

Running head: HOW COLOR CODING FORMULAIC WRITING ENHANCES...

How Color Coding Formulaic Writing Enhances Organization: A Qualitative Approach
for Measuring Student Affect

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Dedication

Throughout the duration of my scholastic career, there are few people whom influenced my confidence and passion towards education like Dr. Barbara C. Coulibaly. The professor devoted her life to education and building relationships with people. Dr. Coulibaly's reverence and passion to my educational career impacted my love of learning to the extent she surfaced as one of my greatest supporters. It is an honor to dedicate my Master's thesis to Barbara Coulibaly. Forever she will be a mentor and friend.

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to investigate and present the status of student synthesis with color coded formula writing for grade level six through twelve, and to make recommendations for educators to teach writing structure through a color coded formula system in order to increase classroom engagement and lower students' affect.

The thesis first examines the struggles American secondary students face with literacy and writing pedagogy. The evidence displays there is a growing demand for a writing system that can groom students to meet the expectations and rigor that the federal Common Core State Standards demand, but at the present time many educators are not successful when giving students guidance in writing proficiently.

The thesis then identifies the history of color coded writing, further outlining the symbolism of colors in cultures and society. In a detailed central section of the thesis, it provides evidence and reasoning with the effects of how a color coded formulaic writing system will build the confidence of students writing in the classroom, while creating engagement in the writing process. Here, the thesis draws on a number of sources from other celebrated researchers to expand on theory of color coding.

On the basis of the results of this research, it can be concluded a student's affect does decrease when provided a color coded writing formula, while revealing some colors negatively affect a student's confidence when writing. In conclusion, color coding writing allows for success in the classroom, which is the first step towards progressing towards mastery in writing. The author recommends further research opportunities to explore the phenomena of color affect among adolescent writers.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The thesis study is an extensive tribute to the analysis of student synthesis with color coded formula writing for grade levels six through twelve. The study will assess student affect when using color codes in their writing. The color coded formulaic writing model is aligned with Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects for California Public Schools Kindergarten through Grade Twelve.

Background

Illiteracy is a rising epidemic in America. A plague is spreading on the hands of young writers everyday as they continue to leave high school with inaptitude in writing skills. Students are leaving high school, flooding colleges and careers with an inept sense of expository and technical writing. For instance, “Eighty-one percent of employers describe recent high school graduates as ‘deficient in written communications’ such as memos, letters, and technical reports” (Conference Board, 2006). Even if the student is college bound, the majority of undergraduates are placed in college English remedial classes to enhance non-fiction informational writing. For example, “About 70% of high school students need some form of remediation; the most common problem is that students cannot comprehend the words they read—not that they cannot read them” (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004). Reading skills in America face similar challenges as writing. Americans suffer from the inability to comprehend what they are reading. The application of what is read is nonexistent, which disables a cycle of innate ability to enhance one’s skill in the workplace or college setting. Furthermore, “According to a 2006 survey conducted by the Conference Board, 63% of employers rated reading

comprehension as ‘very important’ for new hired employees who are high school graduates, while 49% of employers found writing skills to be very important. However, almost 40% of employers found high school graduates to be deficient in their reading comprehension skills, and 72% of employers rate high school graduates as deficient in writing skills” (Rutenberg, 2009). The prevalence of appalling reading and writing skills across America is enough to bring awareness and urgency to the strategies educators use to teach writing.

Developing writing skills is significant to secondary students due to the implementation of Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Common Core requires English curriculum to entail 70% of expository/informational text and writing assignments. A formulaic writing approach allows students to write concretely through guided practice with the ability to expand abstract notions. Formula writing also entails a multi-paragraph guide to writing an essay with each sentence having a purpose and a reason for being in the essay.

Problem Statement

Writing is an atrocity in the United States. New strategies need to be employed to address and champion the enhancement of poor writing skills in United States education. Students are graduating high school lacking skills in expository and technical writing. Over 70 percent of students are graduating high school basic and below, according to Fermin Leal (2012). Unfortunately, people need writing skills to participate in simple tasks in daily life. Nearly half of America's adults are poor readers, or "functionally illiterate." They can't carry out simple tasks like balancing check books, reading drug labels or writing essays for a job. The deficiency of skills also transcends to college

readiness and the fact, “that 50 percent of high school graduates are unprepared for college-level writing” (Reading, Literacy & Education Statistics, 2014). Deficits in one’s writing can exhibit poorly in career readiness as well. America’s employers are just as distraught with writing skills as educators are. The nation’s private companies now spend an estimated \$3.1 billion per year—and state governments spend an additional \$200 million—teaching their employees to write (Headrick, n.d.). Educators, employers, and students will need to collaborate on what writing skills students need to obtain before exiting high school.

Students are exposed to many genres of writing throughout a school year. The problem lies with the inequity of student expository writing production. If students use the precise method of color coded formula writing, students’ writing assessment scores will increase. The color codes will associate and connect student prior knowledge of content.

The new Common Core Standards demands our students to analyze text with a critical lens, while producing colossal amounts of evidence-based writing daily in the classroom. The color coding method is an evidence-based writing program that meets the rigorous expectations set forth by the Common Core curriculum. The writing model trains scholars to respond with academic discourse and compose evidence-based claims and analysis to the expectation of Common Core writing performance tasks. The writing program will not only revolutionize the classroom, but transform your lowest readers and writers to Common Core proficient and mastery with representing a type of sentence (i.e. topic sentence, concrete detail, etc.) with a specific color.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to analyze the efficacy of color codes in formulaic writing for intermediate and secondary grade levels through a qualitative case study. Qualitative data will include a case study on participating teachers' and their students' with a series of interview questions of the quality of their experience with the color coding writing. The interview guides (Appendices A and B) contains a series of questions on the effects of color coding and associations students draw from colors in writing.

Research Questions

How do colors affect adolescents?

How does writing in color effect the affect of adolescents' cognitive abilities?

Does writing in the colors black or gray increase human affect?

Significance of the Study

The thesis study will be an analysis of the affect color-coding writing offers students grades 6-12. The study succinctly measures the phenomena of adolescent affect when writing in color, rather than the colors black and gray. Formulaic writing allows the vehicle of color coding types of sentences with a specific color, inherently allowing adolescents to form effective writing habits. Common Core standards require all students to have a depth and breadth of non-fiction writing for college and career readiness. Offering a non-fiction writing formula allows students the opportunity to identify every sentence with having a succinct purpose in a writing product.

Definitions

Formulaic Writing: Formulaic writing is writing that gives information or an explanation of something. The writing is very precise with no room for interpretation.

Color Coding: To color according to a key designed to facilitate identification.

Summary

The thesis study is an extensive tribute to the development of color codes integrated with a formulaic writing model for student's grades six through twelve.

Writing is significant to secondary students due to the implementation of Common Core State Standards. Students are exposed to many genres of writing throughout a school year. The problem lies with the inequity of student writing production. If students use the precise method of color coding to a writing model, students' engagement and affective domains will enhance in writing. The purpose of the study is to analyze student affect and synthesis with color coding formulaic writing models. The study will measure the efficacy of color coding for intermediate and secondary grade levels through a qualitative case study and interview process.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Literacy in America. Americans' lack in reading and writing skills has faulted the country's reputation in the workforce. Specifically, facts with young writers entail, "Approximately 50 percent of the nation's unemployed youth age 16-21 are functional illiterate, with virtually no prospects of obtaining good jobs" (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014). Students need to be given the tools in order to be successful in the workplace. For example, "To participate fully in society and the workplace in 2020, citizens will need powerful literacy abilities that until now have been achieved by only a small percentage of the population" (National Council on Teachers of English Standards for the English Language Arts, 2014). According to the OECD, America needs to take a different approach on enhancing literacy skills in order to compete with other countries, "U.S. graduates' literacy skills are lower than those of graduates in most industrialized nations, and comparable only to the skills of graduates in Chile, Poland, Portugal, and Slovenia" (2000).

Illiteracy statistics have grown exponentially, "21 million Americans can't read at all, 45 million are marginally illiterate and one-fifth of high school graduates can't read their diplomas" (Department of Justice, 1993). These statistics transfer into collegiate success and failure as well, "Only one in four high school students graduate ready for college in all four core subjects (English, reading, math and science), which is why a third of students entering college have to take remedial courses" (ACT, 2011).

Literacy instruction has been taught with the utmost purpose, "Deliberate literacy instruction in high school offers some potentially promising outcomes. For example, a

literacy-in-content program for ethnically diverse 9th-grade students in a San Francisco high school, that incorporated note taking, paraphrasing, vocabulary, writing, and instruction in text structures, resulted in large gains in reading comprehension scores on standardized tests” (Greenleaf, Schoenbach, Cziko, & Mueller, 2001).

Color Coding Writing. Carl Jung offers psychological insight on the study of how the mind interprets color:

“According to Jung, all of us are born with a basic psyche that can later be differentiated based upon personal experience. This basic psyche reflects the evolutionary traits that have helped humans to survive throughout history. For example, an infant has a pre-disposed affinity for two dark spots next to each other, an image that equals their visual interpretation of a human face. This affinity for the shapes is not learned, but pre-programmed into the collective unconscious of all human children” (Engelbrecht, 2003, p. 1).

The theorist offers many perspectives on how humans perceive color. Jung’s theories can be supported by the significance of color pyramids. Engelbrecht seeks the interpretations of colors and how they adhere to Jung’s theories:

“Just as we are programmed to identify with the human face, our body has a basic interpretation and reaction to certain colors. As proven in recent medical studies, however, the psychological reaction to color does not preclude the basic biological reaction that stems from human evolution. The human ability to see a wide range of color and our reaction to color is clearly articulated in Frank Mahnke’s color pyramid” (2003, p.1).

The pyramid offers a succinct list of ones' affect, "The pyramid lists six levels of our color experience in an increasingly personalized interpretation. The clear hierarchy of the graphic, however, belies the immediate impact that mood, age and life experiences play in the moment to moment personal interpretation of color. Balancing the research of color interpretation with these personal interpretations becomes the designer's task as environmental color choices are made" (Engelbrecht, 2003, p. 1). Engelbrecht's interpretations can be expanded to further studies on color theory. To add, "A further study by Antonio F. Torrice, resulted in his thesis that specific colors impact certain physical systems in the human body. In Torrice's study, he proposes that the following systems are influenced by these particular hues: Motor Skill Activity—Red, Circulatory System—Orange, Cardiopulmonary—Yellow, Speech Skill Activity—Green, Eyes, Ears, and Nose—Blue, Nonverbal Activity—Violet" (Engelbrecht, 2003, p. 2). Psychological affects maybe best presented through analysis, "...our biological reaction and processing of color is quickly linked to the psychological reactions that often simultaneously manifest themselves. The psychological reactions to color are particularly apparent in the qualitative descriptions (anxiety, aggressions, sadness, quiet) offered in color analysis. (Engelbrecht, p. 2)

Color can be highly effective in the classroom depending on how it is used, "Color's demonstrated effectiveness on improving student's attention span as well as both student and teacher's sense of time, is a further reason as to how color can increase the productivity in a classroom" (Engelbrecht, 2003, p.2). Each color can affect one in various ways, dependent on their life experiences, "Being sensitive to each age group's different responses to color is key in creating an environment stimulating to their

educational experience. Children's rejection or acceptance of certain colors is a mirror of their development into adulthood" (Engelbrecht, 2003, p.3). Interpretations of colors change or adapt over time to the eye, "Once students transition into adolescence, however, the cooler colors and more subdued hues provide enough stimulation to them without providing distracting or stress-inducing" (Engelbrecht, 2003, p. 3).

