




---

## Music and Middle School Literacy

Sally Busby<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Indiana University Bloomington

Sally Busby is a doctoral student in Literacy, Culture, and Language Education at Indiana University Bloomington. Her current interests include disability studies, children's literature, and lifelong learning. She taught sixth and seventh-grade English for fifteen years.

### Abstract

This article provides beneficial strategies for using music in the middle school English classroom. Despite research describing the positive effects of using music to enhance learning, there is minimal discussion on specific ways of incorporating music into lessons. Music is a meaningful alternative allowing middle school students to connect with their world and, in doing so, create their own unique identities. This discussion identifies strategies whereby English teachers build upon students' interest in music to frame engagement in critical thinking about a text including the events and characters, themes, and motifs. Students learn complex literacy skills within an environment of personal motivation and multimodal approaches.

Keywords: music in the classroom, multimodal, literature study, critical literacy

### Introduction

Middle school is a unique time in the emerging lives and identities of 12-14 year-olds. The current discussion provides an introduction to not only using music as a positive learning strategy, but as well explores ways to implement music to support students' developing identities. The following examples of popular culture vignettes during the 2007-2008 school year focus on teacher insight and student relevance.

#### 2007-2008, the Year of "Crank That (Soulja Boy)": A Series of Vignettes

*The bell rings, and students file out of my 7th-grade English classroom. Hundreds of students move through the hallways, stop at lockers or talk for a minute. And then one student yells out, "Watch me crank it!"*

*A few other students laugh and respond, "Watch me roll!"  
"Yua!" even more call out.*

*Soulja Boy released his single in September and by October, this became a daily call and response in the hallways.*

\*\*\*

*I have a baby and toddler and tons of single baby socks, broken toys, and other pieces of trash. I decide to gather hundreds of these little items and ask the students to create commercials for an object of “trash” using a propaganda technique.*

*I have five classes, between 27 and 35 students per class. The students work in pairs or trios for the project, and in each class, at least two groups use the tune of “Crank That” to write the lyrics to their catchy commercial hit.*

\*\*\*

*Soulja Boy’s dance for his hit song is just as catchy and becomes a part of several afterschool, hour-long dance events. Jumping to the right, jumping to the left, arms outstretched and flying forward, the students move to the lyrics.*

*During my class students review vocabulary words using an activity I call “paper bag dramatics.” Each group selects a paper bag containing a random assortment of “props” that they incorporate into their skit using the week’s vocabulary words. At least one skit in each paper bag dramatics day includes an eight count of Soulja Boy’s dance. This relevant music is an easy way to hype/engage their audience of peers.*

The preceding vignettes illustrate middle schoolers' organic connections between music, learning, and identity. Students work to join their interests and identity in the classroom community. A teacher’s role is to honor this work and help support the ways students share their identity while learning.

### **Relevance: Self-Identity and Music**

As children move into their early teenage years, they look for ways to create a unique identity. Often this identity connects to their love of particular genres of music and specific artists. My daughter, the baby of my vignettes, is now fifteen and spends at least a half an hour every evening walking around the backyard while listening to her music. It is a ritual that is just as important to her as baths or eating. Music also becomes an important part of middle school students’ lives.

Middle school students strive to connect their music to identity, self, and other. As a middle school English teacher, I often hear students playing songs in the hallway, either on their phones or singing. Some songs connect all students as “Crank That” did for my students over ten years ago. Many schools identify the significance of music with middle schoolers and play music throughout the intercom during the passing from class to class instead of using bells. However, classroom instructional strategies appear to use music merely as a way to transition to a different activity or in some instances, eliminate music all together. In order to learn within a classroom community, the current discussion proposes middle school English teachers invite students’ relevant and personal musical choices into the classroom.

### **Using Music in Supporting Student Identity and Literacy Learning**

Middle school students perceive music as a means to connect to other students their age and create unique parts of their own identity. “Human beings and their social worlds are inseparable” (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014, p. 31). As well, the social worlds in which we reside help us create our evolving and fluid identity. As students interact with others in the community of learners through shared and unique interests, their individual identities form where the “identities reside on a sea of stuff and experience” (Pahl & Rowsell, 2010, p. 8). Palmer (1998) views identity as “an evolving nexus where all the forces that constitute life converge in the mystery of the self” (p. 13). The concept of self strongly connects to identity and the work of reflecting on one’s fluid identity. Philosophers identify self as a key feature of identity.

