: "My First Day in a US School."	
Hi, I'm Zahra, my story's about my first day in school. My first day in school was in Irvington High School.	<i>Picture of Irvington High School</i>	"First is Irvington High because it was my first day it was in Irvington High School and that's what my story is about."
I was really scared on my first day in school cause the school was so big, I can't know where I have to go, I don't know my classes, I don't know anybody. It was the hardest thing ever in my life.		"I'm confused which hallway I'm going to" "Maybe they can't figure it out" CMP: Oh It looks confusing "Yes, cause I'm confused." CMP: You didn't know where to go?
I was really confused because the school was really big, it was not like where I was in Morocco, the school was so small, and I can't understand what people saying, and I can't remember where is my classes, it was the hardest thing ever in my life.		"All the people walking, and I'm walking lonely... I didn't know anybody." CMP: So this almost looks like it's you seeing in the hall.
I was really confused what lunch I have and when I'm going to tell that lady which food I want cause I couldn't understand her what she saying and I can't tell her which food I want.		-"Yeah, and that's line maybe me in the back waiting for lunch cause I don't know lunch. I have a problem when I'm going to tell them which food I want." CMP: So did you even feel nervous when you were going to buy lunch? "Yeah, I don't know what I'm going to say!" CMP: Oh no! "Maybe they're going to give me something I'm not supposed to be eating."

<p>I was really sad because I can't pass my classes cause I don't understand nothing in the class that's why I failed the first year in my high school.</p>		<p>CMP: So in all of these pictures, you look alone, and that's kind of how you felt? "Yeah...and that's when I start the year I didn't pass, I fail" CMP: So you picked the sad face?</p>
<p>But the sad thing ever I didn't pass all the classes, but I will try my best to pass the next year. And I hope everybody like if you just fail, you can always do better in the other year. This always happen even if you don't speak English.</p>		<p>"Yeah, they're not going to figure out whose this" CMP: right, but that could even be you because she has dark hair like you.</p>
<p>When I start learning English, everything was in my head, I was trying to know everything, as much I can, even it was so hard for me, but I try my best to know English.</p>		<p>"So I start learning English, verb. adjective...I'm trying to learn English and everything at the same time, like this picture shows a lot of different stuff, you had to do work" CMP: And this one? "I was like, confused with the English language, the verbs, noun..." CMP: Different parts of speech are confusing!</p>
<p>I try my best to learn English and pass all my classes, even it was so hard for me but I try my best and I went to my guidance counselor and she tell me "you pass all the classes so we can push you one year if you take summer school".</p>		<p>"So when I didn't pass the first year so I try to make it up and I think I'm going to add one about my guidance counselor when she tell me I can graduate this year." CMP: Did you feel so happy? "Yeah, so I'm just going to show-talking about it, cause I'm not going to find any pictures that talk about those stuff." CMP: Right!</p>
<p>And I did everything that she tell me and they push me one year so I don't have to stay in high school for five years, so I just stay for four years now so I will graduate this year and I was really happy with that cause I don't want to stay in high school for so long.</p>		<p>"And I was studying all the time cause I don't have any words." CMP: So that was you, studying all the time?</p>

<p>That's me and my friend, when I start learning English, I have a lot of friend from different countries and I was so happy with that to know everybody from a different culture, different religion, different language.</p>	<p><i>Picture of Zahra and a friend at graduation.</i></p>	<p>"So when I learn English, I make new friends CMP: Now, is that Shami? "Yeah" CMP: Oh, she's one of my favorite people! I love Shami!</p>
<p>When I have friend, everything change in my life, cause before when I start learning (know) English I don't understand anybody. But now, I can talk and I can have friend from a different countries.</p>	<p><i>Another picture of Zahra and friends at graduation.</i></p>	<p>"So I make new friends when I start learning English."</p>
<p>You get friend, you get everything you need cause before I learn English, I used to have no friends but now I have a lot of friend form different countries and I'm so happy with that.</p>	<p><i>Picture of Ms. Levine's class on a fieldtrip to Salem, MA.</i></p>	<p>"You remember that day when we went to the Salem museum?" CMP: Where did guys go? "Salem museum." CMP: Oh yeah!</p>
<p>And also, the difference between school in Morocco and USA, we used to stay all day in school in Morocco but here, just from 7 to 2...It's not that long and it's much better, for me I guess.</p>		<p>"So then I'm gonna start talking about the difference between Moroccan school and U.S.A. school." CMP: Ok, cool "Like the time" CMP: Yeah. You told me you used to go to school till 5:30?</p>
<p>Its really good if you try your best to pass all the classes and to know English cause it's not that hard if you just if you try, you will pass everything and you will understand everything you just have to try your best.</p>	<p><i>Self portrait of Zahra</i></p>	<p>"You're just going to see my face." CMP: So Zahra, what was the turning point for you, when did your life start changing when you were here because this is all lonely and sad, lonely, lonely! "When I start learning English, I make new friends, that's why I show picture of my friends." CMP: so you didn't have any friends till you could learn English? "Yeah, like how you gonna make friends with no language? They're not going to talk to you."</p>
<p>That's me and my friend in</p>	<p><i>Zahra and a friend at the</i></p>	<p>"Yeah, so I'm going to</p>