People use color in various ways. The idea of identifying something by a specific color is to alleviate affect, "Color coding would seem to be ideal for this. People use color coding from infancy for identifying ownership of states in a process. The colors of traffic lights, for example, are a code system. We all have many concepts linked to colors, and the use of color to signal meaning is familiar to our students" (Engelbrecht, 2003, p. 3). Certain colors indicate the increase or decrease one's affect given how the color is being interpreted at that moment.

Red. Red is a complex color that heightens the affect once a person conceptualizes the color. For example, "Red is the color of extremes. It's the color of passionate love, seduction, violence, danger, anger, and adventure" (Morton, 2012). The color red is "flashy" and attracts the eye the most out of any other color. The color has also affected humans for many of centuries, for instance, "Our prehistoric ancestors saw red as the color of fire and blood – energy and primal life forces – and most of red's symbolism today arises from its powerful associations in the past" (Morton, 2012). The research affirms the significance behind the color red's symbol and how one may associate the color in society.

The color red may also hold other interpretations as well. For instance, "Red is also a magical and religious color. It symbolized super-human heroism to the Greeks and

is the color of the Christian crucifixion. Red was almost as rare and as expensive as purple in ancient days – a fact that may explain its magic and power” (Morton, 2012). The color is juxtaposed with the color purple due to religious insights on the affect of the color. Furthermore, “Red captures attention. It is one of the most visible colors, second only to yellow - which explains why it is used on fire engines and stop signs to trigger alertness” (Morton, 2012). Morton alludes to the significance of red’s alertness and how it influences our daily life. Morton’s research helps readers connect the information as well as offer practical language for understanding the science behind color theory, for example, “Red focuses behind the retina which forces the lens grows more convex to pull it forward. Therefore, we perceive that red areas are moving forward. This may explain why red captures attention” (Morton, 2012). The author supports red as being a color that is used to raise and affect one’s emotions.

Green. The color green has been associated with nature and money, Morton (2012) states, “Green is no longer just a color. It’s now the symbol of ecology and a verb. Since the beginning of time, green has signified growth, rebirth, and fertility.” Below the reader can infer when people see the color green they conceptualize the idea of nature:

- Green is universally associated with nature.
- Green symbolizes ecology and the environment.
- Traffic lights are green all over the world (Morton, 2012)

Begin with topic sentences. Topic sentences is the foundations of writing a successful paragraph, the sentence establishes a claim and offers the writer a chance to voice their opinion, “Finding the topic sentence is a good place to begin in extracting meaning from text. Students can be instructed to find the topic sentence in each

paragraph, highlight it, and change its color. They can work singly or in pairs, trying to decide which sentence best expresses what the paragraph is about. This is a small task, one that can be done successfully. As the students get better at this they can try reading the now differently colored topic sentences form a sort of readers' outline. Do these sentences tell them what the text is about? Why are more sentences than just the topic sentence needed? When you read just the topic sentences, does the text make sense?" (Viau, 1998, p. 476). Students are able to differentiate specific sentences when the sentence is titled, for example, "topic" sentence. The title allows students to then highlight; color code, and/or text code the sentence.

What tells? What describes? Writers will use their topic sentences to state opinion and to summarize key ideas they will be writing about in the upcoming paragraph, specifically, "Color can be used to separate descriptive words and passages from narrative or informational writing. Students can use two colors to compare and contrast the types of messages in the text. They can try reading the text one color at a time and see the difference in what is conveyed. Perhaps they will notice a difference in the pace of selections with different proportions of description to narration: differences will be evident in color as well as in meaning. They can see that different writers characteristically use different proportions of description and narration to tell their stories, and they may find that they themselves have preferences for particular styles" (Viau, 1998, p. 476). Successful topic sentences are descriptive with specific word choice based on the prompt integrated with a succinct opinion on the overall concept being conveyed.

Blue. The color blue generally has a calming effect on individuals. Morton (2012) explains, “Blue is the favorite color of all people. It’s nature’s color for water and sky, but is rarely found in fruits and vegetables.” Also, Morton (2012) supplies the reader with a contemporary view, “Today, blue is embraced as the color of heaven and authority, denim jeans and corporate logos. It is cold, wet, and slow as compared to red’s warmth, fire, and intensity.” The contemporary viewpoint allows readers to connect perspectives to the affect of the color blue.

The color blue has more complexities and paradoxes than any other color. These can be easily explained by pinpointing by the specific shade of blue (Morton, 2012). Below provides Morton’s interpretations of the color blue’s shades affect on a person:

- Dark blue: trust, dignity, intelligence, authority
- Bright blue: cleanliness, strength, dependability, coolness
- Light (sky) blue: peace, serenity, ethereal, spiritual, infinity (Morton, 2012).

Morton (2012) explains further affections the color blue portrays, “Most blues convey a sense of trust, loyalty, cleanliness, and understanding. On the other hand, blue evolved as symbol of depression in American culture. ‘Singing the blues’ and feeling blue are good examples of the complexity of color symbolism and how it has been evolved in different cultures.” The color blue offers various pathways for a calm affect amongst many different cultures.

Orange. The color orange takes a slightly different approach on the eye, Morton (2012) explains, “Orange is vibrant. It’s hot, healthy, fruity and engaging – but it can be abrasive and crass. It’s a polarizing color. People either love it or detest it.” The author continues to offer insight and facts on the color orange and how it affects one’s

demeanor, “Orange is the only color of the spectrum whose name was taken from an object, the popular fruit - the orange. In nature it’s the color of vivid sunsets, fire, vegetables, flowers, fish, and many citrus fruits. In our contemporary world, orange is the color of marmalade, Halloween, traffic cones, life rafts, Cheetos, and Halloween” (Morton, 2012).

Morton (2012) continues with analysis, “Orange symbolizes energy, vitality, cheer, excitement, adventure, warmth, and good health. However, pure orange can be brass; however, it may suggest a lack of serious intellectual values and bad taste.” The author progresses towards by juxtaposing the color with the style of past decades, “Orange is currently a trendy, hip color. It was a “groovy color” back in the 70s and then it faded away. In 1991, an article in Forbes magazine about how orange affects consumer choices concluded that orange meant cheap” (Morton, 2012).

Facts and feelings. Ethos, logos, and pathos of a sentence can be differentiated, “Color can also be used to separate information from emotion in writing. Often information is conveyed in a way that shapes and sometimes manipulates the reader’s response. Being able to sift out factual content and to identify emotion-based statements are important skills for critical readers. Students can code such diverse text as scientific reports, love letters, political speeches, and newspaper articles. They can see that different forms of writing are appropriate for different circumstances. And what analysis of text is complete without attention to advertisements? These miniatures of word craft are often a rich mixture of messages, yet are small enough to be accessible to learners. Advertisements can be coded to separate factual information from appeals to the reader’s emotions. Sometimes there are some interesting inferences in advertisements, too”

(Viau, 1998, p. 476). Color coding sentences for a specific rhetorical device will allow the student and peers to identify the intent of the sentence.

Writing pedagogy. The concept of associating colors to specific sentences brings purpose to writing as well as lowering ones' affect when presented a writing task. However, educators must adhere to best practices when teaching writing. Kelly Gallagher, an English teacher in California, presents a list of writing wrongs. All teachers should want to consider when generating and implementing writing curriculum in their classrooms.

Top Ten Writing Wrongs in Secondary Schools.

1. "Students are not doing enough writing
2. Writing is sometimes assigned rather than taught
3. Below-grade-level writers are asked to write less than others instead of more than others.
4. English language learner are often shortchanged as well
5. Grammar instruction is ineffective or ignored
6. Students are not given enough timed writing instruction or practice
7. Some teachers have little or no knowledge of district and state writing standards
8. Writing topics are often mandated with little thought about the prior knowledge and interests of the students
9. Teachers are doing too much of the work. Students are not doing enough work
10. Teachers need help assessing student writing" (Gallagher, 2006, p. 9-13).

Gallagher supplements his "Top Ten Writing Wrongs in Secondary Schools" with what he calls "The Pillars of Writing Success". The pillars cultivate best practices when

teaching writing and who writing is being taught, noting adolescent writers need engagement and attention to their affect.

The pillars of writing success. “With these ten writing wrongs in mind, this book will propose a model for building strong adolescent writers. The model is built on the premise that effective teenage writers emerge when the following six student needs are met:

1. Students need a lot more writing practice.
2. Students need teachers who model good writing.
3. Students need the opportunity to read and study other writers.
4. Students need choice when it comes to writing topics.
5. Students need to write for authentic purposes and for authentic audiences.
6. Students need meaningful feedback from both the teacher and their peers”

(Gallagher, 2006, p. 13).

A challenge with adolescent writers is offering exemplary reasoning and rationale for the evidence presented. Langer and Applebee’s research alludes to a lack of development with increasing high order thinking skills. For example, “Looking at a large cross section of schools across the country, Langer and Applebee came to some sobering conclusions about students’ writing abilities. Among their findings were the following:

- Students’ writing is often superficial, and ‘even the ‘better’ responses show little evidence of well-developed problem-solving strategies or critical thinking skills.’
- A major conclusion to draw from the assessment of students’ writing at all grade levels is that students ‘are deficient in higher order thinking skills.’ They have

difficulty performing adequately on analytic writing tasks, as well as on persuasive writing tasks.

- ‘Because writing and thinking are so deeply intertwined, appropriate writing assignments provide an ideal way to increase student experiences with such type of thinking.’ As a result, ‘Students need broad-based experiences in which reading and writing tasks are integrated with their work throughout the curriculum.’” (1978, p.4)

(Gallagher, 2006, p. 27)

The best thing we can do as educators of reading and writing is to create pathways and opportunities for our students to write consistently. The opportunities need to be succinct and tailored to each individual’s needs when enhancing their ability. For instance, “Earlier in this chapter I noted one of my favorite Stephen King lines: ‘If you want to be a writer, you must do two things above all else: read a lot and write a lot. There’s no way around these two things that I’m aware, no shortcut’” (2000, p. 145). One pathway Gallagher recommends is modeling mastery writing skills with any model being presented, for instance, “If we want our students to develop the tools needed to write well, we must provide them with numerous models to read and study—models from both inside and outside our classrooms. Getting students to internalize what good writers do is critical, and for students to have any chance to do this, they need modeling, modeling, and more modeling” (Gallagher, 2006, p. 87).

Gallagher takes a unique stance on offer in autonomy with writing that increases student affect, for example, “It has been my experience that students write a whole lot better when they care about what they are writing. I have also found that they are much

more likely to care about what they are writing when they are given choice in writing topics. Choice generates a welcome chain reaction: it creates student buy-in, which in turn generates writing motivation, which in turn causes students to write better. Choice is where it starts for reluctant writers, and if we want them to warm up to writing, we need to structure our classes so that our students have some say in what they write” (Gallagher, 2006, p. 87).

Allowing Students to Choose Writing Topics Creates Two Immediate Benefits.

Autonomy is key when offering students various writing prompts and questions. The more choice offered, the more ownership taken by the student, and interdependence developed with students and writing. Below Gallagher describes the benefits of allowing choice in student writing.

1. “Choice fosters a feeling of ownership in the writer. When a student develops ownership, she is much more likely not only to start a paper, but to maintain a stronger work ethic while in the drafting process.
2. Choice drives better revision. The number-one determiner is whether a student of mine will spend meaningful time revising a first draft or whether she cares about the paper. A student who cares about her paper is much more likely to closely revise; a student who does not care about her paper will treat the revision process lightly, if at all.

Choice is good, but we are living in the age of standards, and I can hear you thinking as you read this, “but what about the standards? I have many different discourses I must teach! How do I balance the demands of my grade-level standards with the notion of allowing students to choose their writing topics?” (Gallaher, 2006, p. 91). Gallagher

implies the writing prompts must adhere to the writing standards as well be tiered in a fashion that enhances students' writing.