For instance, while enacting identity work, Foucault (1988) views the self as an imperative part of identity where he focuses on the theme of care for self and “examining [one’s] soul” (p. 26). He explains the word self can be used to “convey the notion of identity” (p. 25); therefore, the care of “self” highlights the focused action of searching for the answer to the question, “What is the plateau on which I shall find my identity?” (Foucault, 1988, p.25). The concept of a plateau for personal identity work indicates the understanding of figurative travel and climbing throughout one’s life. Students learn through their struggles and climbs while using this movement to rest in temporary ease while building the pieces of their identity. An effort to focus on the discovery of self can inform teachers’ praxis. Teachers use students’ interests in music as part of their emerging identities; for example, to encourage literacy.

Identity, though somewhat stable, is on a spectrum of individual fluidity. This fluid movement connects to learning within the discourses of groups and the connection of self to others. Part of an individual’s identity involves defining characteristics such as the role of a student or interests such as specific songs or music. During the middle school years, students use music to demonstrate pieces of their identity based on connections to songs. Often students will find commonality with other students based on music, and those branches of shared identity through a collective interest in particular lyrics, singers, or songs which help to define an individual student’s identity.

Music also provides a vehicle to connect page literacy to musical literacy. Allowing students to learn the modes of music and the layers of musical analysis such as tone, rhythm, lyric, and melody, support a multimodal framework within the classroom.

### **Language Arts, the Middle School Student Identity, and Learning**

Successful middle school English teachers understand several significant truths regarding their students. For example, engagement is not associated with their writing abilities or their average reading levels. Learning is not about grammar or academic rigor or grit. Rather, the community the teacher creates frames students’ success. Insightful educators understand that before students can reciprocate with respect, their teachers must demonstrate respect for them. Students need a tribe; it is critical they be part of a group. They must feel loved and cherished. It is only then that middle school students can share their introspective thoughts and their emerging identities. It is then, they can explain why a particular book wrought tears or describe their difficulty in writing a paragraph. With a feeling of community support, students are less apt to become vulnerable. The community support, however, cannot end at the conclusion of a one-hour class. It is critical

students experience the connections among peers, interests, and teachers beyond the school walls. This means, as well, this understanding of community extends beyond traditional classroom time constraints.

The work in these shared third spaces (Gutiérrez, 2008) nurtures the outside group connections while adding to the funds of shared knowledge. In this way, this expansive understanding of community creates abundant opportunities for students to learn and develop (Moll et al., 1992; Banegas, 2020). Through an understanding of this relevant and personal learning community, teachers build upon students' diverse choices, experiences, and interests (ie. funds of pedagogies) (Zipin, 2009; Hedges, 2012). In order to learn within an effective classroom community, the communication among students and teachers in the “constructions of social identities” (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015, p. 9) supports the work individuals do to use fluid funds of identity (Cutri et al., 2011; Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014; Subero et al., 2016). As Wardhaugh and Fuller (2015) note, “the term identity is used to invoke the interactively developed self that is multiple, fragments, and fluctuating” (p. 73). Teachers harness the identities of their students while finding ways to connect academics to their interests. Students' interests in music and the connections with music relate to student identity. This relationship offers an authentic way for teachers to honor the interests and identities of students. When teachers demonstrate an understanding of personal and relevant interests, this provides a way for them to create a safe learning community for all students to engage.

### **Finding the Music**

When considering the links among music, identity, and literacy learning, researchers describe the correlations between music instruction and students' increased reading prowess (Bolden & Beach, 2021; Eccles et al., 2020; Powell & Somerville, 2020; Rautenberg, 2015). Additionally, data support connecting musical instruction with gains in reading ability of children with special needs (Flaunacco, et al., 2015; Schwartzberg & Silverman, 2016).

Researchers also consider background music in the classroom. Mohan and Thomas (2020) discuss a positive correlation between using students' preferred music as background music and its connection to reading comprehension, while Su et al. (2017) specifically describe using Mozart as background music to decrease students' anxiety associated with learning and reading.

