Bibliographie annotée

Blair, H. A., & Sanford, K. (2004). Morphing literacy: Boys reshaping their school-based

literacy practices. *Language Arts*, *81*(1), 452-460. Retrieved from http://isu468research.wikispaces.com/file/view/morphing+literacy-blair.pdf

Mots clefs:

Boys, transforming reading tasks and purpose, use of time, social aspect of literacy.

Objectif de l’article:

The goal of this study is to gain an understanding of the concept of literacy as it relates to boys in our current school system, and to note how this differs from the traditional view of literacy in schools. The motivation for the study arose from concerns that boys are often overlooked in studies on literacy.

Résumé:

Blair and Sanford (2004) studied middle and junior high aged boys as they modify literacy activities. They coined the term ‘morphing’ to describe how boys take school activities and modify them to suit their personal interests. Blair and Sanford’s findings challenge the belief that boys struggle with literacy; rather, they propose that boys merely modify literary activities to suit their own learning needs and personal interests. What is often misinterpreted by teachers as refusal to follow instructions is merely the boys’ attempt to create an activity that is meaningful to them.

Blair and Sanford (2004) identified three ways in which boys modify, or “morph” literary activities:

1. Transform time to work on aspects of school literacies that appeal to them.
2. Transform the purpose of the assignment to suit their interests.
3. Transform literacy events into social—cultural capital.

(Blair & Sanford, 2004, p. 454)

Transform Time to Work

Boys in the study showed a need to restructure the use of time during the day. They needed time to prepare themselves for an activity or finish the activity quickly so that they could spend time doing something that interested them. Teachers could perceive this as a failure to meet their deadlines, or they could choose to structure days in such a way as to allow boys the freedom to manage their time.

**Transform the Purpose of the Assignment**

The researchers found that boys try to modify the focus of tasks in order to make the learning more meaningful. Activities and pastimes from outside of school can weigh heavily in this. Computers, videogames, Pokémon cards and adventure comics appeared in the boys’ work. If boys are given the freedom to focus on these areas of interest, they can meet the required learning outcomes while enjoying the activity. This will reinforce participation in learning activities.

**Transform Literacy Events into Social—cultural Capital**

Blair and Sanford (2004) recount how the boys in the study used written texts as a focus for social interaction. Boys gathering around a magazine or computer game may create a loud disruption that the teacher sees as misbehavior, but it is merely their way of sharing the information that they are reading. Several examples of this social aspect of reading for boys are discussed.

Méthodologie:

This article describes an ethnographic case study that took place over two years. The researchers studied preadolescent and adolescent boys in both rural and urban schools. Data was gathered through the collection of work samples, interviews with the participants, and direct observations. Throughout the two years Blair and Sanford continually “reshaped and refocused” (Blair & Sanford, 2004, p. 454) their study as their findings led them to deeper questions.

Pertinence pour les objectifs d’études que vous avez choisis:

This study by Blair and Sanford (2004), I believe, is the perfect model for the study that I would like to carry out in the French immersion program. While they studied literacy in the English classroom, their findings are directly related to the questions of how boys learn in any classroom, and of what learning activities interest them. Their findings with regards to reading materials and allowing boys the freedom to develop reading project that relate direct to out of school interests are extremely pertinent to my study, which involves designing learning activities that motivate boys to participate fully and find success in the French immersion classroom. As a part of this learning involves reading, discussion, and project development, this study is a perfect addition to my research.

References

Blair, H. A., & Sanford, K. (2004). Morphing literacy: Boys reshaping their school-based literacy practices. *Language Arts*, *81*(1), 452-460. Retrieved from http://isu468research.wikispaces.com/file/view/morphing+literacy-blair.pdf