Summary

Overall, the effectiveness of student writing relies on the affect and autonomy presented to the student. The affect and autonomy is combined to create a writer and task model, which engages students in the writing task at that time. Viau references color coding as being a pathway to evoke student affect for engagement, "If we use color coding with our students to help them to make generalizations about specific meanings in text, we will need to be careful to keep the colors consistent. Although we can make up our own associations, I might suggest red type for emotional matters, green for descriptions (scenes, environments), blue for factual information, and perhaps orange for topic sentences" (1998, p. 476). Viau suggests that one can associate a color to any type of sentence being written. Color coding writing allows students to develop high order thinking skills while increasing the level of engagement for a writing task.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Research Methods and Design(s)

This study seeks to provide urban students grades six through twelfth with procedural and conditional color coding writing template, and practice with confluent strategies to improve writing abilities. The study consisted on a qualitative component. Qualitative data included a case study on participating teachers and their students with a series of interview questions of the quality of their experience with color coding a writing model. The interview guides (Appendices A and B) contains a series of questions on the confluence of color coding in writing. The qualitative approach provided feedback from primary sources on the efficacy of color in writing and how color coding allows students to make connections in their writing. The study also has a focus on juxtaposing the qualitative data with quantitative data by itemizing student and teacher nuances to locate similarities between responses.

Participants

The participants of the study were students grades six through twelve at Aspire Langston Hughes Academy located in Stockton, California. Five teachers from the English Department at Aspire Langston Hughes Academy were randomly selected. English department educator participants were randomly selected using the schools' database for faculty information. Six students from each grade level were randomly selected and interviewed by the researcher of the study. The 6 student participants were randomly selected using the schools' database for student information. Participants were asked a series of questions and had the opportunity to ask clarifying questions. The clarifying questions were recorded by the researcher and validated by participant

responses. All responses were voice recorded and written in all factuality for the utmost validation of the study. When there was a need, the interviewer explained terminology definitions to the participants. Teachers and students' names were confidential in the study, offering validity and an honest outcome in the questioning process. To enhance the validity of the study, all results were shared in sealed envelopes, and refrained from comparing individual teacher or student responses.

Materials/Instruments

Qualitative interview guides for students and educators were used as instruments to provoke responses to specific questions on adolescent affect and color theory applied in writing. Below are the interview questions for student and educator focus groups:

Qualitative Interview Questions – Student Focus Group.

1. Background

1.1 Gender: Male/Female

1.2 Age: _____

1.3 Grade: _____

1.4 How do you like to learn (i.e. visual, audio, movement, etc.)? Why?

2. Formulaic Expository/Informational Writing Model

2.1 Can you write a thesis statement? If so, explain.

2.2 Can you write a topic sentence? If so, explain.

2.3 Can you write concrete details? If so, explain.

2.4 Can you offer analysis to concrete details? If so, explain.

2.5 Can you write a transition sentence? If so, explain.

2.6 Can you write an expository/informational paragraph? If so, explain.

3. Color Coding

- 3.1 What are the primary colors?
- 3.2 Overall, how does color affect you?
- 3.3 How does seeing the color red make you feel?
- 3.4 How does seeing the color green make you feel?
- 3.5 How does seeing the color blue make you feel?
- 3.6 How does seeing the color orange make you feel?
- 3.7 How does seeing the color black make you feel?
- 3.8 How does color influence your learning?
- 3.9 Do you use colors when you write? Why or why not?
- 3.10 What strategies help you organize your thoughts when writing?

Qualitative Interview Questions – Educator Focus Group

1. Background

- 1.1 Gender: Male/Female
- 1.2 Subject(s) taught (2013-2014): _____
- 1.3 Grade(s) taught (2013-2014): _____
- 1.3 Years in Education: _____
- 1.4 Fluent Language(s): _____
- 1.5 Approximately how many students do you teach?
- 1.6 Approximately how many girls do you teach?
- 1.7 Approximately how many boys do you teach?

1.8 What gender, male or female, if any, has the most difficulty with writing; particularly with the organization and developmental aspect of writing? Please explain your reasoning.

1.9 Approximately how many English Language Learners do you teach?

1.10 Approximately how many Special Education (i.e. students with IEPs and/or 504s) students do you teach?

1.11 What learning modalities do you adhere to most in your teaching (i.e. visual, kinesthetic, auditory, linguistic, etc.)? How and why?

2. Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

2.1 Have you received training on Common Core State Standards (CCSS)? If so, to what extent?

2.2 Is your school embracing Common Core State Standards to be implemented by teachers? If so, how have you begun implementing CCSS in your classroom?

2.3 Are there any instructional shifts from No Child Left Behind (NCLB) standards to CCSS for “Writing”? If so, please explain the shifts.

3. Formulaic Expository Writing Model

3.1 Can your students write a thesis statement? If so, explain.

3.2 Can your students write a topic sentence? If so, explain.

3.3 Can your students write concrete details? If so, explain.

3.4 Can your students offer commentary/analysis for concrete details? If so, explain.

3.5 Can your students write a transition sentence? If so, explain.

3.6 Can your students write an expository paragraph? If so, explain.

4 Color Coding

- 4.1 What are the primary colors?
- 4.2 How does color influence learning?
- 4.3 Do you use color in your teaching? If so, why?
- 4.4 Have you ever used color when teaching writing? If so, how and why?
- 4.5 How can color coding influence student writing?
- 4.6 What do you think the color red does to a student's affect?
- 4.7 What do you think the color green does to a student's affect?
- 4.8 What do you think the color blue does to a student's affect?
- 4.9 What do you think the color orange does to a student's affect?
- 4.10 What do you think the color black does to a student's affect?
- 4.11 Do you color coding for instructional purposes? If so, how and why?

Data Collection

Qualitative measures. Qualitative measures will consist of a case study with two interview guides. The interview guide for educators will have explicit questions for teachers on color coding and the affect the process has on writing organization. Qualitative measures include interview responses from teacher reflections on what strategies worked best and why, and consider how they have grown as professionals. The study will look for salient themes in students and teachers' reflections on the impact of the effects of color in students' writing. The interview guide for students will include specific questions for students on the effects of color in writing. Qualitative measures will also include interviews of students, which address their thoughts on color and how it affects the adolescent mind juxtaposed with organized writing tasks.

Data Processing

Once student and educator interviews were completed, the researcher itemized the data by typing student responses in a word document (Appendices E and F) and identified similarities in responses per question to find common outcomes related to over-arching research questions.

Data Analysis

The analysis (see Chapter 4: Discussion of Findings) applied was synthesis from the researcher aligning interview responses to the color coding system imbedded in the formulaic writing structure the students and teachers at Aspire Langston Hughes Academy were already familiar with. The synthesis is noting the rationale on why specific colors were chosen for the writing model and how the colors would be effective for student affect and writing abilities while referencing and aligning to the interview responses.

Ethical Assurances

To ensure there was no bias, all participants who were randomly selected were coded so respondent's confidentiality was maintained. Recipients signed consent forms to recognize and solidify their confidentiality in the study. Recipients 18 years and younger needed parent signatures to participate in the study.

Chapter 4: Discussion of Findings

Writing in Color

Writing in color creates engagement in the writing process. By nature, most students are not born with a natural passion for writing. Learning to write proficiently takes time, patience, and dedication. For students to learn to write, it is the teacher's job to engage the student with their work. The more engaging the curriculum, the more engaged students will be in the writing process. The first step that teachers can take in engaging students in their work is first by using color. Human beings are naturally drawn to color. Color is all around us and evokes thoughts and emotions when we automatically see it. Writing in color instantly creates an immediate relationship between the student and their work. Color creates the first connection that is essential for students to become engaged. Color breaks down the formula of each paragraph, which scaffolds it so the students may closely analyze and revise each sentence for mastery. Color triggers senses and emotions in their mind, which keeps them alert and involved, unlike when students write in tradition pencil or black pen. Having students write in the these traditional dark, ominous colors creates an environment of negativity, therefore hindering their progress in reach a mastery level of writing. Writing in color lowers a beginning student's learning affective filter, while drawing out positive emotions for them to become one with their composition. Once students have mastered writing in the appropriate colors for each piece of a detailed paragraph, the teacher may then start closely analyzing each piece with the student to edit and revise for mastery of the grade level specific standards.

The analysis offered in the discussion chapter is derived and aligned with data from participant responses. The number indicators leading in the question corresponds

with the number indicators listed on the questionnaire. The discussion chapter of the thesis is composed of synthesis by the researcher, drawing connections to the writing formula Aspire Langston Hughes Academy is familiar with and qualitative interview responses.

Student Data Analysis

3.1 What are the primary colors?

Student knowledge of the primary colors is pivotal to the study. Knowing the primary colors sets the precedent to expand prior knowledge to further questions asked by the researcher. Primary colors are crucial to the study due to the colors red and blue being aligned to specific components in the formulaic writing model. Majority of students do not know the primary colors. The issue of not knowing the primary colors is the lack of understanding on various colors that derive from primary colors and how they juxtapose with one another, which affects human emotions. If students are unable to contrast descending colors from primary colors, then they will be unable to differentiate shades and tints originating from primary colors, which implicitly align with the superiority primary colors, hold over their descendants. Ultimately, students will not be able to evaluate the most significant writing component(s) and the purpose of their color and why the component is emphasized with that specific color.

Knowledge of the primary colors is crucial to living in contemporary society. The use of primary colors is a significant marketing and advertising technique to attract the audience's eye. One must develop skills to identify primary colors that increases affect.

3.2 Overall, how does color affect you?

I believe learning to write is one of the most complicated skills a person must learn to do. Writing separates the educated from the uneducated. It is a skill that is a necessary evil to survive in a world that is heavily dependent on the written word. Yet it is a skill that is one of the most difficult to master. How do you teach a student to master the art of writing with so many students come into school, not speaking properly with broken English and improper use of rhetoric and dictation? These poor skills then directly transfer over into their writing that proves to be atrocious. Students begin to realize that not being able to write at a proficient level not only directly affects their composition grades, but their reading, social studies, math, and science grades as well. These grades then transfer into a low confidence level with the students, which cause students to not want to write. They do not feel comfortable to create and compose new thoughts because they have never been taught and given the arena to compose in a safe zone.

Where teachers go wrong with teaching writing is that we assume. I am guilty of this. We assume students know how to structure a sentence; we assume students know grammar; we assume students know what facts are; we assume students know how to “make a paragraph sound good.” We forget writing is hard. Writing needs to be taught step by step; piece by piece. Familiarity and modeling are the keys with teaching writing. The minute you tell a student they are going to write, their affective filter rises. They become nervous and anxiety sets. They have a history of being a poor writer. They have never been successful at writing. They have no confidence. They have no game plan. This is the first part of writing a teacher must tackle in order to create successful writers.

A teacher must first lower a student's affective filter so they can listen; make them feel comfortable, appeal to their emotions, tell them writing is hard. There is no denying it. But you have a system that can help make it easier. A system that will help make them successful. A system that can help make them be an awesome writer that every student yearns to be.

Introducing a color-coded formulaic writing system offers students comfort and structure in their writing. It gives them a frame and a purpose, which a blank page with a prompt does not give them. First introducing color allows students to connect with prior knowledge of something they are already mastery at—identifying colors. They know their colors and most kids are mastery at allowing colors to symbolize a meaning. By giving kids colors to write in, you are allowing students to already be successful in the first part of the writing process. I know it may sound silly, but to a student who feels like they can never write anything correctly, this is an automatic success.

After students can master the colors of writing, introducing a formula with writing vocabulary to follow when writing is essential. Students always want to know what to write, when to write it, and the length to write it. The formula gives students the expectations they must meet, while allowing students to go above and beyond them. Students will always thrive in structured, disciplined, and organized situations. This is why so many students struggle to master writing because many teachers do not present writing instruction in a formulaic matter.