Most of the research intends to connect the positive effects of using either researcher-selected music or musical instruction with younger students, particularly pre-kindergarten to second-graders. Yoon (2018) discusses the use of popular culture within a kindergarten classroom, including songs such as “The Imperial March” from Star Wars, and the specific strategy to employ popular culture in literacy instruction instead of bracketing popular culture into only a playtime activity. The researchers targeting older students explore connecting middle school and high school students' interest in music to literature. Whatley et al. (2020) highlight using political music as a means to teach critical literacy while Kelly (2019) connects the study of hip-hop music to literature.

### **Using All Music**

Utilizing a wide variety of music genres in the middle school English classroom provides teachers with options to demonstrate their desire to connect with individual students' identities. The concept of identity is more expansive than merely the middle school classroom; this concept helps to inform the choices made by teachers to reach students by offering connections to a wide range of music. This variety of music indicates the teacher and classroom community prioritize individual student identity (Brown, 2006; Kelly, 2019; Mohan & Thomas, 2020).

### **Music as a Scaffold**

Research suggests that students enjoy the most success in classrooms where teachers prioritize the passions of their students (Moje et al., 2011; Subero et al., 2016). Using music to teach literacy concepts is a means to honor students' interests and fluid identity work within the English classroom. Since music is a common way that students define their interests, teachers can use music as a way to connect interest and identity to literary analysis, making the analysis of text more personal for each student.

Teachers incorporate familiar and novel songs to assist when introducing something more complex, such as using line-by-line analysis in readings, finding proof from the text to support a thesis, comparing two modes of literacy, and synthesizing the literary devices of a text. Integrating music in the study of a text is a strategy to challenge students with a complex comparison of two different modes of literacy. The following example provides a robust strategy to support the multimodal forms of literacy, synthesis, and flexible thinking within the classroom.

### **Using Music to Support Student Literacy**

I taught 7th-grade English in a K-8 school with approximately 1200 students within a large urban district. The majority of students read close to or at grade level. Between 16 and 20 students enrolled in each of my classes. The length of study/read time for each book was between four and six weeks. In order to support students' literacy learning, my instructional strategies ensured opportunities for them to connect the relevance of the music with the identified reading. The instructional strategies included music review, visual analysis, and free-write projects.

### **Music Review**

At least one day during the unit, a music connection day occurred. During this class period, the students and I worked together through a series of procedures to connect many genres of music to the text. The students and I called this activity "Music Review."

Prior to the day of the "music review," I created a playlist of twenty songs for the text. I intentionally included a wide variety of genres, tempos, instruments, lyrics, and familiarity of the songs while considering the events and characters, themes, motifs, and prior discussions we engaged as a class while reading.

On the day of the music review, the students created a list of as many possible characters, events, motifs, and themes related to the identified literature. Additionally, students listed their opinions

about the text. Some students created this list throughout the unit; others waited until the day of the music review to brainstorm recalled items. The students who chose to do the latter explained that it was a way to test their memory regarding the assigned reading. After providing adequate time to compile their list, students then numbered the second sheet of paper from one to twenty, skipping five lines between each number. At this time, I played the first 60 seconds of the first song. The students could focus on any element(s) of the song including lyrics, tempo, melody, specific musical instruments, rhythm, tone, or mood to explain how this element(s) connects to one part of the text the class read. Often students were able to understand this somewhat abstract assignment, at least in the beginning of the year, by my suggestion to think of this exercise as creating a movie soundtrack. After the first 60-seconds of a song-play, I ask the question, “Where do you think the music would fit in a movie version of the book?”

For instance, the playlist for William Shakespeare’s (2004) *Midsummer Night’s Dream* included Usher’s (2004) song “Yeah.” Students might identify the high-pitched ringing bells as a reminder of the fairies or they could consider the boisterous “club music” feel of the song which might suggest to them Bottom’s interaction with Titania. Another example is the Police’s (1983) production of “Every Breath You Take.” Students may connect the lyrics, “Every breath you take/Every move you make/Every bond you break/Every step you take/I’ll be watching you” to Helena’s love for Demetrius in Act I.

Students discovered dozens of different ways to connect one song to the text. They used their personal experience, literary understanding, and musical literacy to make their connections. They would explain their reasons first on paper and later in conversation with other students. This provided a way for students to experience what would later be identified as textual proof. They used examples from both texts to connect these literacies (book/literature, music/lyrics) together.