<p>Irvington High School. I just want to show you guys the picture of ma and my friend cause the same think if like you guys don't speak English, its not that hard, you just try!</p>	<p><i>movies.</i></p>	<p>tell about me and my friends, it doesn't matter that these girls speak English."</p>
	<p><i>Zahra and a friend in winter.</i></p>	<p>CMP: Did anyone there speak Arabic? "There was, but not too many people...When they came, they find me, all the people find me (<i>Laughs</i>)." CMP: Right, everyone was looking for you! So you've been like the guide for everybody else! "I was before them just a few months" CMP: But you had already had enough English to be able to help them out when they got here!</p>
	<p><i>Picture of Zahra and her friends at prom with the caption:</i></p> <p>"Never give up because you will get better if you try."</p>	
		

Tenants of CRT Solórzano and Yosso (2002)	Using CRT in Educational Research (Bernal, 2002)	Connections to this Research...
<p><i>1. The intercentricity of race and racism with other forms of subordination:</i> race and racism are “endemic.” In education, “layers” of subordination based on race, gender, class immigration status...accent etcetera exist.</p>	<p>1. Ways of knowing of People of Color are informed (at least in part) by “histories that are based on the intersection of racism, sexism, classism and other forms of subordination”(p. 110).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contextualization of the history of People of Color/language minority speakers in the US (chapter 2), connection of this history to this research.
<p><i>2. The challenge to dominant ideology:</i> CRT challenges that educational institutions claiming to support the philosophical underpinnings of American Society (everyone is equal, schools are colorblind, all are welcome) are actually serving to maintain the power structure of the dominant group.</p>	<p>2. Recognizes ways of knowing and “pedagogies of the home” that fall outside of the epistemologies that are typically honored by the school (p. 110).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Research is focused on identifying knowledge and experiences that SLIFE possesses as a bridge to (not as an impediment to) the learning standards and expectations in a US school.
<p><i>3. The commitment to social justice:</i> CRT is committed to social justice. Researchers “acknowledge that educational institutions operate in contradictory ways, with their potential to oppress and marginalize coexisting with their potential to emancipate and empower” (p. 26).</p>	<p>3. The ways of knowing of People of Color are grounded in “raced and gendered histories” (p. 110). Research that investigates the experiences of People of Color seeks both societal and political change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Research seeks to identify and describe the ways of knowing of the SLIFE in this study via digital storytelling. ○ Research acknowledged students’ prior knowledge and experiences in the construction of their stories.
<p><i>4. The centrality of experiential knowledge:</i> CRT acknowledges that the experiential knowledge of people of color is important and critical to learning</p>	<p>4. As opposed to viewing the knowledge and experiences of People of Color as a deficit, these are viewed as a strength.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The experiential knowledge of the students is essential to the digital storytelling process. As a researcher, I

about racial subordination and encourages people to share their experience through storytelling, family histories, narratives, etcetera.		view this knowledge as the key to improving the education of these students.
<i>5. The transdisciplinary perspective:</i> an insistence that analysis of race and racism must be viewed by placing them “in both historical and contemporary contexts” (p. 27).	5. Using multiple lenses in order to better “understand and improve” the education of People of Color (p. 110).	○ In an attempt to better represent all students in this study, a theoretical bricolage will be utilized.

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