When students feel proficient color coding their writing to meet the formula expectations that is when their confidence is able to take off and the teacher is able to start to critique their writing to help it improve. The color coding and formula is the

security blanket the kids need to feel comfortable in putting their thoughts down on paper. When proficiently following the color coding and formula, they feel they are succeeding just like the other kids, even if student “a” or student “b” is a better writer than they are. Following the color coding and formula correctly gives the students enough “poker chips” to go conference with their teacher about their writing, accept the constructive criticism, and be able to go back and revise and edit. Because at the end of the day, even if you had to rewrite the whole paragraph, at least the colors and formula were correct, and that in itself is a success.

How do you make kids be better writers? You build their confidence. You create an safe environment for them to put their thoughts down on paper and let them know that their composition is a living and breathing document that may not be perfect at first, but will become close to perfection the more they keep writing. You give them the skills to obtain success. Once they have the skills and the confidence, the student will rise to the expectations set before them and amaze. Color is the equivalent of student pathos. The writing formula is the equivalent of logos. The teacher is the equivalent of ethos.

3.3 How does seeing the color red make you feel?

A thesis statement is purposefully color-coded with the color red to evoke the attention of young readers and writers. The color red symbolizes an abundance of bold objects in our society that alert to grab one’s attention. For example, when a street light turns red it alerts drivers to stop their vehicles. A fire trucks exterior is not only red, but their flashing lights are red; again, to draw attention to immediate action.

The American society has conditioned our children to fear the color red. For example, red stop signs, a teacher’s red pen in the classroom, the color of your mother’s

angry face when she is mad at you, and blood. In other cultures red is held sacred and symbolizes power, wealth, and strength. Communism is red. Blood is offering sorrow and sacrifice. America has been conditioned since its inception that the color red holds a negative connotation; however, the United States adopted the color red as a color of their flag to remind ourselves that that is the price, the blood we paid for freedom. Therefore, red functions to draw our attention. No matter how we try to change the connotation, Americans use red to symbolize enjoyment by drinking from a Coca-Cola can, which is covered in the color red. Red symbolizes narcissism.

The color red was chosen for the thesis statement because whether it is considered positive or negative, it's the color that will draw a person's attention. Students have anxiety writing thesis statements, while simultaneously many teachers struggle teaching thesis statements. Once the thesis statement is written well, the affect will decrease. Writing the thesis statement in red not only draws the audience's attention to the main claim in the writing task, but it symbolizes the blood, sweat, and tears that a writer puts into the composition and shows the power of the written word.

3.4 How does seeing the color green make you feel?

The color green has been conditioned to symbolize new growth. Symbols of green are new growth in nature, the green light on a stop light, extraterrestrial new life forms, health, prosperity with money, conservation, and positivity. We use terms such as "go green" to reduce, reuse, and recycle, to be positive, and preserve contemporary society. It's symbolic in the writing system that green is the new growth stemming from the thesis statement, like a rose growing from a crack in the concrete. It's something new and beautiful that comes from a struggling process. The thesis statement provides the

foundation for the writing as well as allowing opportunities for branching of new ideas with claims in the color green.

Claims are also color coded green due to the receding of primary colors, and are easily distinguished by the adjacent nature of the color red. The color subconsciously triggers that this is a type of writing that is expected for the student to excel proficient at. Since the color green symbolizes new growth, when a student writes in the color green, they are already in the mind set of create something new. They are able to create new ideas from the foundation of the strong thesis statement to form the stances in their paper. Without new growth stemming from the thesis statement to direct the body paragraphs, there would be no writing task.

3.5 How does seeing the color blue make you feel?

The color blue is the most confident primary color in our society. Things that are blue are the sky and water. These two elements in our world are the most concrete in terms of reliability. As human beings, we have the confidence to state the sky and ocean are the color blue. The elements are constant and calming presence. The color blue commands respect. It knows its power, but does not abuse it. The color blue does not attract fear like the color red. The color blue displays a calming and soothing effect that invites the eye to investigate.

Evidence is symbolized by the color blue to show the validity in writing. Evidence is what supports the claims in writing. Evidence should be solid and confident enough to support a claim, but should never over power it. Evidence cannot be manipulated or changed, and remains constant in writing. Providing good solid, blue

evidence brings respect to writing, which keeps the reader engaged and inquisitive about the author's message.

3.6 How does seeing the color orange make you feel?

The color orange evokes a variety of emotion in the lives of people. Things that are orange are citrus fruit that activate the taste buds in a person's mouth, caution signs, sport teams' mascots, tigers, and flowers in nature. Each one of these items produce endorphins in human beings that then display a variety of positive and negative emotions in people. Fruit and flowers bring happiness and smiles to human's faces. Caution signs and tigers bring out anxiety and fear in humans, while sport teams bring out excitement, anger, and stress. Orange symbolizes a spectrum of powerful emotions in human beings.

Commentary is portrayed by the color orange to show the emotion in the writing. Commentary allows the writer to display for the reader the how and why the evidence is essential in supporting a claim in writing. Without commentary in writing, the author would not have any credibility in providing their claim. Commentary creates purpose in the paper by showing the importance of the evidence and claims. Commentary is one of the hardest components of writing to master because it forces the author to evoke emotion from within them to then weave into their composition to engage the reader. The orange commentary allows the author to share their most intimate thoughts and pieces of their soul with the audience.

3.7 How does seeing the color black make you feel?

The color black has historically represented all things dark, ominous and menacing. Black symbolizes death, disease, evil, negativity, gloomy weather, black widow spiders, hell, hurt, pain, etc. Black can be used to symbolize hiding the truth, such

as a dark room or a black hole. Black shuns out the light; light is what creates color. Black stunts positivity and growth and does not let progress bloom.

Since the color black brings all things negative to situations, having students write in black only stifles their creativity and raises their affective filter and anxiety when writing. Seeing the color black only frustrates a student and reminds them of all their negative qualities and weaknesses, which may include them being a low achieving writer. Black subconsciously promotes a negative attitude towards writing and does not show positivity like other colors symbolize in the eyes of humans. The color black is the catalyst for poor writing instruction.

3.8 How does color influence your learning?

This question was asked to have the students reflect on their personal learning preferences. The evidence displays that the majority of students agreed that color did affect their engagement level in the classroom while learning. Students stated color grabs their attention, and elevates their affective domain in the classroom. Color influences learning by allowing students to clearly organize their thoughts. Giving students tools help them succeed in the classroom, lowers their affective filter, creating a safe classroom environment learning community.

The students depict colors evoke emotions and ideas when at first glance. When teachers are able to create an emotional response within learning, the learning becomes more lasting and impressionable for students to recall their knowledge. Engagement is essential in the classroom to keep students interested in the curriculum they are expected to learn. When students are actively engaged in the material, they will want to learn and retain new ideas and concepts. Even if the concepts are difficult at first, students will

give more effort if they know their teacher has worked hard to creating engaging material to keep their interest.

While differentiating colors may be a fairly simple engagement tool, it is an incredibly powerful instructional tool. A simple color can symbolize and trigger more emotion than a sound or word can, consciously or subconsciously, because of the affect that prior knowledge links to color in the brain. Color can change the way students take in and retain information.

3.9 Do you use colors when you write? Why or why not?

The differentiation of color allows students to categorize their learning in an organized fashion that can be related to the different components of writing.

Writing in color is used for purely instructional purposes in the classroom, not for professional use in the workplace. Students should be weaned off the color coded systematic writing once students have graduated high school or can write a proficient college-ready level. Color in writing is used to teach students the purpose and meaning behind the different sentences and components of a well written composition. When students are learning to structure paragraphs, essays, and reports, many students become overwhelmed by the requirements and not knowing what to write. When students are given a color coded formula on how to structure a specific genre of writing, they are easily able to memorize the color pattern and apply the meaning of what they were taught the color symbolizes. The more organized and disciplined writing is for students, the more confident will feel they are meeting the basic writing expectations of their teacher. With that foundation of newfound confidence and success, students will become more

engaged and be willing to be more vulnerable in performing writing tasks and activities in the classroom.

The evidence from the survey displays that students found writing in color to be an effective strategy if they felt the colors symbolized a specific purpose. If the colors did not have a purpose or symbolic meaning behind them, the students found writing in color to be an extra chore or task that gives no purpose in helping them be engaged or successful in their work. Color coded writing is only effective when there is student buy in, and they can see the importance and symbolic meaning of the color. Once students are able to connect the color to an idea, they will feel more confident in using the colors to help structure their writing correctly, which will allow them to later focus on other important components of writing such as word choice, grammar, and other writing mechanics. Color coded writing creates confident writers, therefore then produces proficient compositions.

3.10 What strategies help you organize your thoughts when writing?

The theme of the strategies that the students used to organize their thoughts when writing was that all the strategies helped them scaffold their writing down into tinier parts for them to write and analyze. Scaffolding strategies helps students to bring structure and discipline to their writing which then lowers their affective filter. Beginning a new piece of composition can be very overwhelming for any person, especially a student that is just beginning to learn to write and organize their thoughts. Providing and training students how to use different strategies such as graphic organizers and color coding brings clarity to their ideas, which is key to building confident and successful writers.

Students want to be successful in the classroom and meet the expectations their teachers set for them. Becoming a proficient writer is an extremely hard task that students are first presented with in Kindergarten and are expected to improve at every year. Anxieties in students rise when they are not given the appropriate tools to be successful at meeting the expectations. Without the supports, students will become frustrated and insecure in their writing, which will lead them to not performing or improving their writing skills. To create proficient writers, it is the teacher's job to help the students develop a "writing skills tool box" that they can use when writing. This writing skills tool box should include skills with how to use different graphic organizers for genres of writing, learning how to text code and annotate a text to pull evidence for claims in writing, identifying specific parts of a paragraph/essay with color, etc. Teaching student to scaffold, teaches students to take ownership of their learning, which then allows the students to reflect on why their education is important. If students feel connected to the task before them, their effort and grit will be displayed in the performance of the task.

Teacher Data Analysis

4.1 What are the primary colors?

The primary colors are significant for teachers and students to know because they are universal. No matter the cultural background, socio-economic status, or ethnicity of a student or teacher, all human beings are emotional affected by color. Colors may evoke different emotional responses depending on the student or teacher, but the significance is that color draws connections to the person. It is extremely pertinent teachers know the primary colors and how to mix the primary colors in order to use them appropriately in

the classroom. Colors can be used in the instructional setting to draw attention to the learner in order to annotate and text code text, or to scaffold notes. Colors can also be used to set the tone and mood in a classroom to lower or raise a student's affective level depending on the lesson's purpose.

4.2 How does color influence learning?

Color influences learning by the way it affects a human's brain. Color can evoke emotional and physiological responses of which people are not even aware by the way they are being affected. Colors draw attention to important information and can be used an effective instructional tool to help students retain information with more ease. When teachers are aware of the benefits of how color can affect students, they can incorporate instructional strategies that use color and become much more effective in their work.

When teachers are effective, students' productivity increases.

4.3 & 4.11 Do you use color in your teaching or color coding for instructional purposes? If so, why and how?

Many educators use color in their teaching practices. Teachers use colors to help students to learn to annotate and text code text, differentiate purpose of sentences in a paragraph, identify vocabulary, key concepts, etc. Using colors in teaching is always a great addition to a lesson for engagement, but is most effective when done with a specific purpose behind it. When students are able to link a color to an idea, or when students know what a color symbolizes in a lesson, their learning becomes more purposeful, structured, and disciplined. When purpose, structure, and discipline is provided in a classroom, students will always be more confident and successful in whatever they are doing because they feel safe and secure. Students are able to connect with the color on a

different level, than besides how the color lower or raises their affective filter. Teachers who use color for other than cosmetic purposes during instruction will have better results with the impact it has on the learning retention it has with their students.