Every year I used this strategy, my list of songs associated with each book’s playlist became longer because students began to connect songs to the books they were reading on their own. I left a pad of Post-it notes on my desk specifically for students to share new song titles. Examples include: “Busby, you should check out Akon’s (2007) ‘Sorry, Blame It on Me’. It reminds me of Anthony Marston in *And Then There Were None* (Christie, 2003) because he isn’t sorry about ANYTHING. And maybe if you really think about it as Akon being real, then maybe Walter Jr. in *Raisin in the Sun* (Hansberry, 1994) would fit?”

I include an example playlist for *Midsummer Night’s Dream*. However, these playlists often change because of student-generated suggestions or newly created productions.

**Table 1**  
*Playlist for Midsummer Night's Dream*

Song title	Artist	Two ideas for possible connections
The Girl from Ipanema	Amy Winehouse	The beginning tune or mood sounds like a wedding reception song which connects to the 3 couples’ wedding party./ Based on the time period of the text, the lyrics could connect to Helena or Hermia based on how Lysander and Demetrius fall in love with each of them.

Wake Up	Arcade Fire	The beginning rhythm of the song could connect to Puck's race to get the special herb for Oberon./ The song sounds joyous which is the way Theseus feels about marrying Hippolyta.
Se Fue	Bebe	The chords being played in the beginning sounds like practice which is like when Bottom and the other actors practiced the play./ The singing sounds like the fairies singing to Titania.
Beautiful Liar	Shakira & Beyonce	The beginning sound sounds like a Bergomask dance that Bottom and the other actors offer after their play./ The two women singing about the man as a "beautiful liar" could be Helena and/or Hermia about Demetrius and Lysander's fickle love interests.
One Way or Another	Blondie	The tempo of the song reflects Puck's directing of Bottom throughout the play. (Could be several scenes.)/ The lyrics about obsession indicate all four of the lovers as well as Titania's feelings about Bottom and Theseus's feelings about Hippolyta.
Chan Chan	Buena Vista Social Club	The song's mood is stealthy which is how Puck acted as he spied on the lovers./ The drum beats are rhythmic like the feelings Hippolyta has about the continual progression of time to her eventual wedding day.
The Rake's Song	The Decemberists	The lyrics begin with "I had entered into a marriage" which connects to the three couples who marry at the end of the play./ The singer does not sound thrilled to be married which might connect to Oberon since he and Titania argue during most of the play.
Headlines	Drake	The singer notes he receives a lot of compliments and might be changed by the number of compliments. This could be many of the characters including: any of the four lovers, Puck, or Bottom./ The rhythm in the background sounds like a drum beat which could connect to a soldier's march and Hippolyta's fighting.
Beautiful	Eminem	"Lately I've been hard to reach" could focus on Bottom when his friends were looking for him and couldn't find him./ Lysander is very sad in Act I Scene i that he cannot marry Hermia.
Dance, Dance	Fall Out Boy	"She says she's no good with words" could connect to Helena's confusion at Hermia's anger. They both struggle to understand the other./ The intensity and chaotic energy of the song could remind a listener of the chase that ensues when Puck is directing the four lovers away from each other.
Ain't Worried about Nothin	French Montana	Oberon, though amused and annoyed at times, does not seem concerned about how things will eventually work out. He is confident he will be able to correct the wrongs and make Titania love him again./ The high-pitched sounds in the

		background of the song can remind a listener of the lullaby sung by the fairies for Titania.
Back to the Middle	India Arie	The lyrics describing a girl who is afraid of speaking “her mind” connects to Helena’s feelings in the first act./ The theme of the song focuses on the theme of love within the play and the fact that both Helena and Hermia remained true to their loves.
Rise Up with Fists!!	Jenny Lewis	“What are you changing? Who do you think you’re changing?” begins the lyrics of this song and connects to the actual donkey head Puck attaches to Bottom’s head. It could also identify the changes in loves./ Her repetition of the lines “You can wake up” focuses on the theme of dreams that happen within the play.
Fade into You	Mazzy Star	This sounds like a song Titania would sing for Bottom while she was in love with him./ This could be the song that Pyramus and Thisbe whisper to each other on either side of the wall.
You Can’t Touch This	M.C. Hammer	These lyrics could be for either of the male lovers in response to the female lovers that they were not in love with at the time./ This could also be Bottom’s theme song. He thinks very highly of himself.
Black Tables	Other Lives	The somber piano music could connect to Hippolyta’s feelings at the beginning of the play or the way the other actors feel when they cannot find Bottom./ The lyrics “it’s good to see you back home” could refer to how Theseus feels when the lovers, particularly his daughter Hermia, return.
Fields of Gold	Sting	The emphasis in the lyrics of the words “remember” and “forget” can connect to the following characters: Titania, Bottom, the four lovers, and Hippolyta./ This is a love song which relates to the theme of love within the play.
Marry Me	Train	The lyric “love has surely shifted” focuses on the motif of change and the theme of love in the play./ The singer is asking someone to marry him which relates to all four of the couples.
The Kids Don’t Stand a Chance	Vampire Weekend	“The kids don’t stand a chance” focuses on the four lovers and their experience in the forest./ The mood of the song seems magical which connects the motif of magic in the play.
Soul Finger	The Bar-Keys	The excited response reminds a listener of how, after their confusion had passed, the four lovers were thrilled to return to town so that they could participate in the wedding./ The excitement and trumpet trill could also imitate the excitement of Bottom and his friends when they heard Theseus had selected their play.