4.4 Have you ever used color when teaching writing? If so, how and why?

Teachers whom have used color when teaching writing have found it to be incredibly successful. Color in writing creates structure, discipline, and expectations for the student who is writing. When a student sees a specific color when utilizing a color coded writing program, they immediately know what the color symbolizes, what the expectations are for the sentence, and what sequence the sentence comes in within the paragraph. Since colors are taught to children from the young ages of preschool and kindergarten, they are easily relatable knowledge to students whom most likely already have a high affective filter when learning to become a good writer. While a student might find learning the structure of a paragraph to be difficult, memorizing the order of a color pattern seems quite simple since they have been practicing this skill for years. The color coding lowers a student's affective filter and allows them to focus on the meaning and expectation of the color that the teacher has established, rather than trying to memorize new academic terms, the expectation of the terms in writing, and the sequence of the terms in a properly structured paragraph. Color coded writing formulas act like a security blanket for the new and inexperienced writer who is trying to be successful in their work.

4.5 How can color coding influence student writing?

Color coding influences student's writing by creating confident writers. It allows the students to have an emotional connection with each sentence that goes far beyond the

meaning of each color. When a student sees a color within a color coded writing program, the color not only brings forth a meaning, but it creates a relationship between the student and the color. Seeing a color cannot only remind students of the symbolic meaning it is representing, it can represent examples and nuances it was used for in the past, facts or emotions it was written with before, and academic conversations it has been a part of previously. Color imprints examples and meaning of the writing expectations in a student's mind subconsciously. Color also engages multiple different types of learners—visual, linguistic, and emotional. Color coding creates an experience for a student, instead of making writing another task. Color coding nurtures the bond between the writer and pen; scaffolding the writer to confidence and success.

4.6-4.10 What do you think specific colors do to a student's affect?

Each color has a very profound effect on a student's affect. Colors are part of a person's world from the moment they are born, and are old enough to make a connection between color and meaning. The relationship between color and meaning is formed over many years, which is constantly evolving depending on life experiences throughout time. Before a student enters a teacher's classroom, each student has a personal relationship with each color that could be vastly different from their fellow classmates or teacher. In the classroom, the teacher has the power and control to change how a color effects a student's affect. While most people infer what certain colors mean based upon experiences, teachers can give purpose and expectations to colors. Purpose and expectations will create a whole new relationship between the student and the specific color. It is with this relationship, that teachers can use colors to manipulate students' minds into retaining academic instruction. Colors can be seen as positive or negative; it

all depends upon a person's delivery and expectation of the person receiving. Color meaning is constantly evolving in a human's mind, therefore rising and lowering one's affect. When used purposefully, color can be a highly effective tool within the classroom to effect students in ways they never expected.

Chapter 5: Itemization of Data

Student Itemized Data

3.1 What are the primary colors?

Forty-five percent of interviewees noted the primary colors being red, blue, and yellow. Eighteen of those interviewees out of forty-two are high school students. One of the participants out of forty-two is a middle school student.

Four out six 6th grade students revealed specific colors when answering the question. Student 606 named three colors (red, blue, and yellow) as being the primary colors. Student 206 and 406 listed red, blue, yellow, and green as being the primary colors. Student 106 did not know the primary colors. Student 506 stated one can use the primary colors to label things; however, did not list the primary colors. Students 306 noted they used primary colors for annotating [text]. Appropriate follow-up questions for this student would be: Does this student know what the primary colors are? How are you annotating in color? What is the purpose for annotating in color? Does annotating in color help identify literary elements in fiction and/or non-fiction texts?

Four out of six of 7th grade students claimed the color black being a primary color. Fifty percent of interviewees stated yellow being a primary color. Two out of six recognized the colors blue, red, green, orange, brown, and purple. One student suggested primary colors are the colors on the color wheel.

One-hundred percent of 8th grade interviewees stated blue and yellow are primary colors. Five out of six students noted red was a primary color. Fifty percent of acknowledge green as being a primary color. Student 208 noted orange being a primary color. Student 608 responded the color white being a primary color.

Interviewee 109 noted the primary colors are purple for vocabulary, orange for commentary, and blue for concrete details. Respondents 209, 309, 409, 509, and 609 compiled as eighty-three percent of 9th grade participants who stated the primary colors are red, yellow, and blue. Participant 209 added orange and green also being primary colors.

Fifty percent of 10th grade participants, students 110, 310, and 610, noted red, blue, and yellow being primary colors. Student 610 continued their by saying black, green, and orange were also primary colors. Interviewee 210 stated they did not know the primary colors. Student 410 voiced primary colors are colors that open and form cool color and warm colors. Student 510 stated the primary colors are red.

Five out of six 11th grade participants, students 111, 311, 411, 511, and 611, mentioned red, yellow, and blue being the primary colors. Student 311 added the color green to their response of red, yellow, and blue. Interviewee noted the primary colors are red, blue, green, orange, and black.

One hundred percent of 12th grade respondents acknowledged the primary colors are red, blue, and yellow.

3.2 Overall, how does color affect you?

The term “affect” was defined in the interview guide and was defined verbally by researcher. Student 606 stated that color doesn’t affect their decisions, rather it affects their feelings. Two interviewees believe colors bring them happiness. Student 206 indicated bright colors bring them happiness while darker colors create a sense of gloominess. Student 106 noted that color doesn’t affect them. Student 406 shared the color black would not evoke the emotion of crying. If this is so, would the student be

able to locate high interest texts (novels, journals, plays, etc.) for them to read? Is it possible for this student to relate and identify connections between characters and themselves when reading black ink?

One-third of interviewees stated color does not affect them. Two out of six students stated they did not have a problem with color; specifically, because color is all around us. Two out of six students attributed the affect of color as making them feel excited, happy, or surprised.

Fifty percent of 8th grade respondents stated color affects them. Student 108 affirmed that color affects them mostly by their mood or attraction. Student 208 replied color affects them because it brings things to life, if the only colors were black and white it would be boring. Student 608 described color affecting their mood through visualizing things, and allows them to separate objects from each other. Two out of six students answered color does not affect them. Student 308 and 508 stated color doesn't affect them. Student 408 discussed how color shows emotions to how a character is feeling.

Participant 109 claimed colors affect them by helping understand things better and remember them. Student 209 stated yes. Interviewee 309 responded color affects their mood sometimes. Respondent 409 said color affects them by being able to help with organization and other things to help with. Student 509 noted color helps me separate different objects. Participant 609 verbalized colors really don't affect them. Five out of six 10th grade interviewees state colors affect them. Student 101 voiced color affects them in a way where they can speak for them, each color is different and another shade so they represent something different. Respondent 210 said color does not affect them. Participant 310 noted color helps them to be able to see things differently and help

them categorize. Student 410 acknowledges warm colors affect them as happy and cool colors make them relax. Participant 510 specified colors affect them in a spectrum from black being sad to bright colors being joy. Student 610 stated colors affect them because we have to understand each color and be able to identify them.

Respondent 111 voiced colors allow them to see another world, another dimension. It allows them to see another point of view, one that is more vibrant and happy. Interviewee 211 expressed colors do not really affect them. Interviewee 311 said colors make life prettier. Student 411 replied colors make life interesting. Student 511 responded colors affect them by bringing attention to specific things. Also, it makes them feel organized. Participant 611 specified colors may not make them feel a certain way, but they think about emotions. Thinking about emotions tends to make them think about extremes that the emotion can cause. Student 611 continued, for example, red makes them think more of anger, thus they tend to think of gruesome or gory scenes. However, these thoughts do not reflect their nature.

Participant 112 noted if they are surrounded by happy colors, such as red, yellow, and orange, they feel happy. However, if they are surrounded by dark colors, such as blue and black, they begin feeling sad. Student 212 said colors make them feel objects and/or clothes have more emotions and more flavors. Participant 312 stated colors can be like symbolism, but other times, they see color for art's sake. Interviewee 412 said colors affect their mood. Respondent 512 voiced colors affect them because it draws their eye to give whatever has color more attention. Students 612 acknowledged colors affect them by making them feel emotions.

3.3 How does seeing the color red make you feel?

Eighty-three percent of 6th grade interviewees have stated the color red makes them feel mad or angry at some capacity when they see it. Three out of six students said the color red made them feel happy. Student 206 associates the color red with the National Football League's (NFL) San Francisco 49ers, their colors being red and gold. Student 406 stating that the color red makes them feel happy because it is their mother's favorite color. In comparison, both of the examples came from females. The interviews were given November 21st when the National Football League was in season. Does the color red suggest a bold color that may be associated with personal anecdotes and experiences of interviewees?

Two out of six interviewees stated the color red makes them feel normal. Two out of six interviewees stated the color red makes them feel mad. Two out of six interviewees stated the color red reminds them of blood. One student claimed red makes them scared because it usually implies to stop.

Student 408 insinuated the color red is an alarming color that shows anger. Two out of six respondents, students 208 and 508, informed the interviewer that the color red makes them feel like something is wrong or bad. Interviewee 108 specified the color red makes them feel strong or a forceful take on a matter. Student 308 stated when they see red they think about blood and sometime stopping. Respondent 608 claimed the color red does not have much of an effect on them, but it gives off heat.

Student 109 states the color red makes them feel like someone is dying. Interviewee 209 claims the color red makes the feel happy. Participant 309 acknowledged seeing the color red makes them feel angry. Interviewee 409 said seeing

the color red makes them feel like it is something important. Participant 509 expressed the color red reminds them of blood or love. Student 609 affirmed the color red makes them feel energetic.

Participant 110 expressed the color red makes them feel as if something is intense. Interviewee 210 responded the color red makes them feel normal and neutral. Student 310 acknowledged the color red makes them think of something bad. Student 410 voiced the color red makes them feel mad. Two out of six students, participants 510 and 610, claimed the color red as reminding them of death. Interviewee 510 also stated red could be a Christmas color for joy. Student 610 continued by saying it's a depressing color.

Two out of six students, participants 111 and 511, stated the color red makes them feel alert. Respondent 211 said the color red makes them feel like a firefighter. Three out of six interviewees, students 311, 411, and 611, expressed the color red makes them feel anger or mad.

Student 112 specified the color red is an angry color but it also is a color that catches their eye. Sometimes it makes them feel warm. Sometimes it makes them angry. Respondent 212 said the color red makes them feel bold and angry. Student 312 noted red makes them feel timid, surprised, but in a daring way. Participant 412 stated they feel excited when they see the color red. Interviewee 512 expressed the color red makes everything seem more bold. By using red it gives energy of attention to the object. Participant 612 replied the color red scares them because it makes them think of blood.

3.4 How does seeing the color green make you feel?

Three interviewees described the affect of the green as being joyful and happy.

Two students related the color green to nature. One interviewee answered the color green makes them feel sick.

Fifty-percent of the interviewees indicated the color green reminds them of grass and spring. One student stated green brings them happiness. One student claimed the color green makes them feel calm. One student stated green reminds them of sickness. One student recognized the color green makes them feel normal.

Two out of six 8th grade interviewees expressed the color green reminds them of nature. Student 208 stated the color green makes them feel happy because they love playing soccer. Respondent 408 acknowledges the green as being calming, but can show a worried emotion. Interviewee 508 expressed the color green is not special to them due to having convinced themselves that green was their favorite color when they were younger.

Students 109 and 509 both associated the color green to nature. Participant 209 replied the color green makes them feel joyful. Interviewee 309 stated the color green makes them feel like they are outside, relaxed. Student 409 noted seeing the color green makes them feel calm. Student 609 said the color green makes them feel proud.