---

**Visual Analysis.** “Music review” is not the only place to use music in the classroom. For instance, the students also wrote a visual analysis of a favorite music video where we studied film techniques such as camera angle and movement, lighting, and transition. Then, students applied these different vocabulary words and the meanings behind the film to the lyrics of the song. The students provided an analysis of the music video by referencing the cinematic choices made and the possible reasons for these choices in connection to the lyrics and other layers of musical literacy.

Each class also creates a class soundtrack including both a representation of each student as well as songs indicating traits identified as important by a particular classroom of learners. Incorporated as part of their final class video, students often shared with other classes as a way to demonstrate their unique attributes.

**Free-Write Projects.** I also use songs as a catalyst for some free writing activities. Here, instead of playing only the first minute of the song, I would play an entire song, at least one time, and sometimes more than once while students take notes. These notes, doodles, or just attentive listening graduated into a “free write” assignment. Students write for 10 minutes. Sometimes I would offer a suggestion of genre, but more often, the students responded in a way that made personal sense to individuals. In order to expand an initial project, students used these free writes for later writing assignments as a starting point.

## Conclusion

Middle school English educators experience pressure to teach reading and writing standards in traditional ways that mimic formal state-mandated tests. However, by incorporating music within the English classroom, students learn complex literacy skills within the context of interest-driven and multimodal learning activities. Music harnesses another piece of student engagement as well as student identity to support literacy and emphasize the importance of the unique students within a classroom.

While using a “music review” to provide a close analysis of a text, students experience ownership of not only the interpretation of the lyrics, tone, and melody, but also exhibit the ability to connect other songs to the texts read in class. The visual analysis project offers a way for students to investigate relationships between imagery and song, noting the multimodal aspects of literacy while focusing on a song directly related to their identity and interests. A teacher can continue to honor student identity and help students connect in the classroom community when creating a group playlist. Finally, when a teacher uses music to support student writing, students not only have an immediate connection to the assignment because of the incorporation of music, but students also find the task of writing more comfortable.

Using music to highlight the individuality of middle school students allows teachers to hone in on the importance of student identity and its relationship to literacy and learning within a classroom community. Multimodal assignments incorporate music and thereby, allow students to learn through interest-driven connections and personal identity while, at the same time, helping to develop students’ critical thinking.

## References

- Akon. (2007). Sorry, blame it on me [Song]. On *Konvicted*. Konvict Muzik.
- Banegas, D. (2020). Teacher educators' funds of knowledge for the preparation of future teachers. *RELC Journal*, 003368822097308. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688220973083>
- Bolden, B., & Beach, P. (2021). Integrating music and literacy: Applying invented music notation to support prosody and reading fluency. *General Music Today*, 34(2), 5–12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1048371320926603>
- Brown, V. (2006). Guiding the influence of hip-hop music on middle-school students' feelings, thinking, and behaving. *The Negro Educational Review*, 57(1-2), 49–68.
- Christie, A. (2003). *And then there were none*. Harper Collins.
- Cutri, R., Manning, J., & Chun, M. (2011). Poverty phds: Funds of knowledge, poverty, and professional identity in academia. *Studying Teacher Education*, 7(3), 299–314. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17425964.2011.617137>
- Eccles, R., van der Linde, J., le Roux, M., Holloway, J., MacCutcheon, D., Ljung, R., & Swanepoel, D. (2020). Effect of music instruction on phonological awareness and early literacy skills of five- to seven-year-old children. *Early Child Development and Care*, 191(12), 1896–1910. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2020.1803852>
- Esteban-Guitart, M., & Moll, L. C. (2014). Funds of identity: A new concept based on the funds of knowledge approach. *Culture & Psychology*, 20(1), 31–48. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354067x13515934>
- Flaugnacco, E., Lopez, L., Terribili, C., Montico, M., Zoia, S., & Schön, D. (2015). Music training increases phonological awareness and reading skills in developmental dyslexia: A randomized control trial. *PLOS ONE*, 10(9), e0138715. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0138715>
- Foucault, M. (1988). Technologies of the self. In L. H. Martin, H. Gutman, & P. H. Hutton (Eds.), *Technologies of the self* (1st ed., pp. 16–49). The University of Massachusetts Press.
- Gutiérrez, K. D. (2008). Developing a sociocritical literacy in the third space. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 43(2), 148–164. <https://doi.org/10.1598/rrq.43.2.3>
- Hansberry, L. (1994). *Raisin in the sun*. Vintage Books.
- Hedges, H. (2012). Teachers' funds of knowledge: A challenge to evidence-based practice. *Teachers and Teaching*, 18(1), 7–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2011.622548>
- Kelly, L. L. (2019). Building critical classroom community through hip-hop literature. *English Journal*, 109(1), 52–58.
- Mohan, A., & Thomas, E. (2020). Effect of background music and the cultural preference to music on adolescents' task performance. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 25(1), 562–573. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2019.1689368>
- Moje, E., Ciechanowski, K., Kramer, K., Ellis, L., Carrillo, R., & Collazo, T. (2011). Working toward third space in content area literacy: An examination of everyday funds of knowledge and discourse. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 39(1), 38–70. <https://doi.org/10.1598/rrq.39.1.4>
- Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory Into Practice*, 31(2), 132–141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00405849209543534>

- Pahl, K., & Rowsell, J. (2010). *Artifactual literacies: Every object tells a story (language and literacy series)* (1st ed.). Teachers College Press.
- Palmer, P. J. (1998). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life* (1st ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Powell, S., & Somerville, M. (2020). Drumming in excess and chaos: Music, literacy and sustainability in early years learning. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 20(4), 839–861. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798418792603>
- Rautenberg, I. (2015). The effects of musical training on the decoding skills of German-speaking primary school children. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 38(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jrir.12010>
- Schwartzberg, E. T., & Silverman, M. J. (2016). Effects of a music-based short story on short- and long-term reading comprehension of individuals with autism spectrum disorder: A cluster randomized study. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 48, 54–61. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aip.2016.01.001>
- Shakespeare, W. (2004). *A midsummer night's dream (Folger Shakespeare library)* (B. A. Mowat & P. Werstine, Eds.). Simon & Schuster.
- Su, Y.-N., Kao, C.-C., Hsu, C.-C., Pan, L.-C., Cheng, S.-C., & Huang, Y.-M. (2017). How does Mozart's music affect children's reading? The evidence from learning anxiety and reading rates with e-books. *Educational Technology & Society*, 20(2), 101–112.
- Subero, D., Vujasinović, E., & Esteban-Guitart, M. (2016). Mobilising funds of identity in and out of school. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 47(2), 247–263. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764x.2016.1148116>
- The Police. (1983). Every breath you take [Song]. On *Synchronicity*. A&M. (Original work published 1982)
- Usher, Lil John, & Ludacris. (2004). Yeah [Song]. On *Confessions*. Arista.
- Wardhaugh, R., & Fuller, J. M. (2015). *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (7th ed.). John Wiley & Sons.
- Whatley, R., Banda, R. M., & Bryan, N. (2020). Challenging traditional conceptions of english curricula & pedagogy: A review of literature on teaching critical literacy through political music. *Changing English*, 27(4), 431–445. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1358684x.2020.1747395>
- Yoon, H. S. (2018). "The Imperial March" toward early literacy: Locating popular culture in a kindergarten classroom. *Language Arts*, 95(3), 171–175.
- Zipin, L. (2009). Dark funds of knowledge, deep funds of pedagogy: Exploring boundaries between lifeworlds and schools. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 30(3), 317–331. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01596300903037044>