Fifty percent of 10th grade respondents, students 110, 310, and 510, noted the color green makes them think about nature, and how calm and positive nature could feel. Student 510 added green makes them feel ready to go camping. Student 210 associates happiness with the affect of the color green. Interviewee 410 specified seeing the color

green makes them feel gloomy. Participant 610 said the color green reminds them of good and money.

Participant 111 noted seeing the color green makes them feel they are at a peaceful point, makes them think of earth and its land. Student 211 stated the color green makes them feel like they are lying in grass. Respondent 311 said the color green makes them feel calm. Student 411 voiced green reminds them of nature. Interviewee 511 expressed the color green makes them feel creative. Student 611 specified the color green makes them feel uncomfortable. They are uncomfortable because they correlate green with things like mucus or radiation.

Interviewee 112 noted green doesn't make them feel like anything. Student 212 said the color green makes them feel calm. Participant 312 voiced green makes them feel calmer, more open, and relaxed. Student 412 stated they feel happy when seeing the color green. Respondent 512 specified the color green makes them feel peaceful. It reminds them of nature and the wild life. Participant 612 responded the color green makes them think of nature and comfort.

3.5 How does seeing the color blue make you feel?

A couple of interviewees noted the color blue as making them feel perky and peaceful. The color blue also triggered two students to think about nature; specifically, water and being thirsty. Student 406 noted the color blue reminds them of their favorite NFL team, the Dallas Cowboys. The Dallas Cowboys colors are blue, white, and gray. The interviews were given November 21st when the National Football League was in season.

One-third of interviewees responded the color blue makes them feel normal. One-third of students answered the color blue makes them feel calm and relaxed. One student said the color blue makes them want to go swimming. Another student stated blue makes them feel like they are on a cloud.

Two out of six 8th grade interviewees expressed the color blue makes them feel happy. Student 208 responded that blue reminds them of the ocean. Student 508 noted they love the water, swimming, and fishing. Respondent 308 revealed the color blue makes them feel small. The sky is blue like the earth's atmosphere, reminding them that they are small in the universe. Student 108 replied the color blue makes them feel more subtle and open-minded. Interviewee 408 stated blue makes them feel calm and alluded to this affect showing a sympathetic emotion. Student 608 responded blue makes them feel alive, good, and fresh.

Two out of six respondents, student 209 and 409, stated the color blue makes them feel calm and relaxed. Specifically, student 209 said dark blue makes them feel calm, whereas, light blue makes them feel relaxed. Interviewee 109 acknowledged the color blue making them feel nasty because they associate the color with mold. Participant 309 noted the color blue makes them feel upset and sad sometimes. Student 509 mentioned the color blue reminds them of the ocean or the sky. Interviewee 609 replied the color blue makes them feel cool and/or chill.

Interviewee 110 responded seeing the color blue makes them feel calm as well because it makes them think of the ocean and sky. Student 210 noted the affect of blue reminds them of up high sky. Respondent 310 expressed blue brings a refreshing feeling. Student 410 voiced the color blue makes them feel down and relaxed. Interviewee 510

specified blue gives them the sense of serenity. The color reminds them of the ocean. Student 610 said the color blue reminds them of peace and the sky.

Two out of six 11th grade students, 111 and 211, expressed the color blue reminds them of the ocean. Fifty percent of 11th grade respondents, students 111, 411, and 611, mentioned the color blue reminds them of the sky. Interviewee 311 said the color blue makes them feel happy. Student 511 noted blue makes them feel somber. Respondent 611 stated the color blue gives them tranquility.

Student 112 stated the color blue makes them feel sad. It also has a cooling effect. Participant 212 responded the color blue makes them feel spiritual, relaxed, and childlike. Respondent 312 noted blue reminds them of the sky's freedom, but also, depth, like the sea. Student 412 said they love the color blue, so it makes them happy when they see it. Participant 512 specified the color blue makes them feel protected. It reminds them of nature and the wild life. Interviewee 612 voiced the color blue makes them think of the ocean and sky.

3.6 How does seeing the color orange make you feel?

A couple of the interviewees acknowledged the color making them feel bright or jubilant. Another duo of students connected the color orange to sports teams. Student 406 related the color to University of the Pacific (UOP) Softball, noting the color makes her feel athletic. UOP's colors are orange, black, and white. Student 506 stated the color orange makes them feel mad because they have distaste for the Cincinnati Bengals whose colors are orange, black, and white. Both UOP and the Cincinnati Bengals have tigers as their mascots. There are similarities among two other students when expressing the color

orange makes them feel sad and bored. In comparison, the interviewees saw the affect of the color orange as being broad and offering various emotions.

One-third of 7th grade interviewees stated the color orange reminds them of being hungry and they like eating oranges. One student answered the color orange reminds them of the University of the Pacific because the university's colors are orange and black. Another student stated orange is their least favorite color and it does not give them happiness. One interviewee responded orange makes them feel normal.

Interviewee 108 responded the color orange makes them feel a little more interested and stands out more. Student 208 stated seeing the color orange makes them feel ok because they really do not like orange. Interviewee 308 acknowledged they do not feel anything when they see orange. Respondent 408 expressed the color orange shows happiness and warmth. Student 508 stated orange is their favorite color. They feel different with orange since nothing looks like orange. The color is just there. Student 608 said orange kind of makes them sick. The color reminds them of puke.

Participant 109 noted the color orange makes them feel happy. Student 209 stated the color orange makes them feel awake. Interviewee 309 reported the color orange makes them feel like having fun. Respondent 409 specified seeing the color orange makes them feel warm or bright and enthusiastic. Student 509 stated the color orange reminds them of sunshine. Participant 609 said orange makes them feel crazy.

Student 110 voiced seeing the color orange makes them feel weird because they do not like the brightness of it. Interviewee 210 said the color orange is really cool. Student 310 mentioned orange makes them think of the fruit or something citrus. Participant 410 acknowledged seeing the color orange makes them feel bright. Student

510 specified the color orange gives the feeling of unity or family because it reminds them of Thanksgiving. Respondent 610 revealed the color orange reminds them of peace and sunsets.

Student 111 expressed seeing the color orange makes them feel like summer is here. Interviewee 211 stated the color orange makes them feel like they are eating oranges. Participant 311 acknowledged the color orange makes them feel zesty. Student 411 noted orange reminds them of their aunt's pants. Respondent 511 voiced the color orange makes me feel like they need to pay attention to something. Interviewee 611 specified the color orange does not make me feel any way since they do not register an emotion or any concept with the color orange.

Respondent 112 acknowledges the color orange makes them feel warm. Student 212 said the color orange makes them feel neutral. Student 312 specified orange reminds them of a bonfire, or a beautiful natural fall day with auburn leaves highlighting a pathway. Participant 412 mentioned they feel meh when seeing the color orange. Interviewee 512 voiced the color orange makes them feel fruity. It gives a mellow vibe and also makes me think of the summer; being outside enjoying the sun. Student 612 expressed the color orange makes them feel fruity because of the fruit.

3.7 How does seeing the color black make you feel?

Majority of interviewees concurred that the color black offers the affect of dark, ominous, and menacing. Majority of writing is normally presented in black or gray ink. Can the affect of black ink present an unsettling demeanor? Could the color black indicate the effort level of one to use black ink to write?

One student stated the color black makes them feel at home as if they were in their room. Another interviewee responded the color black makes them want to sleep. The color black is a favorite color to one interviewee because it is dark. One student answered the color black makes them feel awesome due to most of the music they listen to. Another student noted the color black makes them feel dull. One student responded the color black makes them feel normal.

Student 108 answered the color black makes me feel more myself and free to explore mainly because it doesn't stand out or mean anything making it able to "do" a lot of things. Respondent 208 acknowledged seeing the color black makes me feel sad because it's dark. Black makes me feel uncomfortable it makes me feel like I am at a cemetery and at one point or another I will be like them, responded interviewee 308. Respondent 408 expressed, the color black is where there is no emotion it shows that something is important but you just can't see it. Student 508 stated seeing black actually makes me happy. I like black because it's everywhere. At night, enclosed places, clothes, it is everywhere. Interviewee 608 noted black is a nice color to wear but if a room was all black, it would make the room look dark and not bright and fresh.

Two out of six participants, students 109 and 409, revealed the color black makes them feel sad and down. Student 209 reported black makes them feel bored. Student 309 stated the color black makes them feel scared and anxious. Interviewee 509 noted the color black reminds them of death and loneliness. Respondent 609 said black makes them feel calm.

Participants 110 and 410 acknowledged the color black makes them feel dark. Student 110 also mentioned the color associates with sadness where it makes you feel

low because it is not bright like other colors. Student 210 noted the color black makes them feel scared. Interviewee 310 suggested black seems like a neutral color that they are used to seeing. Participant 510 expressed black gives them a formal feeling to a sense, it brings them down, but not totally. Student 610 stated black is a very depressing color, it seems like death.

Respondent 111 claimed seeing the color black makes them feel like an empty hole that can go on and on, like a black hole. They feel like black is darkness that hides the other vibrant colors. Student 211 voiced the color black does not really leave a feeling to them unless it is coffee. Student 311 said the color black makes them feel edgy. Interviewee 411 expressed black makes them feel like a rebel. Participant 511 noted the color black makes them feel at peace. Student 611 acknowledged the color black makes them feel dread because it is so empty. Yet the color makes them feel imagination because then they can imagine what is in the darkness.

Student 112 stated the color black makes them feel sad and depressed. Interviewee 212 said the color black makes them feel gothic. Student 312 responded the color black makes them think of sophistication, darkness, ravens, secrets, but also a solid grasp of things. Participant 412 noted seeing black makes them feel dark. Interviewee 512 expressed black makes them feel lonely; isolated from reality as if to disappear from life. Student 612 voiced the color black makes me feel dark because of no light.

3.8 How does color influence your learning?

Five out of six 6th grade interviewees suggest color influences their learning. Majority who agreed color is influence noted that color was a strategy used to remember or organize their thoughts. Interviewee 306 asserts their teacher uses color to

differentiate ideas in order to engage the students' attention. In addition, interviewee 506 articulates color makes them feel happy because there is a lot of color in their teachers' classroom. Can one assume having a colorful classroom raises the affective domain of students? There was one student recorded who did not feel color influenced their learning.

Fifty percent of interviewees stated color does not influence their learning. Fifty percent of students acknowledge colors do influence learning based on enhancing enthusiasm, fun, and the world around us.

Four out six 8th grade interviewees responded color influences their learning. Student 108 claimed color can really influence my learning by making it easier to see or find quicker and take in the information. Interviewee 208 specified color influences me to learn by grabbing my attention to the color. Student 308 replied that in most of my classes we use purple and blue to annotate the text. Sometimes in English we have to annotate our own writing with orange, green, blue, and red. Respondent 408 stated when there are colors I can recall info better because I can see the colored text in my head. Student 508 emphasized to be honest, color doesn't influence my learning. This year was the first time I've color coded my work, and all it did was make it look sloppy. Respondent 608 said color gives of sort of a vibe for learning. White is too boring but you don't want it to be too colorful either. Fairly colorful would be perfect but color doesn't really have an effect on me, I just like seeing certain color that are my favorite because they are pretty.

Two out of six participants, students 209 and 609, stated color does not influence their learning. Specifically, student 209 said they feel it is not professional. Interviewee

109 claimed color influences my learning by knowing certain colors mean certain things or is a symbol for something. Student 309 acknowledged colors influence my learning by changing my attitude toward the activity/assignment. Respondent 409 reported they think color influences their learning by helping show a difference in things. Student 509 replied color helps them recognize and organize different parts of my writing.

One hundred percent of 10th grade interviewees acknowledged color influences their learning. Student 110 noted color influences their now because it helps them organize and find things quicker than before. Student 210 specified bright colors equal happiness. Participant 310 responded color influences them to feel somewhat connected to what they are learning. Student 410 feels colors make learning more fun and/or interesting. Interviewee 510 said colors influence their learning by making certain parts stand out. Participant 610 voiced colors make learning interesting.

Participant 111 stated color allows them to identify different types of sentences. Student 211 noted color influences their learning by allowing them to view colors in their mind. Interviewee 311 said color helps them organize their annotations. Interviewee 411 noted color makes them think of the writing they do in class because every color has a purpose. Student 511 specified color influences their writing by helping them get organized. Respondent 611 voiced colors in their learning are only helpful when they color code. If they are using certain layouts then some complications may occur but most of the time, they do not prefer color coding things.

Interviewee 112 believes that sometimes color can affect your moos and then your ability to learn. Student 212 stated colors make it easier for me to learn because the material is not as boring. Student 312 said they may be to connect ideas to colors, so

when they see a color, they are reminded of a previous lesson. Respondent 412 said color does not influence their learning. Participant 512 specified color influences their learning by making them focus of what is in color. It pulls their eye to make them see whatever is in color in a more meaningful way. Interviewee 612 expressed the color makes them think of different points of view.

3.9 Do you use colors when you write? Why or why not?

Sixty-six percent of 6th grade interviewees use color in their writing. Their anecdotes include using color for other types of writing as well, such as, color coding math to understand better, annotating text for differentiation, and writing in blue, black, and red ink. A pair of students responded they do not use color in writing because they feel they do not need to and it is distracting. Was the pair of students exposed to organizational writing strategies at a younger age? Is it possible for student 606 who stated writing is distracting may be an advanced writer who does not see purpose in color coding writing?

Sixty-six percent of interviewees stated they do not use colors in their writing. One student responded using color in writing is a waste of time. Another respondent noted they were not allowed to write in color. One other student explained they write in pencil or black ink. One student stated they do not write in color because they do not think it is needed. One student noted they only use color to draw. Another stated they use the colors black, blue, red, and gray; gray for the color of lead pencils and black, blue, and red due to standard pen colors.

Student 108 noted they use colors to organize their writing; for example, labeling commentary or concrete details in a chunk. Interviewee 208 stated they use colors to

help them edit their work or to go over something. Participant 308 specified they don't use colors when they write because it really doesn't help them. They just write in black and blue. Student 408 expressed color influences their learning most of the time because if there is a certain topic that I need to remember I can use a color to memorize it better. Respondent 508 replied they do not use colors when they write because they don't quite like them on paper. To them, it makes it look sloppy, and with bad handwriting already, they try not to make things sloppier. Student 608 uses color when they write to separate important information from vocab words and so on.

Interviewee 109 uses colors when they write to identify certain sentences.

Student 209 did not respond to question. Participant 309 stated they see colors when they write because when they write, depending on their attitude on the topic they can see the colors that they feel. Student 409 uses colors when they write because they like color a lot. Interviewee 509 does not use colors when they write because they do not need to. Student 609 does not use colors to write because they are not used to it.

Participant 110 noted they do use color when they write sometimes because it helps them organize their thoughts. Student 210 said they use blue mostly because they like it. Interviewee 310 acknowledged when they write, they usually write in color unless they are doing an assignment that involves organization or categorization. Respondent 410 voiced they use colors in their writing for paragraphs, chunks, and concrete details. Student 510 noted they use colors in their writing in some cases. Colors help the student concentrate and organize their writing. Interviewee 610 affirmed they use colors to get the main point so they will not have to read it all over and colors make the writing easier to read.

Student 111 stated they do not normally write in color; however, they are usually asked to write in color. They feel color takes away attention from their writing. People will focus on their color choices than word choice. Interviewee 211 voiced no, they do not really write in color because they just don't like colors in my essay. Student 311 said they use color when annotating. Participant 411 noted they use colors when they write because their colors have purpose. Student 511 expressed they will write in colors if they have to. They write in color when they need to write a chunk. Respondent 611 stated they do not write in colors when they write because it does not said in their work and only makes their writing distracting and slow.

Participant 112 stated they do not use color in their writing by choice. They only use color in their writing when their teacher makes them. Student 212 voiced they do not use color in their writing because colored ink in handwriting does not seem professional. Participant 312 acknowledged they do use color in their writing; not only does their teacher make it a policy, but it reminds them of what colors to use when annotating. Respondent 412 said they use color when they write for organizational purposes. Participant 512 specified they do use color when writing their rough draft in order to distinguish different sections of their paragraphs. It makes it simpler to write and read. It also helps when reading to let them focus on new things. Student 612 stated they use colors to organize their work.

3.10 What strategies help you organize your thoughts when writing?

Four out of six 6th students responded they use webs; specifically spider webs to organize their writing. Two out the four even stated that webbing makes it easier to understand and find information. One out of the four continued to list strategies, such as,

T-charts and lists to help them in their writing. One student expressed they will keep working and to work hard and also to express my feeling into my writing.

Three out of six students responded they use brainstorm strategies to organize their writing; writing strategies, such as, webbing, planning multiple paragraphs, and transitional words. One interviewee stated they use the strategy of listening and learning to organize their writing. Another student stated they use strategies their teacher and family members have taught them. One student stated they do not have strategies for writing that they just go with the flow.

Participant 108 responded they think color coding and graphic organizers play a huge role to organize your thoughts and make your writing better. Interviewee 208 stated strategies that help them organize their thoughts; they put them down on paper. Student 308 specified when they organize their thoughts they skip lines when there is a different subject. Once they are done they highlight/underline the important stuff. Interviewee 408 acknowledged when writing they usually create a table or a group in which certain information will go to. Respondent 508 said to organize their thoughts; they tend to only think about what is being written at the time. They find that thinking ahead distracts them, and they forget what they meant to write so they stay on track most of the time. Participant 608 noted to organize their thought in writing they make side notes and underline or highlight.

Fifty percent of 9th grade interviewees stated one of the strategies they use is brainstorming. Student 109 reported strategies that help them organize their thoughts is a brainstorm. Respondent 209 said brainstorming, outlines, and highlighting help organize their thoughts. Interviewee 309 recognizes the strategies that help them organize their

thoughts when writing is brainstorming. Student 409 stated what helps them organize their writing is colors and thinking and planning what they are going to write about. Participant 509 acknowledges outlining helps them organize their thoughts when writing. Student 609 does not use any writing strategies.

Interviewee 110 acknowledged separating things and using color helps them organize their writing thoughts, for example, when they organize their ideas for a certain paper. Student 210 responded randomness. Participant 410 voiced breaking writing into chunks is what helps them. Fifty percent of 10th grade participants, students 310, 510, and 610, noted using brainstorming strategies; such as, outlines, graphic organizers, and free-writes when organizing their writing.

Interviewee 111 said a great strategy that they use in their writing is to create an outline to place all my ideas. Student 211 noted they use an outline when they write like a concrete detail. Student 311 stated they use colors help them organize thoughts. Participant 411 expressed an outline helps them organize their thoughts when writing. Interviewee 511 specified they prefer brainstorm ideas. The student listed an example, such as; they like to create a brainstorm or a little list of processes. Then they choose the best idea that fit the requirements of the prompt. Once they begin writing, they refer back to their outline and try to elaborate on what they initially thought. Their choice of strategies is a logical and concise process. Student 611 voiced they tend to do a lot of prewriting. They like to make multiple outlines before writing so that they know exactly what to write.

Student 112 acknowledged when they write they usually will highlight the text they are using. Then they annotate the text. From there they begin their essay.

Participant 212 said they separate their thoughts into paragraphs. Interviewee 312 specified they brainstorm; outlining with color, list main ideas, and whatever they feel will help bring their ideas out the best at the moment. Student 412 stated they make an outline to help them write their essays. Respondent 512 specified when beginning a paper they like starting off with a random sheet and putting everything that can relate to the prompt on the paper. It doesn't matter whether it is in complete sentences or not. Student 612 responded they brainstorm or create an outline before they work.

Teacher Itemized Data

4.1 What are the primary colors?

Teacher 106T stated the three primary colors are red, yellow, and blue.

Participant 206T responded the primary colors are red, blue, and green. Instructor 107T said the primary colors are green, blue, and orange. Respondent 207T noted the primary colors as being blue, red, and yellow. Teacher 112T voiced the primary colors as red, yellow, and blue as being colors on the color wheel.

4.2 How does color influence learning?

Instructor 106T acknowledged color is a text feature in the learning setting and draws attention from the eye to the text/important information. Respondent 206T said color helps students to memorize and identify different "things". Teacher 107T noted students are able to distinguish between the components for this program. Interviewee 207T voiced color influences learning by helping separate out text, helps with memory association. Teacher 112T stated colors have been programmed into human neurochemistry through evolution from pre-linguistic times to enable us to respond to

stimuli on our environment. Colors can evoke emotional and physiological responses of which we are not even aware as we are seeing them.

4.3 Do you use color in your teaching? If so, why?

Interviewee 106T noted, yes, I do use color in my teaching practices. I use color because it helps students organize their thoughts, ideas, and claims systematically. I also teach my students to annotate text in color so they are able to quickly identify different literary elements quickly when scanning a text. Teacher 206T claimed for the past 5 years, I have used colors to represent different groupings of students, different colored paper for assignments, and certain colors to write in. But more importantly, I used colors to help teach the organization of a paragraph, the “stoplight” approach; green (topic), yellow (body), and red (conclusion). Instructor 107T voiced, yes, in our PowerPoint for history lessons we use color coding for key vocabulary, key concepts, ideas, etc. Now with writing we are using the color coding; especially, in reading annotations. Participant 207T said they use color minimally and rarely this year in particular since we are using a new approach. Teacher 112T noted, yes, at my best, I try to intentionally select pen, marker, and paper colors to achieve certain effects with my learners.

4.4 Have you ever used color when teaching writing? If so, how and why?

Teacher 106T stated, yes, I have used color when teaching writing. My students color code the different parts of paragraphs, such as text evidence is always in blue, student analysis/synthesis is always in orange, topic sentences are always in green, etc. The color first and foremost helps teach my students structure of an essay and then know my expectations of what kind of sentence is expected for that “color.” For example, when my students see a sentence written in blue, they automatically know that is text

evidence, it is either a direct quote or paraphrased quote from a fiction or non-fiction text. Also, I can ask my students to write me a concrete detail in response for a question, and they know I expect a direct or paraphrased quote from the text we are analyzing, with a lead in and citation, written in blue. After teaching my students to color code their writing, it is like I have created a secret code/language amongst their peers that they can self-monitor own and each other's writing, knowing my expectations for success. Participant 206T voiced they use colors to help teach the organization of a paragraph, the "stoplight" approach; green (topic), yellow (body), and red (conclusion). Instructor 206T noted, they have used color in their teaching this year; our school site has advanced this idea in writing when it comes to writing paragraphs and annotating text. Respondent 107T acknowledged last year they used it for my academic writing intervention class. The color helped them memorize structured writing. Teacher 207T stated they have not used color in their teaching. Interviewee 112T noted only this year with the support of this study in any level of depth. In the past, my color use has been more with avoiding red ink and using blue or green for revisions or editing, respectively. I try to color code notes on the white board by category, but haven't until now consistently used a specific color to match a specific purpose.

4.5 How can color coding influence student writing?

Respondent 106T noted color coding can influence student writing because students are able to easily identify and organize their thoughts in the correct format for the genre of writing they are composing. Participant 206T responded they have found that color coding helps students remember what is needed in a paragraph. If I say, make sure to start with green, they know that is the topic sentence. Teacher 107T voiced it can

help them learn structure. If they learn a consistent color coding system they can always apply it in the future and with other classes. Teacher 207T said, I think it can help students to track whether or not they have included the key elements in writing (ex. point/evidence/commentary). Instructor 112T acknowledged students who are more visual, but also students in general who respond to systems thinking and organization in academic work, can make more sense of their writing on more levels (visual, linguistic, emotional) when they use colors and can better achieve the CCSS evidence demands when they use colors. If I am a student who is correctly using a color code system and I see two orange sentences per paragraph, I know I have a solid amount of evidence.

4.6 What do you think the color red does to a student's affect?

Teacher 106T thinks the color red brings alert to a student's affect. Instructor 206T stated this might be my own projection, but I feel that red has negative connotation. Red is the color of stop, the last color when "pulling cards" for behavior, the edits a teacher makes on their paper, etc. Participant 107T said the color red gives them like a warning signal in my opinion. Respondent 207T voiced the color red affects students to be more alert. Educator 112T noted red gets attention. It is the color of blood, of danger. It makes a point and stands out. It can cause people to respond with stress, alarm, or simply get their attention, depending on the student and the context. This is emphasized by the traffic light card-flipping behavior management technique that many students have experienced.

4.7 What do you think the color green does to a student's affect?

Educator 106T thinks the color green, motivates a student's affect. Instructor 206T stated green is a non-threatening color. I like to have students edit in this color, as

well I correct in this color and purple. Participant 107T said the color green could provide a sense positivity or reflection. Teacher 207T noted the color green affects students by symbolizing growing. Interviewee 112T voiced green connects human consciousness with natural habitats and is generally calming. Students often say “Green means go!” and respond to green as an affirmation. This is emphasized by the traffic light card-flipping behavior management technique that many students have experienced.

4.8 What do you think the color blue does to a student’s affect?

Participant 106T thinks the color blue, calms a student’s affect. Educator 206T stated blue is a dull color that many students prefer to use in class. Teacher 107T noted blue affecting students by offering a calm or tranquil demeanor. Instructor 207T voiced blue affects students by calming them. Respondent 112T said blue is the color of water and the clear sky—colors that generally connect us with beauty and vastness. Blue can make students wonder or be curious, but also overwhelmed by its intensity.

4.9 What do you think the color orange does to a student’s affect?

Teacher 106T thinks the color orange, challenges a student’s affect. Interviewee 206T noted orange stands out to students, and would typically notice this color before any other. Educator 107T voiced urgency as being an affect from the color orange. Participant 207T listed warning as being an affect from the color orange. Instructor 112T stated orange is often quite bright, and shown in its pure secondary color form, as opposed to shades.

4.10 What do you think the color black does to a student’s affect?

Interviewee 106T thinks the color black does not really affect a student’s affect because most print they see is in black so it is the norm. Teacher 206T noted all text that

students read is in black. I would think that it has little to no effect on students as it does not stand out. Participant 107T said the color black may add confusion for students. Respondent 207T noted bad as being an affect from the color black. Educator 112T voiced black is a standard for printed text—most students I work with view it as kind of a default. Many students also have the association with is of cheap photocopies, of a second-hand text, as opposed to the color and richness of a more expensive or high quality text. In terms of annotations, it can be neutral, or have the authority of “black and white.”

4.11 Do you color coding for instructional purposes? If so, how and why?

Teacher 106T noted, yes, I do use color coding for instructional purposes. I teach my students to take notes, annotate texts, and write in color. I find that color coding helps my students organize and structure their thoughts much easier, which therefore creates more confident writers. Participant 206T uses color when identifying key ideas or facts and in images/pictures that are used in instruction. This is because it draws the students’ attention to what I really want them to focus in on and remember. Educator 107T uses color coding for instructional purposes when creating lecture power points, chart poster of academic language or concepts, reading and writing. Respondent 207T has not used color coding for instructional purposes with middle school students but I recall doing so for elementary, but this was more than 20 years ago (can’t remember the specifics!). Educator 112T noted only this year with the support of this study in any level of depth. In the past, my color use has been more with avoiding red ink and using blue or green for revisions or editing, respectively. I try to color code notes on the white board by category, but haven’t until now consistently used a specific color to match a

specific purpose. But I now have started to experiment with using colors to code for my learners. Just bit by bit, but learners are responding to it, and I am exciting to try deeper implementation over a longer period of time!

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

The study affirms there are future research opportunities to explore the phenomena of color effect among adolescent writers. In this study students and faculty discovered writing in color decreases adolescent affect when the color is used to label a specific sentences' function. The study also revealed students and teachers found the color black as an ineffective color to use for writing, specific to one's affect. However, other colors used for writing may have an adverse effect as well. Research implications call for a broader study across multiple schools and various demographics, possibly longitudinal. Student and faculty voice in the thesis was vital to the authenticity of the study. Interviewee insight and transparency generated well-constructed responses for qualitative research in order to receive the interpretations stated above.

The thesis study is an extensive tribute to the development of color codes integrated with a formulaic writing model for student's grades six through twelve. Students are exposed to many genres of writing throughout a school year. The problem lies with the inequity of student writing production. If students use the precise method of color coding in a writing model, students' engagement and affective domains will decrease with writing. The purpose of the study is to analyze student affect and synthesis with color coding formulaic writing models. The study measured the efficacy of color coding for intermediate and secondary grade levels through a qualitative case study and interview process.

Writing in color creates engagement in the writing process. By nature, most students are not born with a natural passion for writing. Color lowers their learning affective filter, while drawing out positive emotions for them to become one with their

composition. Introducing a color-coded formulaic writing system gives students comfort and structure in their writing. It gives them a frame and a purpose, which a blank page with a prompt does not give them. First introducing color allows students to connect with prior knowledge of something they are already mastery at—identifying colors. They know their colors and most kids are mastery at allowing colors to symbolize a meaning. By giving kids colors to write in, you are allowing students to already be successful in the first part of the writing process.

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Appendix A
Qualitative Interview Questions – Student Focus Group

Research/Organizational Use Only:

Participant: Student Participant Indicator (Number/Grade): _____

Date of Interview: _____

Student Accommodation(s) (circle all that apply): Traditional EL SPED

Glossary of Terms

Color Code:

n. a system of marking things with different colors as a means of identification.

v. mark (things) with different colors as a means of identification

Thesis Statement:

A thesis statement (TH) appears near the beginning of a paper, and it offers a concise solution to the issue being addressed. It states the claim of the argument presented in a paper. A thesis statement is usually one sentence, though it may occur as more than one.

Topic Sentence:

The topic sentence (TS) should state the main point of the paragraph and be straight to the point.

Concrete Detail:

A concrete detail (CD) is the "what" sentence and is a fact that shows "what" is happening. It should be facts, examples, illustrations, evidence, support, plot references, paraphrases, citations, quotations, plot summary, etc. It should be a concrete detail and should start with '*for example*' or a different transition.

Commentary/Analysis:

There are two or three commentary/analysis sentences (CM) in each chunk. They contain no facts; rather, comments from the paragraph writer elaborate on the fact presented in the CD. This sentence contains analysis, interpretation, character feelings, opinions, inferences, insights, reasons, or comments. It is important that the commentary explains how the concrete detail helps prove the writer's point (the TS).

Concluding/Transition Sentence:

The concluding/transition sentence (CS) is the closing sentence that wraps up the TS and sums up the paragraph. It closes up the thoughts and gives insight to the next paragraph. Again, it is a good idea to use as many (at least two) feeling, emotional, or connotative words as possible. It usually begins with "As a result" or another concluding phrase.

1. Background

1.1 Gender: Male/Female

1.2 Age: _____

1.3 Grade: _____

1.4 How do you like to learn (i.e. visual, audio, movement, etc.)? Why?

2. Formulaic Expository/Informational Writing Model

3.1 Can you write a thesis statement? If so, explain.

3.2 Can you write a topic sentence? If so, explain.

3.3 Can you write concrete details? If so, explain.

3.4 Can you offer analysis concrete details? If so, explain.

3.5 Can you write a transition sentence? If so, explain.

3.6 Can you write an expository/informational paragraph? If so, explain.

3. Color Coding

3.1 What are the primary colors?

3.2 Overall, how does color affect you?

3.3 How does seeing the color red make you feel?

3.4 How does seeing the color green make you feel?

3.5 How does seeing the color blue make you feel?

3.6 How does seeing the color orange make you feel?

3.7 How does seeing the color black make you feel?

3.8 How does color influence your learning?

3.9 Do you use colors when you write? Why or why not?

3.10 What strategies help you organize your thoughts when writing?

1. Background

1.1 Gender: Male/Female

1.2 Subject(s) taught (2013-2014): _____

1.3 Grade(s) taught (2013-2014): _____

1.3 Years in Education: _____

1.4 Fluent Language(s): _____

1.5 Approximately how many students do you teach?

1.6 Approximately how many girls do you teach?

1.7 Approximately how many boys do you teach?

1.8 Approximately how many English Language Learners do you teach?

1.9 Approximately how many Special Education (i.e. students with IEPs and/or 504s) students do you teach?

1.10 What learning modalities do you adhere to most in your teaching (i.e. visual, kinesthetic, auditory, linguistic, etc.)? How and why?

2. Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

2.1 Have you received training on Common Core State Standards (CCSS)? If so, to what extent?

2.2 Is your school embracing Common Core State Standards to be implemented by teachers? If so, how have you begun implementing CCSS in your classroom?

2.3 Are there any instructional shifts from No Child Left Behind (NCLB) standards to CCSS for "Writing"? If so, please explain the shifts.

3. Formulaic Expository Writing Model

3.1 Can your students write a thesis statement? If so, explain.

3.2 Can your students write a topic sentence? If so, explain.

3.3 Can your students write concrete details? If so, explain.

3.4 Can your students offer analysis concrete details? If so, explain.

3.5 Can your students write a transition sentence? If so, explain.

3.6 Can your students write an expository paragraph? If so, explain.

4. Color Coding

4.1 What are the primary colors?

4.2 How does color influence learning?

4.3 Do you use color in your teaching? If so, why?

4.4 Have you ever used color when teaching writing? If so, how and why?

4.5 How can color coding influence student writing?

4.6 What do you think the color red does to a student's affect?

4.7 What do you think the color green does to a student's affect?

4.8 What do you think the color blue does to a student's affect?

4.9 What do you think the color orange does to a student's affect?

4.10 What do you think the color black does to a student's affect?

4.11 Do you color coding for instructional purposes? If so, how and why?

**Appendix C
Informed Consent for Student Interviews**

INFORMED CONSENT FOR INTERVIEWS

How Color Coding Formulaic Writing Enhances Organization: A Qualitative Approach
For Measuring Student Affect

I, _____, agree to be interviewed for the study entitled *How Color Coding Formulaic Writing Enhances Organization: A Qualitative Approach For Measuring Student Affect* which is being produced by Bryce A. Geigle of Humphreys College.

I certify that I have been told of the confidentiality of information collected for this study and the anonymity of my participation; that I have been given satisfactory answers to my inquiries concerning study procedures and other matters; and that I have been advised that I am free to withdraw my consent and to discontinue participation in the study or interview at any time without prejudice.

I agree to participate in one or more electronically recorded interviews for this study. I understand that such interviews and related materials will be kept completely anonymous, and that the results of this study may be published in an academic journal or book.

I agree that any information obtained from this research may be used in any way thought best for this study.

Signature of Interviewee Parent/Guardian

Date _____

Signature of Interviewee

Date _____

Print Name of Interviewee

Grade _____

Research/Organizational Use Only:

Participant: Student Participant Indicator (Number/Grade): _____

Date of Interview: _____

Student Accommodation(s) (circle all that apply): Traditional EL SPED

If you cannot obtain satisfactory answers to your questions or have comments or complaints about your treatment in this study, contact:

Dr. Bob Humphreys Jr.,
Dean of Graduate Studies
Humphreys College
bhumphreys@humphreys.edu

